

Trump's Need to Trust Americans

December 21, 2016

Exclusive: President Obama promised transparency but delivered a deceptive administration hostile to truth-tellers. President-elect Trump's narrow path to greatness would require the opposite choice, writes Robert Parry.

By Robert Parry

Barack Obama's chance for a transformative presidency ended when he bowed to Official Washington's foreign-policy establishment of neocons and liberal interventionists and bought into the elitist notion that the American people should be guided by propaganda, not informed by facts.

Although he began his presidency by promising transparency, Obama instead undertook an unprecedented crackdown on national security whistleblowers, prosecuting more than all other presidents combined. Meanwhile, he authorized partial and misleading releases of information about key events. Instead of an informed public, his administration sought maximum propaganda advantage, such as with the Aug. 21, 2013 [sarin gas attack](#) outside Damascus, Syria, and with the July 17, 2014 [shoot-down](#) of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 over eastern Ukraine.



President-elect Donald J. Trump (Photo credit: donaldjtrump.com)

But Obama's anti-democratic approach to information, i.e., treating Americans like mushrooms in a darkened cellar, creates an opportunity for President-elect Donald Trump to do the opposite, reinvigorate U.S. democracy by arming citizens with facts. By doing so, he also can counter his reputation as someone hostile to reality.

Once in office, Trump could use his power over pardons and commutations to reverse Obama's punishment of truth-tellers – the likes of Chelsea Manning and Edward Snowden – and Trump can authorize as full a release of evidence about turning-point events as possible. There's no justifiable reason for the U.S. intelligence community to continue to withhold its assessments on the Syria-sarin case, which killed hundreds of civilians, or on the shoot-down of MH-17, which killed 298 people.

I've been told by intelligence sources that there is a great deal more evidence regarding each incident than the Obama administration has shared even with official inquiries, although holding back this information has allowed guilty parties to escape while sending investigators off in wrong directions. [See [here](#) and [here](#).]

Instead of pursuing justice, the Obama administration exploited the atrocities to demonize geopolitical "enemies." The sarin case was pinned on the Syrian government and the MH-17 shoot-down was blamed on Russian President Vladimir Putin – all the better to gin up the New Cold War and justify massive new armaments spending.

Official Washington's foreign-policy establishment, aided and abetted by the mainstream U.S. media, also concealed or played down other relevant facts about Syria and Ukraine. Regarding Syria, the Obama administration hid the [degree of collaboration](#) between U.S.-backed "moderate" Syrian rebels and radical jihadists, including Al Qaeda's affiliate, Nusra Front. On Ukraine, Obama concealed American [complicity in the violent putsch](#) that overthrew Ukraine's elected President Viktor Yanukovich and threw Ukraine into a nasty civil war with the pro-U.S. side [relying on neo-Nazi storm troopers](#) to kill ethnic Russian Ukrainians. Those realities had to be whitewashed because they didn't reinforce the desired narrative.

Opening the Records

On his first day in office, President Trump could order his CIA Director Mike Pompeo to review these cases and release all information that does not compromise sensitive sources and methods. The order could extend to other intelligence-related mysteries, including some that may reflect poorly on Republicans such as [the October Surprise mystery of 1980](#), whether Ronald Reagan's campaign went behind President Jimmy Carter's back to undermine his hostage negotiations with Iran and thus ensure Reagan's election.



Rep. Mike Pompeo, R-Kansas, the CIA director-designate.

By demonstrating a readiness to tell it like it is – regardless of where the partisan chips fall – Trump could reassure nervous Democrats and progressives who view him as a demagogue who disdains facts and exploits emotions for political gain. He could reverse that negative image by doing what Obama promised – but failed to deliver on – a transparent government that trusts the people.

Trump also could put mainstream U.S. media outlets in a bind since they would have to admit that much of what they have reported about Syria and Ukraine amounted to either propaganda or disinformation. As much as the big newspapers have decried Trump as a purveyor of "fake news," they would have a hard time arguing against the release of information that gives Americans a fuller understanding of the world around them.

After opening up these intelligence files, Trump could explain why he believes neocon/liberal-hawk “regime change” strategies are unwise and how relations with Moscow could be improved based on a clear knowledge of what the Kremlin has and has not done, rather than a slanted and selective presentation of propaganda designed to manage the perceptions of the American people.

Advice to Obama

In early 2014, as the New Cold War was starting to heat up, I advocated for President Obama to find within himself the courage that Dwight Eisenhower and John Kennedy displayed when they explained real dangers that Americans faced from, respectively, the Military Industrial Complex and the demonizing of Moscow’s leaders in the pursuit of the original Cold War.



President John F. Kennedy at the American University commencement on June 10, 1963.

In a farewell address on Jan. 17, 1961, Eisenhower ominously warned that “In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes.”

On June 10, 1963, at American University in Washington, D.C., Kennedy outlined the need to collaborate with Soviet leaders to avert dangerous confrontations, like the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962:

“What kind of peace do I mean and what kind of a peace do we seek? Not a Pax Americana enforced on the world by American weapons of war. Not the peace of the grave or the security of the slave. I am talking about genuine peace, the kind of peace that makes life on earth worth living, and the kind that enables men and nations to grow, and to hope, and build a better life for their children, not merely peace for Americans but peace for all men and women, not merely peace in our time but peace in all time.”

And then, in arguably the most important words that he ever spoke, Kennedy said, “For in the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children’s futures. And we are all mortal.”

But U.S. presidents since then have opted for an expanded Military Industrial Complex, the demonization of “enemies” – and what the Reagan administration liked to call [“perception management” of the American public](#). Rather than trusting the people as the true sovereigns of the nation, these U.S. presidents saw the people as simpleminded beasts to be guided and controlled.

