

## COMMENTARY *By* DR. DHANPAUL NARINE

# President-elect Donald Trump: The Media Got it Wrong!

The media kept telling us what the candidates were doing but failed to report on what ordinary people were thinking. There were only six newspapers in America that endorsed Donald Trump while eighty went for Hillary Clinton. This makes Trump's victory even more stunning.

The pollsters got it totally wrong. They were forced to backpedal and change their tune. Nate Silver with all his polling experience couldn't see a Trump victory. But America has had its Brexit moment. People are fed up with the Establishment.

We were told that Clinton was sitting pretty. The media gave the impression that she had already won and we were just going through the motions. But Silver and others were wrong. Trump's internal poll showed that many voters were angry with the business-as-usual politics in Washington and wanted change.

There was a rush to explain the election through the use various statistical models and they were mainly in favor of Clinton. But did the media make a mistake or was it deliberate? They should tell their readers why they kept pumping up a Clinton victory and their failure to report from the American heartland.

As the mainstream media coddled up to Clinton the Trump campaign knew that their ground game was strong. The folks on Fox News told us as much but CNN and MSNBC were having none of it. One CNN journalist even had the temerity to tell us that Trump was 'talking crap.'

The 2016 presidential elections had everything. There was sex, email scandals, the role of the FBI, Wikileaks, insults to women, accusations of rigging and a barrage of personal attacks. The mood, message and movement got lost in the constant jostle for supremacy. It is little wonder that the 2016 US presidential elections created the most media

frenzy in history. But did the media pick a winner before the voting?

There was media coverage from every angle and by countless networks. The elections may be over but the frenzy has increased, and so have the protests. There

and 2012 elections.

The media has always played an important part in the US elections; it is argued that had it not been for television Richard Nixon would have probably won the 1960 presidential elections. It was the first presidential debate and John F. Kennedy appeared more at ease with the medium and better looking too!

The media has been used over the years to convey the messages of

Despite the proliferation of media outlets there have been criticisms of the mainstream media. Donald Trump kept saying that the media was against him. How valid is this claim?

According to Jim Rutenberg in the New York Times, 'If you're a working journalist and you believe that Donald J. Trump is a demagogue playing to the nation's worst racist and nationalistic tendencies, that he

candidates.

Another journalist of the Weekly Standard said that, 'Hillary Clinton lied repeatedly in her testimony on Benghazi and she should be called out on that. There is no gray area here. The New York Times wrote a piece praising her instead of calling her out.'

The Atlantic Magazine endorsed Clinton; it was only the third time in its history that it had made an endorsement.



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This conclusion ignited a firestorm among some reporters who argued that the FBI could not clear and smear Mrs. Clinton the same time. Mr. Comey had put himself in a no-win situation, said the New York Times, but the Washington Post had other ideas.

The latter said that Comey was 'stern, unflinching and standing on principle-politics and position be damned.' The extent to which Comey has determined the status and outcome of the elections is unclear; it seemed that voters had made up their minds prior to his statements two days before the elections.

The New York Times attempted a weak-hearted explanation the day after Trump's victory. Nate Cohn wrote, 'The Republican elite treated Mr. Trump as it would have treated a fairly ordinary candidate, even as he said extraordinary things. That's a big part of why he won.' Really?

The elite disowned Trump starting with Speaker Paul Ryan to be followed by Mitt Romney, John McCain, various Congressmen and women, and others. It reached a point where the elite did its best to distance itself from Trump and to describe him as unhinged and as a maverick.

But the media did not take into account one important factor: it was the rank and file, the people in middle and low-income America that were tired of professional politicians and wanted change. In the end they turned out and it made all the difference.



**President-elect Donald Trump proved the media wrong. Now he must implement policies to benefit all Americans.**

is Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and millions of smartphones sharing data by the second. The print media, along with radio and television, saturated the public with reports and expert panels dissected the news from every quarter.

Donald Trump has thousands of followers on Twitter. Hillary Clinton took hundreds of selfies and Bernie Sanders had millennials using various hashtags to get his message across. But it was Barack Obama that revolutionized the use of the social media. He urged voters to AMA (Ask Me Anything) on Reddit and had millions of responses in the 2008

the candidates and the explosion of social media has reached record highs. According to a study conducted by the Pew Research Center, '44 percent of US adults claimed to have received information about the 2016 presidential election from social media.'

It would appear that the power of persuasion lie in the 30-second clip sound byte. Who can forget Obama using his Blackberry to good effect to whip up support while John McCain said that he did not care too much for the internet? Information is power and politicians realize that using the technology can translate into votes.

cozies up to anti-American dictators and that he would be dangerous with control of the United States nuclear codes, then you have to throw out the textbook of American journalism.'

Fred Barnes of the 'Weekly Standard' believes that the media has told only one side of the story. He said that the 'Washington Post' had about five stories everyday that are anti-Trump and 'practically nothing on Hillary.' But isn't it right for the media to call out a candidate if he or she lies to the public? There is agreement that a candidate should be called out but that it should be applied to all

It argued that Trump 'is the most ostentatiously unqualified major-party candidate in the 227-year history of the American presidency.' But if this is the case why did Trump beat all the other Republican contenders to emerge as the candidate and eventually to win the presidency? There must be a swing in the mood of the electorate that the mainstream media failed to see and to embrace.

There can be no doubt that the James Comey affair had an impact on public opinion. In July 2016 Comey stated that although 'extremely careless' the FBI did not find Mrs. Clinton had broken the law.

The views expressed in this column are solely those of the writer and do not necessarily represent the views of the **THE WEST INDIAN**.