

# The Electoral Choice from Hell

The prospect of a Hillary Clinton vs. Donald Trump general election is nightmarish for Americans who see Clinton as a warmonger and Trump as a demagogue, but William Blum sees Trump as the lesser danger.

By William Blum

If the American presidential election winds up with Hillary Clinton vs. Donald Trump, and my passport is confiscated, and I'm somehow FORCED to choose one or the other, or I'm PAID to do so, paid well ... I would vote for Trump.

My main concern is foreign policy. American foreign policy is the greatest threat to world peace, prosperity, and the environment. And when it comes to foreign policy, Hillary Clinton is an unholy disaster. From Iraq and Syria to Libya and Honduras the world is a much worse place because of her; so much so that I'd call her a war criminal who should be prosecuted.

And not much better can be expected on domestic issues from this woman who was paid \$675,000 by Goldman Sachs – one of the most reactionary, anti-social corporations in this sad world – for three speeches and even more than that in political donations in recent years. Add to that Hillary's willingness to serve for six years on the board of Walmart while her husband was governor of Arkansas. Can we expect to change corporate behavior by taking their money?

The *Los Angeles Times* ran an editorial the day after the multiple primary elections of March 1 which began: "Donald Trump is not fit to be president of the United States," and then declared: "The reality is that Trump has no experience whatsoever in government."

When I need to have my car fixed I look for a mechanic with experience with my type of auto. When I have a medical problem I prefer a doctor who specializes in the part of my body that's ill. But when it comes to politicians, experience means nothing. The only thing that counts is the person's ideology.

Who would you sooner vote for, a person with 30 years in Congress who doesn't share your political and social views at all, is even hostile to them, or someone who has never held public office before but is an ideological comrade on every important issue? Clinton's 12 years in high government positions carries no weight with me.

The *Times* continued about Trump: "He has shamefully little knowledge of the issues facing the country and the world."

Again, knowledge is trumped (no pun intended) by ideology. As Secretary of State

(January 2009-February 2013), with great access to knowledge, Clinton played a key role in the 2011 destruction of Libya's modern and secular welfare state, sending it crashing in utter chaos into a failed state, leading to the widespread dispersal throughout North African and Middle East hotspots of the gigantic arsenal of weaponry that Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi had accumulated. Libya is now a haven for terrorists, from al Qaeda to ISIS, whereas Gaddafi had been a leading foe of terrorists.

What good did Secretary of State Clinton's knowledge do? It was enough for her to know that Gaddafi's Libya, for several reasons, would never be a properly obedient client state of Washington. Thus it was that the United States, along with NATO, bombed the people of Libya almost daily for more than six months, giving as an excuse that Gaddafi was about to invade Benghazi, the Libyan center of his opponents, and so the United States was thus saving the people of that city from a massacre.

The American people and the American media of course swallowed this story, though no convincing evidence of the alleged impending massacre has ever been presented. (The nearest thing to an official U.S. government account of the matter – a Congressional Research Service report on events in Libya for the period – makes no mention at all of the threatened massacre.) [["Libya: Transition and U.S. Policy"](#), updated March 4, 2016]

The Western intervention in Libya was one that the *New York Times* said Clinton had "championed", convincing Obama in "what was arguably her moment of greatest influence as secretary of state."□

All the knowledge she was privy to did not keep her from this disastrous mistake in Libya. And the same can be said about her support of placing regime change in Syria ahead of supporting the Syrian government in its struggle against ISIS and other terrorist groups. Even more disastrous was the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq which she as a senator supported. Both policies were of course clear violations of international law and the UN Charter.

Another foreign-policy "success" of Mrs. Clinton, which her swooning followers will ignore, the few that even know about it, is the coup ousting the moderately progressive Manuel Zelaya of Honduras in June, 2009. A tale told many times in Latin America.

The downtrodden masses finally put into power a leader committed to reversing the status quo, determined to try to put an end to up to two centuries of oppression ... and before long the military overthrows the democratically-elected government, while the United States – if not the mastermind behind the coup – does nothing to prevent it or to punish the coup regime, as only the United

States can punish; meanwhile Washington officials pretend to be very upset over this “affront to democracy”. (See Mark Weisbrot’s [“Top Ten Ways You Can Tell Which Side The United States Government is On With Regard to the Military Coup in Honduras”](#).)

