

THE BAD NEWS: AN INCOMPLETE LIST OF DEMOCRATS' RECENT GREATEST HITS

Many of us hope that returning Democrats to power will save our country. The truth: they sound great when not in power but act as Corporate Party Lite when they could make changes. This is not to say that they are as extreme as Corporate-Party-Supersize-Me crazies, or should not be elected when there are no better choices. But if the best we can do is 50 years of the lesser of evils, we will get 50 years of evil.

Much of the list refers to the administration of Barack Obama, a civilized man, easy to look back on with nostalgia after Donald Trump's election. The point is not to demonize him or his corporate-friendly, militaristic administration, but to recognize (a) what rising high in our current political structures does to even the best of people, and (b) the futility, in general, of relying on Democratic politicians for fundamental changes in direction.

Note: Nothing on this list was compelled by Republicans or even a perceived need to compromise with them.

1. Rahm Emanuel chaired the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) during the 2006 election, where, as [John Nichols wrote](#), as a "corporate-friendly centrist," he "actively worked against a number of anti-war progressives in 2006 Democratic primaries for US House seats and then refused to support at least some of those candidates in November."
2. Democrats did take over Congress in 2006 because of revulsion to the Iraq War, but Speaker-to-be Nancy Pelosi immediately announced, "Impeachment [of the liar who started it] is off the table." Then they continued to fund the war.

3. The Democrats then made Rahm Emanuel chair of the House Democratic Caucus.
4. Barack Obama ran claiming to accept no money from lobbyists, while [quietly raising record sums](#) from “bundlers” of lobbyists’ money as well as lobbyists’ spouses and [law partners](#).
5. President-elect Obama appointed the aforesaid Rahm Emanuel his Chief of Staff.
6. Obama named a cabinet and other high officials who were almost all on a list [supplied by a Citigroup executive](#); Eric Holder came aboard as Attorney General from a career as a Wall Street white-collar criminal defense lawyer.
7. Holder’s Justice Department’s plea deals with big banking corporations for their housing-crisis criminal offenses imposed well-publicized fines (a minor cost of doing business), while prosecuting no human criminal.
8. The Democratic Administration and Congress then bailed out the banks while 20,000,000 ordinary people lost their homes.
9. They supported the bleeding of Puerto Rico’s economy, for the benefit of vulture funds.
10. Obama—before there was a Republican Congress to contend with—refused to consider any health care reforms that did not continue to funnel oceans of profits to insurance companies.
11. His Administration turned a blind eye to poverty and rising income inequality.
12. It, and Democrats in Congress, tolerated use of the Katrina disaster to make New Orleans friendly to big money and expel much of its Black and lower-income population.

13. It ignored mass incarceration and the abuses of privatizing the prisons, until enough pressure was placed on the Administration towards the end.
14. The Democrats left in place Republican tax cuts and Reagan-Clinton-Bush-era deregulation.
15. The Obama Administration legitimized torture by refusing to hold its perpetrators accountable, even intervening to stop lawsuits against Bush/Cheney-era torturers and killers.
16. That “Deporter-in-Chief’s” Administration instituted unprecedented deportation levels ([still unmatched by Trump](#)).
17. It continued the Clinton-initiated Prevention Through Deterrence policy, forcing would-be migrants from Latin America away from safe urban routes into the deserts and other wilderness areas where many die.
18. It targeted Islamic communities for enhanced surveillance and entrapment operations while largely ignoring dangerous white nationalists.
19. It literally made a new growth industry of weaponized drone manufacturing; VERB personal approval by Obama of a weekly “kill list” though the operations were known to murder at least nine innocents—or as many as 32 per one study—for every person our spy agencies deemed worthy of being blown up.
20. It started or continued bombing or otherwise fighting in at least seven countries that have never attacked us or been the subject of a declaration of war.
21. It used crippling economic sanctions—the quieter tool for committing mass homicide in an attempt to force regime change

in other people's countries—against North Korea, Iran, and Venezuela.

22. It completed the establishment of the surveillance state and turned a blind eye to surveillance capitalism.
23. It set new records for prosecuting whistleblowers.
24. Obama expressed “serious reservations” about the National Defense Authorization Act’s empowering the military to indefinitely imprison any of us whom it deems to be terrorists but refrained from vetoing the legislation. His administration successfully defended it in court.
25. The Obama Justice Department coordinated the nationwide forcible clearing of the Occupy encampments, in partnership with local police agencies as well as major banks.
26. It set up [surveillance programs](#) monitoring activists from 350.org and other nonviolent advocacy groups.
27. It continued facilitating the militarization of police. It tacitly approved outrageous shows of force, whether at Occupy Oakland or Ferguson or Standing Rock, by its failure to speak or act.
28. Its response to the finally-exposed epidemic of police violence against people of color: appointing a commission, which did what commissions always do—make lovely recommendations.
29. [It stonewalled investigative reporters’](#) Freedom of Information Act requests.
30. Obama actually boasted about how the Administration’s support for the oil and gas industry’s building of pipelines was leading to record levels of construction, until opponents of the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines built extremely strong movements

against them.

31. His administration continued our government's history of watering down international efforts to stem catastrophic climate change and he touted the fatally inadequate, voluntary Paris Climate Accords as a solution.
32. Like every president of either party since Truman, he threatened at least one other country with nuclear attack. EXPLAIN
33. He supported the Saudi war in Yemen, which even then was a humanitarian catastrophe, fueled by a steady stream of war crimes. The U.S. was the world's biggest arms merchant and Saudi Arabia its biggest customer, as it is now.
34. His administration supported a disastrous anti-democratic coup in Honduras, which is still largely responsible for the flow of Honduran refugees.
35. They plunged Libya into chaos, helping to build groups like ISIS and contributing to another refugee crisis.
36. The administration continued the bipartisan enabling of Israel's brutal occupation of Palestinian territory.
37. It established a dangerous, destabilizing 30-year, trillion-dollar nuclear weapons "modernization" program aimed at making the arsenal more usable.
38. It, and Democrats in Congress before and since, overwhelmingly supported lavish, ever-increasing budgets for an unaudited Pentagon and military contractors on the government **teat.**

Again, these were not things forced on Barack Obama by the Republican congresses he faced for his last six years. All were initiated or tolerated by his Administration and supported by Democrats in Congress,

whether they were in the majority or minority.

During this time we also saw:

39. Continued consolidation of the news and entertainment media;
40. Continued de-funding and privatizing of public services, including in states controlled by Democrats;
41. Democrats consistently ignoring Republicans' widespread and growing suppression of votes of people of color, to the point of attributing Hillary Clinton's loss to everything but the one phenomenon which *demonstrably* changed the outcome;
42. Democrats sometimes using voter suppression against Bernie Sanders supporters.

Finally, in California, where I live, a liberal Democratic legislature and Governor Jerry Brown shielded the electrical utility from liability for underfunding its maintenance operations so that _____. But this only mirrors the decades-old bipartisan treatment of the nuclear power industry nationwide, and the corporate welfare that the fossil-fuel, military, and big agriculture industries have become accustomed to, along with the monopoly profits of the drug industry.

NET NEUTRALITY NOT REALLY SUPPORTED; MEDIA CONSOLIDATION CLINTON, CABLE BILL OF 94-95. promised to get us out of these wars.

Need to explain bleeding of Puerto Rico.