Obama's Choice

Obama faced that test, too. Would he go over the heads of Washington's elites and trust the people or would he keep the people in the dark and ally himself with the elites? Obama reached that crossroads in late 2013 and early 2014.



President Obama in the Oval Office.

On March 14, 2014, [I wrote](#): “With the neocons [again ascendant](#) and with the U.S. news media [again failing](#) to describe a foreign crisis honestly, Barack Obama faces perhaps the greatest challenge of his presidency, a moment when he needs to find the courage to correct a false narrative that his own administration has spun regarding Ukraine and to explain why it's crucial to cooperate with Russian President Vladimir Putin in the cause of world peace.”

But Obama couldn't find the courage to rise to the occasion. Instead he relied on [the strident language](#) of aides such as his “humanitarian” warmongering Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power, and he stuck with the confrontational policies of neocon holdovers such as Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Victoria Nuland, an architect of the Ukraine coup.

Obama's failure to stand up to this neocon/liberal-hawk foreign-policy elite over Syria and Ukraine may well define his historical legacy. He allowed the Syrian conflict to escalate with shipments of U.S. weapons to rebels both directly and indirectly adding to the country's carnage. Obama also acquiesced to the provocative overthrow of Ukraine's elected president on Russia's border and allowed the crisis to escalate into a risky stand-off with nuclear-armed Russia.

Rather than do what was best for the American people and the world, Obama sought to appease what's often called Washington's “war party,” apparently thinking that the neocons and liberal hawks would think better of him if he joined them in beating the war drums.

Now, ironically, it may fall to a man with only a fraction of Obama's oratorical skills to pick up the torch for peace that Eisenhower and Kennedy raised in their two most important speeches.

However, even more important than giving a speech, Trump can give the American people the facts from which can be built a solid foundation for rational relationships with adversaries as well as allies.

Out of the Weeds

If the weeds of propaganda and “perception management” are cleared away, a Trump administration could move forward with plans to tackle the international problems that most tripped up Obama: Ukraine and the Middle East.



Russian President Vladimir Putin addresses a crowd on May 9, 2014, celebrating the 69th anniversary of victory over Nazi Germany and the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Crimean port city of Sevastopol from the Nazis. (Russian government photo)

With Ukraine, President Trump could make clear he will not tolerate the Kiev regime continuing to drag its feet on the Minsk II peace accord that calls for granting ethnic Russians in eastern Ukraine some form of autonomy. The Crimea issue also could be resolved by arranging an internationally supervised referendum on whether the people want to be with Russia or Ukraine.

Regarding the Middle East, Trump could finally speak the truth – that Saudi Arabia and other Sunni-ruled Gulf states are the true prime sponsors of terrorism, not Iran. The Iran lie is a beloved Washington “group think” – favored by the powerful Israel Lobby – but the accusation is clearly not true.

Al Qaeda, Islamic State and other terror groups that have obsessed and bedeviled the West in recent decades are all Sunni and are backed by rich Sunni kingdoms and emirates, led by Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

If President Trump chooses to really level with the American people and truly wants to get to the root causes of terrorism, he will identify Saudi Arabia and its friends as state sponsors of terrorism and take appropriate actions to stop them.

Of course, if Trump does challenge Official Washington’s vested interests in protecting the wealthy Saudis who have built [an influential anti-Shiite alliance with Israel](#), he will find few friends in the U.S. capital. Which is why he must enlist the support of the American people by first empowering them with the truth and then rallying them to a policy that could make a difference.

Whether Trump has the courage and wisdom to pull off such a sharp break with the way Washington does business may determine whether he achieves his ambition to be a great president or simply presides over another failed presidency.

Investigative reporter Robert Parry broke many of the Iran-Contra stories for The Associated Press and Newsweek in the 1980s. You can buy his latest book, *America’s Stolen Narrative*, either in [print here](#) or as an e-book (from [Amazon](#) and [barnesandnoble.com](#)).

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1.

Sceptic

December 21, 2016 at 5:09 pm

Whatever one may think of Trump, he has made clear that he is no coward. He has persisted in the face of ridicule and attacks by the media (some of them at least partly well-justified, such as in the case of his mistreatment of women) that would have withered 99 men out of a hundred. He has the courage. The real question is whether he has the wisdom.

To challenge the deep state in this way would indeed take enormous courage, on the scale of Khrushchev in 1956 or Gorbachev in 1989. Where it would lead is anyone’s guess. But without purging the American system of its enormous baggage of lies, it is hard to see how it can begin to move forward and heal.

The mainstream press prefers keeping unpleasant things like the truth hidden away, lest they cause a crisis. They are like doctors who prefer to ignore a cancer, rather than operating and saving the patient’s life.

[Reply](#)



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Peter Loeb

December 21, 2016 at 5:30 pm

MR. PARRY’S MISPLACED HOPES....

“But Obama couldn’t find the courage to rise to the occasion. Instead he relied on the strident language of aides such as his “humanitarian” warmongering Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power, and he stuck with the confrontational policies of neocon holdovers such as Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Victoria Nuland, an architect of the Ukraine coup.” —Robert Parry, above

Congratulations for your continuing to believe that Barack Obama will suddenly—shockingly—show courage. His mask is different than that of Donald Trump but therefore the more misleading and the more sinister. Its professorial demeanor covers the evils of which he is too bright to be unaware.

I was hopeful in 2008 and shortly afterward understood my stupidity.

Obama got where he got by using this mask and being in fact an organization man, proffering wars, death, and hypocrisy.

Our warrior President (Obama) has shown us only what we should have known already.