In her 2014 memoir, *Hard Choices*, Clinton reveals just how unconcerned she was about restoring Zelaya to his rightful office: “In the subsequent days [after the coup] I spoke with my counterparts around the hemisphere ... We strategized on a plan to restore order in Honduras and ensure that free and fair elections could be held quickly and legitimately, which would render the question of Zelaya moot.”

The question of Zelaya was anything but moot. Latin American leaders, the United Nations General Assembly, and other international bodies vehemently demanded his immediate return to office. Washington, however, quickly resumed normal diplomatic relations with the new right-wing police state, and Honduras has since become a major impetus for the child migrants currently pouring into the United States.

The headline from *Time* magazine’s report on Honduras at the close of that year (December 3, 2009) summed it up as follows: “Obama’s Latin America Policy Looks Like Bush’s”.

And Hillary Clinton looks like a conservative. And has for many years; going back to at least the 1980s, while the wife of the Arkansas governor, when she strongly supported the death-squad torturers known as the Contras, who were the empire’s proxy army in Nicaragua. [See Roger Morris, former member of the National Security Council, *Partners in Power* (1996), p.415. For a comprehensive look at Hillary Clinton, see the new book by Diane Johnstone, *Queen of Chaos*.]

Then, during the 2007 presidential primary, America’s venerable conservative magazine, William Buckley’s *National Review*, ran an editorial by Bruce Bartlett. Bartlett was a policy adviser to President Ronald Reagan, a treasury official under President George H.W. Bush, and a fellow at two of the leading conservative think-tanks, the Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute – You get the picture?

Bartlett tells his readers that it’s almost certain that the Democrats will win the White House in 2008. So what to do? Support the most conservative Democrat. He writes: “To right-wingers willing to look beneath what probably sounds to them like the same identical views of the Democratic candidates, it is pretty clear that Hillary Clinton is the most conservative.”

During the same primary we also heard from America’s leading magazine for the

corporate wealthy, *Fortune*, with a cover featuring a picture of Mrs. Clinton and the headline: "Business Loves Hillary".

And what do we have in 2016? Fully 116 members of the Republican Party's national security community, many of them veterans of Bush administrations, have signed an open letter threatening that, if Trump is nominated, they will all desert, and some will defect – to Hillary Clinton!

"Hillary is the lesser evil, by a large margin," says Eliot Cohen of the Bush II State Department. Cohen helped line up neocons to sign the "Dump-Trump" manifesto. Another signer, foreign-policy ultra-conservative author Robert Kagan, declared: "The only choice will be to vote for Hillary Clinton."

The only choice? What's wrong with Bernie Sanders or Jill Stein, the Green Party candidate? ... Oh, I see, not conservative enough.

And Mr. Trump? Much more a critic of U.S. foreign policy than Hillary or Bernie. He speaks of Russia and Vladimir Putin as positive forces and allies, and would be much less likely to go to war against Moscow than Clinton would. He declares that he would be "evenhanded" when it comes to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (as opposed to Clinton's boundless support of Israel). He's opposed to calling Senator John McCain a "hero", because he was captured. (What other politician would dare say a thing like that?)

He calls Iraq "a complete disaster", condemning not only George W. Bush but the neocons who surrounded him. "They lied. They said there were weapons of mass destruction and there were none. And they knew there were none. There were no weapons of mass destruction." He even questions the idea that "Bush kept us safe", and adds that "Whether you like Saddam or not, he used to kill terrorists."

Yes, he's personally obnoxious. I'd have a very hard time being his friend. Who cares?

**William Blum is an author, historian, and renowned critic of U.S. foreign policy. He is the author of *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II* and *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*, among others. [This article originally appeared at the Anti-Empire Report, <http://williamblum.org/> .]**

---

---

# Hillary's Double-Standard on Protests

**Exclusive:** Hillary Clinton is lecturing Donald Trump on the need to respect protesters but – in 2011 – she did nothing to stop police from brutalizing a silent protester at one of her speeches, writes Robert Parry.

