

Iowa Vote Reflects Global Rejection of the Anglo-American Establishment

by Harley Schlanger

Jan. 19—U.S. media coverage of the results of the Jan. 15 Iowa Republican caucuses missed the most significant aspect of the outcome, which is that Iowa voters reflected the contempt emerging worldwide for the global Anglo-American Establishment. This occurred despite concerted efforts by that Establishment to derail support for former President Donald Trump, whose candidacy is taken as an affront to the self-appointed guardians of “American democracy.” Trump received over 51% of the vote, putting him on a path toward winning the Republican nomination for President.

This overwhelming victory occurred even though he has been indicted in four criminal cases and is the subject of a continuous flood of nasty media coverage, replete with allegations that he is preparing to overturn the U.S. Constitution and run the country as a dictator if he wins back the presidency! Mystified reporters expressed astonishment that their efforts to deflate support for him—going back to their four-year promotion of the fraudulent and widely-discredited “Russiagate” narrative, and allegations that he organized an insurrection to keep himself in office after losing the 2020 election to Joe Biden—seem to have backfired.



C-SPAN

Former President Donald Trump crushed anti-Trump forces in the Iowa caucus vote, Jan. 13, 2024, putting him on a path toward again winning the GOP nomination for President.

While most of the voters in Iowa may not be aware they are part of a global revolt against establishment institutions, the angry rejection of the political establishment expressed by the majority of Iowa caucus participants in their support for Trump is, in fact, part of the growing global opposition to wars backed by



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The effort to weaken Trump—by the “never-Trumpers” from the Bush wing of the Republican Party, who rallied behind fellow war-hawk and former UN Ambassador Nikki Haley (right), and by the neoliberals who supported Florida Governor Ron DeSantis (left)—failed miserably.

the U.S. military-financial complex in Ukraine and Southwest Asia—and to the weaponization of the dollar against nations of the Global South. As the largely rural voters in Iowa cast their ballots, farmers were rolling their tractors through more than 100 cities in all 16 states of Germany, with broad popular support, protesting the Green policies of arrogant ideologues in their government and the European Union. These policies are driving farmers to bankruptcy by inflating their energy and fertilizer costs, thereby making food unaffordable for a growing number of families, while at the same time the German government is sending billions of euros to continue the slaughter of Ukrainians in the U.S.-NATO proxy war against Russia.

What should be shocking to most Americans is that as the world is entering a moment of maximum turbulence, with the collapsing unipolar order challenged by the emergence of the Global South, none of this drama is a subject for debate in the U.S. presidential electoral arena.

Anti-Trump Forces Crushed in Iowa

To accomplish this, *Politico* reported a flood of money to the anti-Trumpers coming from “super PACs,” that is, political action committees set up by Wall Street bankers, hedge fund managers, and other operatives representing corporate cartels of the military-financial complex. According to *Politico*, these PACs had poured \$136 million into the Iowa Republican caucuses since the start of 2023. Most of that was spent on TV political ads. DeSantis’ super PACs spent more than \$30 million, and Haley was close behind at \$28.7 million, to try to catch Trump—far and away the leading candidate—who spent \$10.8 million on ads.

In addition to media advertising, the PACs funded activities that campaigns used to do themselves, such as door-to-door canvassing and sponsoring special events, including to “get out the vote.” This is especially important in Iowa as there is no ordinary primary vote, but caucuses, where voters come to attempt to win others over to their chosen candidate in gatherings across 1,500 churches, schools, and community centers throughout the state.

The DeSantis campaign apparatus made a show of going to all 99 Iowa counties—a tradition for electioneering in the state—but Trump, who visited Iowa only a few times, won all but one of them. The exception

was the legendary, liberal Johnson County, which went for Nikki Haley, but by only one vote! This county is home to the University of Iowa, and never even votes for Iowa’s senior Republican U.S. Senator, Chuck Grassley, who has been elected to the U.S. Senate every year since 1980.



EIRNS/Martin Kaiser

It is against the same neocon/neoliberal Establishment’s austerity policies that Iowa voters and German farmers are rebelling. A BüSo organizer is shown here supporting the German farmers’ and truckers’ protest in Munich, Jan. 8, 2024. Her signs read: “Tractors, not Tanks!” and “Butter, not Guns!”