—Peter Loeb, Boston, MA, USA

[Reply](#)



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Johan Nygaard

December 21, 2016 at 9:06 pm

I think it is misplaced to label Parry's writing "misplaced hopes". Unrealistic as his advices may seem, I think it is more realistic to view this advice article as an example of a very enlightening literary jangle.

Johan Nygaard, Oslo, Norway

[Reply](#)



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backwardsevolution

December 21, 2016 at 6:51 pm

Sceptic – good post, but I think it goes farther than this. The government is now in league with the media, corporate power, the military/security complex, the financial industry. They are now ONE. This is fascism in all its ugliness. Laws are now being passed which could curtail the alternative media.

You have "almost" been totally captured. Trump really is your last chance. IF he is strong enough (which I think he is), and if the American people help him (not hinder him), he could turn this around. As Mr. Parry says, he could become a great president if he provides transparency, the truth. And Trump is good at this. It's his best feature. He has been exposing them (which is their greatest fear), and the alternative media have been for the most part helping him, not for his sake, but for the country's.

Last night I watched CNN for a few minutes. The talking head filling in for Anderson Cooper was asking questions of a panel. He kept insisting that Trump was not around to get the daily intelligence briefings, and he was finding great fault with Trump for not doing this. It was

pointed out that Trump was not yet the President, but he wouldn't let up. A comment I saw last night said:

“The problem is that the CIA doesn't want a friend, it wants a compliant puppet who does what he is told and doesn't ask questions, or even worse, someone who gives them orders.

The fact that Trump is already rejecting those CIA briefs given on a daily basis, and doing so publicly, must be driving the hubristic egomaniacs crazy with rage and fear that the days of unlimited power are about to end.

Trump's actions are deliberate and meant to send the message about who is boss. That terrifies these criminals coz they have no idea how he might deal with those who defy him.”

If he is correct in his assessment, then Trump is your best chance for taking back your country. If Trump is purposely not meeting with them, then he is exhibiting great courage for doing this. The American people must back him up.

[Reply](#)



Joe B

December 21, 2016 at 8:38 pm

Yes, Trump's ignoring the dark state briefings is a very positive sign. His alleged reassurances of AIPAC are not. We will know in a few months where he stands, and not before.

[Reply](#)



Joe B

December 22, 2016 at 9:58 am

But Trump would have to control DoD as well. There is an excellent article today on MoonOfAlabama showing that the Deir Ezzor attack on Syrian government forces was planned by SecDef Carter to sabotage a long-delayed Kerry-Lavrov cooperation plan. Days prior to the attack, the USAF commander asserted that he would decide whether the agreement was implemented:

“I'm not saying yes or no,” Lt. Gen. Jeffrey L. Harrigian, commander of the United States Air Forces Central Command, told reporters on a video conference call. “It would be premature to say that we're going to jump right into it.”

Kerry admitted that insubordination was the problem:

“Unfortunately we had divisions within our own ranks that made the implementation of that extremely hard to accomplish,” Kerry said. “But I believe in it, I think it can work, could have worked.”

“During the U.S. attack the Syrian-Russian operations center had immediately tried to contact the designated coordination officer at U.S. Central Command to stop the attack. But that officer could not be reached and those at CentCom taking the Russian calls just hanged up:”

According to Gareth Porter, the investigation report shows that the DoD:

“* misled the Russians about where the US intended to strike so Russia could not warn that it was targeting Syrian troops
* ignored information and intelligence analysis warning that the positions to be struck were Syrian government rather than Islamic State
* shifted abruptly from a deliberate targeting process to an immediate strike in violation of normal Air Force procedures”

The article is at <http://www.moonofalabama.org/>. This appears to be the cause of the US exclusion from the Russia-Syria-Iran cooperation talks.

[Reply](#)

2.



rosemary

December 21, 2016 at 5:10 pm

What a change that would be! However, we have heard nothing but aghast frantic criticism from the Dems and lots of others on every step Trump has taken so far, and we all know he is unpredictable, so who knows, good news could be on the way.

[Reply](#)

o



Wm. Boyce

December 22, 2016 at 11:28 am

Uh yeah, unpredictable is the right word. However, his picks for the cabinet do not indicate a large change in the direction Mr. Parry would like. Far from it; do you really think Exxon Mobil wants big changes in the way things work?

[Reply](#)



3.

Joe Tedesky

December 21, 2016 at 5:17 pm

With the appointment of Rex Tillerson as Secretary of State, could it be surmised that by having an oil executive in charge of state diplomacy that we could plan a move away from Saudi Arabia? To further expound Mr Tillerson credentials, would he be just the person to collaborate a deal for energy rights with Russia? If a Trump Administration can get us pass these wars of proxy, and quit with the Zio-Israeli/Saudi Middle East dominance campaign of chaos, would it not be a great thing?

I once had high hopes via Obama for 'hope and change', but now I will remain patient to see what comes out of a Donald Trump presidency. Although Trump's picks resumes aren't not what I'd hope they would be, I will give our new President the benefit of the doubt for now, and keep my fingers crossed that the best will happen.

[Reply](#)



4.

msavage

December 21, 2016 at 5:24 pm

"But without purging the American system of its enormous baggage of lies, it is hard to see how it can begin to move forward and heal.

The mainstream press prefers keeping unpleasant things like the truth hidden away, lest they cause a crisis. They are like doctors who prefer to ignore a cancer, rather than operating and saving the patient's life."