By Robert Parry

Hillary Clinton has excoriated Donald Trump for failing to stop a supporter from roughing up a protester during a speech, saying “This kind of behavior is repugnant. We set the tone for our campaigns – we should encourage respect, not violence.” Yet, in 2011, she did nothing to stop security personnel from brutalizing a 71-year-old veteran who stood silently with his back to her during a speech.

The protester, Ray McGovern, a retired Army officer and CIA analyst, was wearing a black “Veterans for Peace” T-shirt, when he was set upon within sight of Secretary of State Clinton, who ironically was delivering a speech about the importance of foreign leaders respecting dissent. The assault on McGovern left him bruised and bloodied but it didn't cause Clinton to pause as she coolly continued on, not missing a beat.

The Feb. 15, 2011 incident at George Washington University in Washington prompted an email from Clinton's personal adviser Sidney Blumenthal who noted that “something bad happened” and suggested that Clinton have someone reach out and apologize to McGovern. Clinton, however, chose not to do so, although criminal charges against McGovern were dropped.

Subsequently, McGovern was placed on the State Department's “Be On the Look-out” or BOLO alert list, instructing police to “USE CAUTION, stop” and question him and also contact the State Department's Diplomatic Security Command Center.

After learning of the BOLO alert, the Partnership for Civil Justice Fund (PCJF), which is representing McGovern in connection with the 2011 incident, interceded to have the warning lifted. But McGovern wondered if the warning played a role in 2014 when he was aggressively arrested by New York City police at the entrance to the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y where he had hoped to pose a question to a speaker there, one of Clinton's friendly colleagues, former CIA Director and retired General David Petraeus.

After that arrest on Oct. 30, 2014, McGovern wrote, “God only knows (and then only if God has the proper clearances) what other organs of state security had entered the ‘derogatory’ information about the danger of my ‘political activism’ into their data bases. Had my ‘derog’ been shared, perhaps, with the ever-

proliferating number of 'fusion centers' that were so effective in sharing information to track and thwart the activists of Occupy including subversives like Quakers and Catholic Workers?"

On Feb. 15, 2011, McGovern attended Clinton's GWU speech, deciding on the spur of the moment after feeling revulsion at the "enthusiastic applause" that welcomed the Secretary of State "to dissociate myself from the obsequious adulation of a person responsible for so much death, suffering and destruction.

"The fulsome praise for Clinton from GW's president and the loud, sustained applause also brought to mind a phrase that as a former Soviet analyst at CIA I often read in *Pravda*. When reprinting the text of speeches by high Soviet officials, the Communist Party newspaper would regularly insert, in italicized parentheses: '*Burniye applaudismenti; vce stoyat*' , *Stormy applause; all rise*.

"With the others at Clinton's talk, I stood. I even clapped politely. But as the applause dragged on, I began to feel like a real phony. So, when the others finally sat down, I remained standing silently, motionless, wearing my 'Veterans for Peace' T-shirt, with my eyes fixed narrowly on the rear of the auditorium and my back to the Secretary.

"I did not expect what followed: a violent assault in full view of Madam Secretary by what we Soviet analysts used to call the 'organs of state security.' The rest is history, as they say. A short account of the incident can be [found here](#).

"As the video of the event shows, Secretary Clinton did not miss a beat in her speech as she called for authoritarian governments to show respect for dissent and to refrain from violence. She spoke with what seemed to be an especially chilly *sang froid*, as she ignored my silent protest and the violent assault which took place right in front of her.

"The experience gave me personal confirmation of the impression that I reluctantly had drawn from watching her behavior and its consequences over the past decade. The incident was a kind of metaphor of the much worse violence that Secretary Clinton has coolly countenanced against others.

"Again and again, Hillary Clinton both as a U.S. senator and as Secretary of State has demonstrated a nonchalant readiness to unleash the vast destructiveness of American military power. The charitable explanation, I suppose, is that she knows nothing of war from direct personal experience." [For more of McGovern's account of his arrest, see Consortiumnews.com's "[Standing Up to War and Hillary Clinton](#)."] ]

## **Proposed Apology**

In the email exchange, Blumenthal suggested that Clinton “have someone apologize to Ray McGovern,” but referred to the incident and McGovern in condescending terms, noting that McGovern’s mistreatment has “become a minor cause célèbre on the Internet among lefties.” As for McGovern, Blumenthal said the former CIA analyst who was a presidential briefer to George H.W. Bush has “become a Christian antiwar leftist who goes around bearing witness. Whatever his views, he’s harmless.”