Disconnect from Reality

Despite all this campaigning throughout the state, there has been no serious discussion of solutions to the danger of the neocon, geopolitical wars in Ukraine and Gaza expanding to a world war, with the exception of an occasional reference by Trump that he can “fix it” through his ability as a “negotiator.” To his credit, he did address this at a town meeting Jan. 13, saying that the world is “the closest we’ve ever been [to World War III] ... and this won’t be a regular war,” but fought with “weapons of mass destruction ... you know, like annihilation.” But he steered away from explaining what would be the cause of such a war and what must be done to avoid it—except to vote for him!

The debate has also avoided physical economic reality. For example, Iowa is the top hog-producing state in the nation and a big pork exporter, but the forecast is that hog prices to farmers will continue to be below the cost of production for the second year in a row. There are also significant bankruptcies in the livestock and grain production chain, so much so that the Grain Indemnity Fund, which was set up to pay farmers if the outfit that

buys their grain goes bankrupt without paying them, ran out of money in Spring 2023. And it isn't just farmers who are in trouble. Nearly 30 nursing homes have shut down in the state over the past two years, and hospital closures are at all-time highs.

Role of Media

The media cartel is doing its job of “dumbing down” the voters, by focusing its audience on the “game” leading into the Iowa caucuses: “Will Trump meet expectations? Who will come in second behind Trump? Will the cold weather lower turnout?” They are stoking a battle as to which candidate seems most capable of standing up against “woke culture,” as if the major danger facing the nation is transgender women unfairly competing against women in swimming meets! Instead of engaging voters in intense discussion of leading events shaping the future, there is nonstop pandering, based on identity politics profiles, arousing momentary interest with simple sloganeering, but leaving voters sleepwalking into the most profound strategic juncture since World War II.

What *Politico* did not tell its readers is *why* they do this, as the super PACs use their money to shape the campaigns of both parties, to control the agenda for permanent war, “green transition,” and austerity. By limiting the discussion to the chosen topics, voters are not engaged in reality, turning the election into the equivalent of a betting pool over which “team” you prefer, with the beneficiaries being the owners and managers of the corporate cartels.

In the aftermath of the failure to convince Iowa voters to play this game, several alternative paths are being charted by those attempting to determine the outcome of this year's elections. On one side is the inevitable escalation of a scorched earth policy, typified by an *NBC News* article Jan. 14: “Fears grow that Trump will use the military in ‘dictatorial ways’ if he returns to the White House.” After warning about the danger to “democracy” of a Trump presidency, the article outlines measures being prepared to defeat him in November, or if that fails,



USDA/Lance Cheung

Although Iowa is the top hog-producing state in the nation, none of the candidates addressed the fact that prices paid to farmers are below the production cost.

to move to contain his presidency, including launching new articles of impeachment.

Another fallback was presented by JPMorgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon, who told CNBC viewers Jan. 17 to “quit attacking MAGA,” referring to the Trump-directed “Make America Great Again” movement. Dimon implied a belief that Trump could be co-opted. “I don't like how Trump said things,” he said, “but he wasn't wrong about those critical issues. That's why they're voting for him.” He called for Trump's opponents to be “more respectful of our fellow citizens,” as the anti-Trump

rhetoric “will hurt Biden's campaign.”

Some media talking heads opined that this may be a way to create an “open lane” in the Establishment to break with Biden and “normalize” Trump, i.e., to surround him as in his first term, to “limit the damage he can do.”

Writing Off Biden?

There were no Democratic caucuses in Iowa this year, but only “mail-in” ballots with results not to be released until March, as the party leadership has decided that it would not allow any candidate to challenge President Biden. This, despite the fact that the latest *ABC News/Ipsos* poll found that only 33% of U.S. adults approve of Biden's job performance, while 58% disapprove. Even more revealing, asked whether they think Biden has adequate mental sharpness to serve effectively as President, only 28% responded “Yes.” So much for American “democracy.”

As the global rebellion against the neocon, neoliberal establishment continues, American voters must do better than the traditional search for a “lesser evil” as a candidate. It seems unlikely that Trump will make a commitment to bring America into support of the Global Majority moving against the unipolar order, which means that American voters should look to the example of the German farmers, and move into the streets to join forces with this movement.

Marcia Merry Baker contributed to this article.