Agree with you here. It is not possible to begin healing our country until the cancerous lies are revealed and dealt with. Trump has the opportunity to do this. To see the way that MSM is demonizing him, I have to believe that Deep State is afraid that he might reveal some of the malignancies. I think it's pretty evident that Trump is a narcissist. But then, what American president hasn't been? I think Trump's particular brand of narcissism is just easier to identify than most. Imagine the opportunity he now holds in his hands. His choices? I think there are several. Promise change, as Obama did, and then carry on with business as usual and go down in history as another loser. Fulfill the prognostications of the MSM and go down in history as another Hitleresque figure. Reveal the lies, challenge Deep State, and put America on a course toward healing. What's it gonna be Mr. Trump? History-changing president of the people, or must another money-grubbing, lying loser? We are on the cusp of a momentous change. Who knows what way it will go? Obama might still have many liberals fooled now, but that won't last. His lasting legacy will be one of a man who sold out the American people—someone who wasted a tremendous opportunity.

[Reply](#)



5.

Ragnar Ragnarsson

December 21, 2016 at 5:24 pm

Given what the media has done to Trump it wouldn't surprise me if he takes steps against them, maybe busting up the media/news monopoly. As far as the CIA, I'm hoping he dismantles that whole nest of vipers, but won't hold my breath.

He doesn't seem to be afraid of anybody or speaking his mind accordingly, so the next few years will be interesting. I don't want to hope for too much and thereby get disappointed. I was hopeful when Obama was first elected and look how that turned out. The difference is Trump truly doesn't seem to care what anybody thinks of him, which is an asset in a leader. I think he's more prone to tell us the truth than anybody in at least the last 40 years or so. I think that's part of why he got elected in the 1st place.

[Reply](#)



6.

Gina

December 21, 2016 at 5:34 pm

Excellent articles as usual

[Reply](#)



7.

F. G. Sanford

December 21, 2016 at 6:06 pm

Petroleum production, thanks to fracking and shale oil extraction, are rumored to have made the U.S. a potential net exporting nation. It would be the perfect time and the perfect opportunity to give Saudi Arabia the "pink slip". If we're going to compromise the environment, we may as well do it for a good cause. Mr. Parry's advice to the new administration, if taken and implemented posthaste, would not just bring a new dawn to American democracy. It could also remove the specter of November 22, 1963. I am certain I am not alone in believing that the lingering menace of that dreadful day has hampered every Presidency since. I still remember those events as though they were yesterday. How could they not adversely temper the judgement of every subsequent President? It's time to lift the veil. Out, damn'd spot! Out, I say! And, Godspeed, Mr. Trump!

[Reply](#)



o

Joe Tedesky

December 21, 2016 at 6:30 pm

If America is ever to heal it's self inflicted wounds of yesteryear then the assassinations of JFK, RFK, and MLK, must be solved publicly. I would also like to add how America must begin holding it's leaders accountable for past, and present war crimes...but this will most likely never happen. One lie leads to another lie, and I'm afraid we are all living our lives through this era of deceit one day at a time. Once American can work up enough courage to look in the mirror, and start becoming honest with itself, well then nothing will change for the better.

Here is something worth reading, and hopefully it will aire on ABC...

http://www.irishcentral.com/news/jackie-kennedy-blamed-lyndon-b-johnson-for-jfk-murder-127220093-237788131?utm_source=zergnet.com&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=zergnet_1335650

[Reply](#)



8.

Tom Huckin

December 21, 2016 at 6:38 pm

JFK and his brother were indeed courageous dissenters to business-as-usual. But they both paid for it with their lives. I wonder if Trump, like any other president, doesn't face the same sort of Hobson's choice.

[Reply](#)



9.

[Gregory V Driscoll](#)

December 21, 2016 at 6:49 pm

We're supposed to hope that Trump will do the "right thing"? Take just one thing as an example: his threat to raise tariffs on Chinese products – this reveals his lack of rudimentary knowledge about WTO rules and processes. And that is just a reflection of his lack of knowledge about many other US government laws and rules, as well as international law and regulations under multilateral and bilateral

agreements, unless of course they just happen to impinge on his personal businesses or his tax situation. There he is probably up to par. So, there may be a lot of opportunities for Trump “to do the right thing”, but all his history [and I’ve followed his outrageousness since the 1970s] so far points to his NOT doing so, unless he sees a very personal (read ‘financial’ or narcissistic) reason for doing so. Robert Parry seems to be a bit of an optimist; I’m 72 years old, a war veteran, and former government worker, who’s seen these BS artists at all levels and in several countries. As a result, I’m a pessimist – but I hope I’ll be surprised, though it’s very unlikely.

[Reply](#)



10.

[sstephanie](#)

December 21, 2016 at 6:52 pm

Please keep up the good work as we are being over run by the lib tards.

[Reply](#)



o

Stygg

December 22, 2016 at 7:28 pm

Pray tell, which “lib tards” would those be?

[Reply](#)



11.

backwardsevolution

December 21, 2016 at 7:15 pm

Article re the media and the intelligence agencies explicitly stating that Trump and Russia worked together to win the U.S. election.

“Donald Trump Will Ruthlessly Decimate the CIA for Turning on Him:

Donald J. Trump does not take prisoners. He will not forgive, or forget. And the massacre coming to halls of Langley and to anybody and anywhere else in the executive branch involved in this is going to beggar belief. [...]

John F. Kennedy famously threatened to “smash the CIA into a thousand pieces.” But ultimately, the 35th president lost his solitary battle to completely break the power of the deep state.

Though I respect Kennedy, I believe Donald Trump is a much more serious proposition.

Donald Trump is Michael Corleone. He will keep his friends close, and his enemies closer (including the likes of John Bolton). But those he doesn't keep closer, he will ruthlessly “screw against the wall” for targeting him.

The no-nonsense Mike Pompeo, Trump's nominee for CIA director, will be the hatchet man for this merciless house cleaning operation.

Come January 20th, the reckoning begins.

Let's get ready to rumble.”

<http://russia-insider.com/en/politics/donald-trump-will-ruthlessly-decimate-cia-turning-against-him/ri18205>

Let's hope he's right, that Trump takes no prisoners. Fire the lot of them! Split up the media!