Clinton responded, “I appreciate your sending thgis [sic] to me. Neither State nor my staff had anything to do w this. The man stood up just as I was starting and GW – which claims their quick actions were part of their standard operating procedures to remove anyone who stands up and starts speaking while an invited guest is talking – moved to remove him. GW claims he was not in any way injured.”

However, McGovern was not speaking, simply standing quietly until he was attacked by the police. As for Clinton, no apology was forthcoming, nor any further explanation of why she failed to stop police from roughing up a peaceful protester in her presence. She now has chosen to lecture Donald Trump on the need to demonstrate respect toward protesters.

**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](#)).**

---

## Clinton’s Email Hypocrisy

Hillary Clinton imposed a double-standard on emails as Secretary of State, one for her underlings and one for herself, and now she’s using double-talk to excuse her behavior, writes Bart Gruzalski.

By Bart Gruzalski

Hillary Clinton’s smooth-talking subterfuges about her email server continued in the debate on March 9. Univision’s Jorge Ramos raised the issue: “When you were Secretary of State you wrote 104 emails in your private server that the government now says contained classified information according to the Washington Post and others. That goes against a memo you personally sent to employees in 2011 directing all of them to use official email precisely because of security concerns. So it seems that you issued one set of rules for yourself and a

different set of rules for employees at the State Department.”

After asking who approved her private server, Ramos asked the memorable question: “If you get indicted will you drop out?”

The key line in Clinton’s response: “Here’s the cut-to-the-chase fact: I did not send any emails marked ‘classified’ at the time.” We’ve heard that line over and over again the past weeks. Ramos asked his question again: “If you get indicted would you drop out?” Hillary: “Oh, for goodness, it’s not gonna happen. I’m not even going to answer that question.”

By continually claiming that none of her emails were marked “classified,” Clinton has convinced many of her supporters that she is innocent of putting classified information at risk: Her parsing of words – “marked classified” rather than simply “classified” – continues to work for her.

We have excellent reasons for doubting that Hillary “never sent classified emails.” Hillary stated clearly that she was “well aware of the classification requirements.” The Washington Post discovered the email equivalent of a “smoking gun” when it reported that Clinton had written three-quarters of the classified emails herself. That undermined her defense that they weren’t “marked” classified. If any should have been marked “classified,” It was her job to label them.

Under pressure by Fox host Bret Baier on March 7, Hillary added that it was the State Department’s job to classify the emails she sent out. The suggestion that it was the State Department’s job to classify her outgoing emails is ludicrous. No one else had the access to her private server. In her 2011 email to State Department employees, she shows that she is aware of the dangers of using a private server.

Hillary will undoubtedly continue to dance around questions involving her email. Even if she is forced to testify before a grand jury, her grand jury testimony will remain sealed. Those who are asking her the hard questions in public need to ask very simple and direct questions that leave her no wiggle room. One such question: “Did you ever originate emails containing top secret information?”

Clinton has tried to sidestep the email brouhaha by pointing out that Colin Powell, who was Secretary of State under President George W. Bush, used a private email address. The critical difference is that Powell did not use a home server. The potential security breach is not created by using a private email address, but by sending and keeping emails on a private home server.

Hillary will have to become an unparalleled Clintonesque wordsmith to keep the waters muddied. She may wave off a direct question, saying she’s answered it

already (she hasn't answered the one above) and asking for the "next question." That response is already losing its effectiveness.

Regardless of what the FBI and Justice Department do, it's hard to imagine what will protect Hillary from being indicted in the forum of public opinion. Hillary did send classified emails. That was part of her job as Secretary of State. She should not have used a home server which allowed classified information to be hacked. That too was her responsibility as Secretary of State.

**Professor Emeritus Bart Gruzalski specialized in ethics, has published three books and over fifty articles, including online publications at Consortiumnews, Truthout's Speakout, Counterpunch, and PolicyMic. EMAIL ADDRESS: bartgruzalski@gmail.com**

---