[Reply](#)



12.

backwardsevolution

December 21, 2016 at 7:26 pm

I think the worst president the U.S. has had, who did more damage, was Bill Clinton. Charming, outwardly warm, he put the U.S. up for sale. He brought in NAFTA, he allowed the media to conglomerate, he repealed the Glass-Steagall Act which separated commercial and investment business at the Wall Street banks, and he brought in the Commodity Futures Modernization Act. It has been a free-for-all ever since.

“Democracy in Peril: Twenty Years of Media Consolidation Under the Telecommunications Act

Twenty years ago this week, President Bill Clinton signed the Telecommunications Act of 1996. The act, signed into law on February 8, 1996, was “essentially bought and paid for by corporate media lobbies... [...]

The negative impact of the law cannot be overstated. The law, which was the first major reform of telecommunications policy since 1934, according to media scholar Robert McChesney, “is widely considered to be one of the three or four most important federal laws of this generation.” The act dramatically reduced important Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations on cross ownership, and allowed giant corporations to buy up thousands of media outlets across the country, increasing their monopoly on the flow of information in the United States and around the world.

“Never have so many been held incommunicado by so few,” said Eduardo Galeano, the Latin American journalist, in response to the act.

Twenty years later the devastating impact of the legislation is undeniable: About 90 percent of the country’s major media companies are owned by six corporations.”

<http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/34789-democracy-in-peril-twenty-years-of-media-consolidation-under-the-telecommunications-act>

IMO, he really did the most damage of any president, and he almost made it back into the White House, and Hillary said she was going to put him in charge of economic policy. OMG, you barely escaped that fate! Media’s present power goes all the way back to Bill Clinton. Wherever he saw a direct monetary benefit to himself, he was easily bought.

[Reply](#)



13.

W. R. Knight

December 21, 2016 at 7:53 pm

Yes, Trump could undo much of the damage Obama did, but I won’t hold my breath.

[Reply](#)



14.

Bob Van Noy

December 21, 2016 at 8:11 pm

Robert Parry, your timing on this article is perfect and I agree totally with your thinking. Everything that you are asking of this upcoming administration is just and requires an adequate explanation to the American People. I’m especially enamored with your thought about quickly pardoning Edward Snowden and Chelsea Manning. As you say, the Perception Management must stop; it is anathema to a free society. By doing these things quickly, President Trump could set the tone of his administration and have enough time to fight the opposition that he clearly will have. He has the opportunity like Franklin Roosevelt, to betray his class and support the working people of America. On the other hand politically, it is equally clear that President Elect Trump intends to run a purely business oriented administration which one would expect to be counter productive to workers and the environment so I guess, like with President Obama, we’ll see...

[Reply](#)

15.



Bill Bodden

December 21, 2016 at 8:27 pm

Barack Obama's chance for a transformative presidency ended when he bowed to Official Washington's foreign-policy establishment of neocons and liberal interventionists and bought into the elitist notion that the American people should be guided by propaganda, not informed by facts.

Donald Trump's chance for a transformative presidency will end when he presides over the next set of elites to run the country. Just as the incumbent team of elites focused on their own agendas that excluded the interests of the people so too will their replacements.

Robert Parry, for whom I have the greatest respect, has suggested actions that Trump could take to reverse the hazardous path along which this nation is traveling. Well and good, but too many people, including commentators above, will see these suggestions as justifications for hope and change that are no better than Obama's hopey-changey con job.

I was fortunate before Obama's speech at the Democratic National Convention in Boston in 2004 to have read and learned from the compendium of Walter Karp's writings that taught me how the Democratic and Republican parties worked, so I didn't join in the parade with other Democrats** following this new pied piper. My skepticism continued through the 2008 primaries as I read between the lines of Obama's speeches. If I recall correctly, I voted again for Ralph Nader. So, when people ask if I'm disappointed in Obama my answer is, "No. He lived down to my expectations."

When he viciously attacked then-Bradley Manning, Obama fell below what I expected of him.

** I don't recall when I changed my party affiliation to non-affiliated, but it wasn't long after the 2004 election.

[Reply](#)



backwardsevolution

December 21, 2016 at 8:55 pm

Bill Bodden – I think what you're saying is true, that the Republicans and Democrats are ONE single entity. That's because they're bought. By big money. They've caved to and been bought off by vested interests all along the way until now. That's why they do not control anything anymore, but they take orders from their handlers well and follow their instructions. The government is in collusion with big media, big banks, the military/security complex, multinational corporations, the pharmaceutical industry and big agricultural interests, the economics profession, along with ivy league academia. You are OWNED.

But Trump is not and has not been part of them. He is an outsider, as seen by the way they are going after him. If he was on-side, do you think for a minute they'd be vilifying him as they are? Not a chance. He is not on-side, and they are terrified by this.

Even Nader and Chomsky were rooting for Hillary. Can you wrap your head around this? And even Sanders caved and embraced her, campaigned for her; Warren too. Talk about no hope – there it was! Way to stand up for your country, you empty-minded progressives. Way to sell out. Is there a brain cell in operation between the lot of them? When you have no hope, you don't turn around and vote for a person who is going to give you more of "no hope", do you? But they did, unbelievably.

As one commenter said:

“Trump has the wind of 60 million fired up supporters at his back, he is acutely aware of this power, and seems to have the courage and balls to use it ruthlessly to strike while the iron is hot and destroy his enemies, including hothead Republicans and defiant CIA thugs who think they are untouchable.

Trump's personality and style does not have room for alternate power centers within the executive, and the CIA will toe the line or be 'drained'.”

I hope he's right. If Trump does this, there actually will be hope.

[Reply](#)



Bill Bodden

December 21, 2016 at 9:32 pm

I think what you're saying is true, that the Republicans and Democrats are ONE single entity

Not quite. My point was about elites. Currently the Democratic and Republican oligarchs and their special interest financiers being replaced by billionaires and other staunch authoritarian figures.

Time will tell, and I'll be more than happy if my skepticism and pessimism prove to be unjustified.

[Reply](#)



Stephen Sivonda

December 22, 2016 at 3:44 am

Backwardsevolution....I really enjoyed your posts on this topic. I also think the assessment about Trump being an outsider and the establishment shaking in their boots is spot on. Yesterday while checking some email and surfing some of the sites I saw a headline ...but didn't read the article. The Israeli's were basically asking Trump on his stance about them keeping the Golan heights. I'll have to guess that he wouldn't answer that now, and he really has no authority to do that ...even after the inauguration If he did...it would be illegal. I'm going to try and hunt that up to see the exact nuances of the article....but just the fact that the Israeli's are sounding him out NOW...put's them in the category of all the others that are unsure of what they'll be dealing with. It will be very interesting

[Reply](#)



Brad Owen

December 22, 2016 at 6:51 am

You are right. Trump is the absolute LAST hope for the 99 per centers, after Obama's complete, two-faced betrayal. That's why I've gone to step 2; a citizen-funded political party. So far, that seems to be the Greens. I hope Trump proves to be one of the Greats (however "left-handed" he may be).

[Reply](#)



Brad Owen

December 22, 2016 at 8:11 am

P.S. If a billionaire autocrat (Trump), or the flunkies hired to do the bidding of billionaire autocrats (Reagan, Bush, Bush, Bill, Obama, Hillary), fail the people and betray them, then it's time to ban all billionaire autocrats from the people's Party (whatever form that Party takes), by owning it themselves, via reasonable dues, with absolute bans on any large donations, and banning any member who takes bribes from a billionaire autocrat.

[Reply](#)



Dr. Ibrahim Soudy

December 21, 2016 at 8:37 pm

How many lifetimes does it take an average American to understand that America is run by a SYSTEM of, by, and for the BANKERS?! Change the personalities all you want, the SYSTEM runs like a machine..... You ask for a proof?! How about Wall Street/Goldman Sachs being fully incorporated in the government since days immemorial..... AND when the BANKERS screwed up in 2008, well, the Federal government was there to take the fall.....AND that happened under the watch of Henry Paulson, who was the Chairman of.....you guessed it, Goldman Sachs.....Keep dreaming.....

[Reply](#)



o

backwardsevolution

December 21, 2016 at 9:31 pm

Dr. Soudy – I agree, except that all of this was made worse – much worse – when Bill Clinton changed the banking laws: repealed the Glass-Steagall Act, and brought in the Commodity Futures Modernization Act. The bankers really went to town after this. Prior to this time, banks did NOT have the power they have today, not even close.

Greenspan was a terrible choice for Fed Chair, and then the disasters of Bernanke and Yellen have followed, all taking orders from above. These people have not been independent.

Who owns the banks? Who owns media? Who owns the communications industry? Who owns Hollywood? Who controls academia? Who? Answer that question, and then you'll understand who runs the "system".

[Reply](#)



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Dr. Ibrahim Soudy

December 22, 2016 at 2:33 pm

Google my name and you will see some of my TV interviews where I answer your question.....the way to control the system is to control the money.....and we all know who controls the banking industry.....their cleverness comes from the fact that they know how to enslave many.....

[Reply](#)

17.



Bill Bodden

December 21, 2016 at 8:53 pm

The Guardian just published a list of Trump's choices, so far, for his administration – <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/dec/09/donald-trump-administration-cabinet-picks-so-far>. Check it out. If you find any hope that this incoming president and his administration will be working for the American people, please share your thoughts.

[Reply](#)

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backwardsevolution

December 21, 2016 at 9:23 pm

Paul Craig Roberts goes over Trump's appointments:

“We do not know what the appointments mean except, as Trump discovered once he confronted the task of forming a government, that there is no one but insiders to appoint. For the most part that is correct. Outsiders are a poor match for insiders who tend to eat them alive. Ronald Reagan's California crew were a poor match for George H.W. Bush's insiders. The Reagan part of the government had a hell of a time delivering results that Reagan wanted.

Another limit on a president's ability to form a government is Senate confirmation of presidential appointees. Whereas Congress is in Republican hands, Congress remains in the hands of special interests who will protect their agendas from hostile potential appointees. Therefore, although Trump does not face partisan opposition from Congress, he faces the power of special interests that fund congressional political campaigns. [...]

With Trump under heavy attack prior to his inauguration, he cannot afford drawn out confirmation fights and defeats.”

<http://www.paulcraigroberts.org/2016/12/02/trumps-appointments-paul-craig-roberts/>

I think we will have to wait and see, Bill, what Trump does. He's yet to set up shop. Let's give him a chance.

[Reply](#)

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Bill Bodden

December 21, 2016 at 9:27 pm

backwards: Thank you for sharing this post. PCR is another of my favorite mentors.

[Reply](#)



▪

backwardsevolution

December 21, 2016 at 9:36 pm

Bill – you are welcome. Because Congress is OWNED by special interests, even Republicans will fight Trump on his nominations. This is what the American people really need to understand, that they are OWNED. At least Trump has a big mouth and he will expose them for who they are, but it's going to be a battle. I hope if Trump does expose them that the American people will get behind him and help him. He can't do it alone.

[Reply](#)



○

Bill Bodden

December 21, 2016 at 9:25 pm

PS: The president-elect's appointments make it clear that we cannot rely on the government to protect the planet. – <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2016/12/donald-trump-cabinet-bodes-ill-planet-161219100238604.html>

[Reply](#)



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backwardsevolution

December 22, 2016 at 1:32 am

Bill – if we were serious about saving the planet, capitalism would have to end tomorrow, the population would have to dive over the next few generations, and any growth would have to end, as of yesterday. They've stopped talking about Fukushima because it's still out of control (ssssshhhhhh, don't tell anybody). According to the World Wildlife Fund:

“The Living Planet Index reveals that global populations of fish, birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles declined by 58 per cent between 1970 and 2012. We could witness a two-thirds decline in the half-century from 1970 to 2020 – unless we act now to reform our food and energy systems and meet global commitments on addressing climate change, protecting biodiversity and supporting sustainable development.”

Humans are no different than any other animal species. We use up absolutely everything in front of us at the fastest rate possible. I thought we were supposed to be smarter. Not! The capitalists get the “greens” to convince us that recycling plastic bags and bottles is somehow going to save the planet. That way we end up feeling good while the planet dies around us, and capitalism gets to continue.

If we want to save the planet, growth has to end or go negative.

[Reply](#)



Brad Owen

December 22, 2016 at 1:02 pm

To get another view of WWF, go to Executive Intelligence Review and type in their search box “WWF” and read what pops up. Co-founded by Prince Phillip/consort to the Queen, and Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands (former member of the Nazi SS), it is a project to re-package eugenics (a favorite topic of true oligarchs who love to plan how to cull their herds of human beasts-of-burden. They believe optimum population is between 1 and 2 billion; like during Victorian times...steam punk anyone?). Their preferred policies to “cull the herd”: wars, famines, disease, anti-technology, (presumably so they can go fox-hunting with their horses-n-hounds through pristine forests and not see any of those peasant riff-raff). Tell me with a straight face these are not the policies already in place, with asinine wars, austerity policies that don't permit anything helpful to be done to promote the general welfare of the people (just encourages them to procreate), idiotic healthcare policies (dying younger now already), foolish threats of starting a nuclear WWII with “usable” nuclear weapons. They have it out for the “inferior races” (as the old eugenicists liked to say); but they also have it out for the Americas, especially USA (wrong politics usually favoring the 99% and not the Oligarchs; too many Bernie Sanders-types around, stirring things up).

No thanks. I think there are better ways to save and green-up the planet.

[Reply](#)



18.

backwardsevolution

December 21, 2016 at 9:13 pm

Robert Parry – good article, except I take exception with this part:

“The mainstream press prefers keeping unpleasant things like the truth hidden away, lest they cause a crisis. They are like doctors who prefer to ignore a cancer, rather than operating and saving the patient’s life.”

Whoa, way too soft. That almost paints the MSM as a benevolent mother who wants to hide a sad truth from her children so they don’t get hurt, or as someone who just prefers to put on blinders in order not to see the truth. Does this capture what the media has been doing? Not even close. If anything, they have been psychopathic in their pursuit of telling lies, half-truths and omissions, and they have been purposely working against the American people.

You must think not as a diplomat, but as a detective. Look at the facts. They have been aiding and abetting the government (whoever controls them) in everything they do. Six conglomerates own 90% of all media. This is not healthy.

The media is not just looking the other way to avoid crisis. This is a war, an attempted coup. With respect, get that into your head.

[Reply](#)



19.

Truth First

December 21, 2016 at 10:27 pm

In order for Trump to purge “the American system of its enormous baggage of lies” it will take more than dealing with the movers and shakers in Washington. He will also have to deal with many millions of Americans who are convinced that the USA is number #1 and responsible for peace and prosperity wherever they choose to drop more than a few bombs.

[Reply](#)



20.

Zachary Smith

December 21, 2016 at 10:28 pm

But Obama’s anti-democratic approach to information, i.e., treating Americans like mushrooms in a darkened cellar...

Nice bit of bowdlerization here, but it accurately describes Obama’s Mushroom Theory of Governance. His fanatical desire to control all leaks (except for the ones he and his buddies used) as well as his

willingness to say anything at all (Situational Logorrhoea?) leads to what Mr. Parry describes – keeping Americans in the dark and restricting our information diet to official horse****.

Once in office, Trump could use his power over pardons and commutations to reverse Obama’s punishment of truth-tellers – the likes of Chelsea Manning and Edward Snowden...

I don’t expect Trump to do this, but he really ought to consider the situation these two faced. Has anybody heard the latest about the fellow Snowden was supposed to contact by going through “official” channels at the NSA?

“An NSA inspector general who strongly criticised Edward Snowden in 2014 for not coming to him with his concerns about NSA’s domestic eavesdropping practices is facing termination for having retaliated at another whistleblower who followed protocol.”

Yes, Snowden was right, and all the people howling for his head were wrong. The “protections” Snowden would have received from this jerk would have included a knife in the back.

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/anti-snowden-nsa-official-could-lose-job-hypocritical-retaliation-against-another-whistleblower-1596895>

Whether Trump has the courage and wisdom to pull off such a sharp break with the way Washington does business may determine whether he achieves his ambition to be a great president or simply presides over another failed presidency.

Google News reports Trump has decided to dump his “Drain The Swamp” talk, and that’s not a hopeful sign the man intends to make a “sharp break”. Time will tell.

[Reply](#)



o

lizzie

December 22, 2016 at 6:33 pm

Ah, you’re a bit behind — this is something Newt Gingrich said, apparently. I just read a little Yahoo news notification on my “smart phone” saying that Trump, himself, has refuted this the Gingrich claim with a tweet saying that he is NOT giving up his “drain the Swamp” policy. The man may have a plan, after all.

What if he puts the lover of privatizing the Commons in charge of the Commons, and then orders him/her to actually protect the Commons from the rascally corporate raiders of the Commons? What if refusal to do so results in “You’re fired!”? Then the Secretary of Commons position is vacant and the Senate refuses to approve Trump’s choice(s) for a new one?... ad infinitum. Who, then, would run the Dept. of the Commons? Donald Trump? Go on with it — use your imagination. Just sayin’, I can envision some interesting scenarios.

We “live in interesting times,” do we not? And we have no choice but to “wait and see” what happens. You can write letters to him (although tweeting might be more likely to get his

attention), call your legislators, etc., just as before. I suggest also popping some popcorn and prepare to be entertained. How many decades does it take to be entertained to death? I figure that we're at least 3 to 4 decades into it.

[Reply](#)



21.

Abe

December 21, 2016 at 10:39 pm

Investigative journalist Greg Palast explains that there are 75,000 uncounted Clinton votes that she does not want counted. The elite will defend the fake monstrosity called the US electoral system even when their personal interests are at stake.

Greg Palast on Why Clinton Won't Push for Michigan Recount
[VIDEO minutes 8:15-14:40]
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPJeEkKGIMA>

[Reply](#)



22.

Tristan

December 22, 2016 at 3:02 am

Trump, ah Trump. If one were an analyst with the CIA for instance, what would you report regarding this man? I, just a fool of a human, would not put much credence to the musings of this article (Forgive me Mr. Parry, I like the majority of your good work). Looking at the trajectory of Trump, as a business man and golden spoon baby, over time and now, the indications presented by his proposed appointments are disturbing in that Trump has a proclivity to let his lieutenants run their own show. One would have to shutter and suddenly find a new religion to succor oneself with, otherwise the recognition of the real and destructive trajectory that the Trump administration will take this nation ought to turn one to stone.

This is not lightly said. Think of the devastation that the oligarchic Trump administration, along with a majority of RepubOrcs in both houses of The Dark Tower, will reap. It is not lightly that one should expect this new administration to land upon our nation, the citizens, and the minions of our Imperium. Indications are while some, myself included, are finding relief in the fact that Trump would seek to reduce conflict with Russia. But, check yourself, who are the maniacs that may seek to find a foe to defeat in the name and glory of the Lord? Or those who wish to install a Christian/Fascist interpretation of the US Constitution? Who was it who said that when fascism comes to America it will come draped with the flag and carrying a cross?

Indications are that we are near this. The electors have spoken, our system worked, the fools who were so cock sure of themselves wanted to run against Trump. Hillary Clinton planned to run against him.

Fools, drunk on their own Kool-Ade, like so many of the neocon/neoliberals (who the fuck cares what the name is, other than we know them by their deeds) were ignorant and swollen with hubris. Now we reap the foul crops of the negligence of oligarchy and the worship of profit over the well being of the citizen and the nation.

[Reply](#)



o

backwardsevolution

December 22, 2016 at 3:41 am

Tristan – “Who was it who said that when fascism comes to America it will come draped with the flag and carrying a cross?” Isn’t fascism already here? Hasn’t it been here for some time now? I’m just hoping that Trump can undo it.

[Reply](#)



o

Joe Tedesky

December 22, 2016 at 10:14 am

Sinclair Lewis

[Reply](#)



23.

David F., N.A.

December 22, 2016 at 3:20 am

Wouldn’t it be great if Trump read this article, dumped his cabinet, and then chose a bunch of progressive — not Hillary-progressive, but real-progressive scholars to advise him? The audacity of hope.

[Reply](#)



o

Tristan

December 22, 2016 at 3:36 am

The Bombasity Bojangled by Preposterously! By Jove, I've got it! (New words courtesy Newthink, thanks Newthink!)

[Reply](#)



o

backwardsevolution

December 22, 2016 at 4:14 am

David – real progressives would never get through the nomination process. Trump is trying to choose people who will be accepted by the bought-and-paid-for politicians. It's a fine line. He's trying to form a government, and they're going to fight him every step of the way.

If all Trump does is shake up the military and end the wars, he will have accomplished a great deal. The audacity of not expecting too much.

[Reply](#)



24.

Michael Morrissey

December 22, 2016 at 3:54 pm

Great article, as always, and the comments are also astute, as usual. I wish you would all duplicate them at OpEdNews.com, where most of Parry's articles also appear, because you would raise the level of discussion there. It would be even better if you could all identify yourselves because I'm sure the credentials would be impressive. The mechanics of the dialogue there are also better than here — which I say not as a criticism of this site because I know it does its best, but it is hard to read through all the worthwhile comments here. Why not share your thoughts on both sites?

[Reply](#)



25.

delia ruhe

December 22, 2016 at 4:50 pm

Great advice for Trump. However, I really don't think it would appeal to an opportunist like Trump. When the white working class was his best chance at moving forward, he delivered to them a lot of truths about their situation — and brought along with them others who were in much more dire straits. Now that he's inside, he's likely to do whatever it takes to solidify his right to be there, since there are still so many who find him illegitimate. He will hold Washington's feet to the fire only if and when it serves his own purposes, not those of his campaign base.

[Reply](#)



26.

lizzie

December 22, 2016 at 7:15 pm

Well, now that the not-good guys have just released “proof” that Ed Snowden was and still is making whoopee with Russian Intelligence, you can give up on that “hope” of his ever being pardoned. They have also proven that the Russian Military was responsible for DNC hacking.

[They have also eliminated His Excellency Andrei Karloff (God rest his good soul), the Russian Ambassador to Turkey, who has lately been negotiating with Syrian “opposition” to end the warring in Syria. Who doesn't want an end to the warring in Syria? Why, it's those not-good guys, of course.]

[Reply](#)