

The Democrats of Michigan have chosen to fight. I hope ...

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Wherever I read reports about Abdul El-Sayed's victory over Rep. Haley Stevens in Michigan's Democratic primary in the USA yesterday, in which that party selected its candidate for the US Senate midterm elections this autumn, I could not help but feel the shock creeping from the pages of the mainstream press.

Commentary in the Financial Times, the New York Times and the Washington Post all reflect the same sentiment. The shock of a democratic socialist being selected over a mainstream corporate Democrat is something that the mainstream media is having difficulty coming to terms with.

Take this [from the New York Times](#) for example:

Dr. Abdul El-Sayed, a progressive former public health official, won a razor-thin victory in the Democratic primary for Senate in Michigan that serves as the most significant triumph for his party's left wing this year.

Dr. El-Sayed prevailed in a highly contentious contest against Representative Haley Stevens, who argued to the end that he was unlikely to win a general election in a battleground state.

Can you spot the positive dimensions in there? No, me neither. Grudging disbelief coupled with foreboding naysaying is the one I am getting.

This is [the FT take](#):

Progressive challenger Abdul El-Sayed has defeated congresswoman Haley Stevens in a high-stakes Democratic Senate primary in Michigan that has delivered a stunning rebuke of the party establishment.

The result is a significant victory for the party's progressive leftwing and sets the stage for a blockbuster US Senate race in the critical swing state in November's midterm elections.

Much the same sentiment is expressed as is seen in the New York Times. The message is one of sympathy for the Democrat hierarchy and their loss, and misses the point that they threw four times more money at this campaign than Abdul El-Sayed and still lost, as if they had to find out the hard way that money can't buy you love.

The sentiment is such that you almost believe that these papers are aligned with Trump, who said on his social media platform, as quoted in the FT:

Great news for the Republican Party. El-Sayed, a Communist loser who hates Jews and Israel is the projected winner in his race. Now the Democrats crazy policies will only get worse!

That comment is worth noting. The language is patronising. As far as I can see, it would be hard to call Abdul El-Sayed a democratic socialist, let alone a communist, but this portrayal of the left by Trump (and many Democrats) is familiar, and alienating for anyone who cares about others.

As tellingly, the framing around support for Israel is significant: this reveals the real issue in US politics, which is whether the US should be a sovereign state, or one run for the benefit of Benjamin Netanyahu's factions in Israel. Many in both the Republicans and Democrats take the second view. That is the great divide in US politics now, and maybe elsewhere as well.

The reality is, of course, that this is great news for politics in the USA. To get a sense of that, I had to read Robert Reich. He said in a Substack post:

*With the victory of progressive Abdul El-Sayed over Rep. Haley Stevens in Michigan's Democratic primary yesterday, prepare yourself to hear enormous quantities of bullsh*t about the Democratic Party now being "taken over" by "Democratic Socialists."*

Or as the reliably establishment New York Times [described](#) what's at stake, "can an insurgent candidate, with unabashedly left-wing positions, win in a moderate state?"

Oh, p-l-e-a-s-e.

Michigan Democrats didn't choose El-Sayed because he's "unabashedly left wing" or a Democratic Socialist (in fact, he's not).

They chose him because he's a fighter — at a time when America needs fighters willing to stand up to the worst tyrant who has ever occupied the Oval Office.

I hope and believe that is right, precisely because, as he added:

Corporate Democrats — such as Haley Stevens, along with Rahm Emanuel, Chuck Schumer, and Hakeem Jeffries — aren't up to the task because they won't bite the

corporate hands that feed them campaign money. They won't criticize the billionaire class. They refuse to see how big money has corrupted America.

That is the issue at stake here, and which is at stake in the UK as well.

People have had enough of the influence of money in politics of both the far-right and the soft right, which the Democrats in the USA and Labour here represent.

They are sick and tired of welfare for the wealthy, and the steady stream of grants they are given in exchange to appease their squealing when real people in need are ignored.

They want action on issues that offend those who pursue big profits from exploitation of people and planet, which activity corporate interests can only maintain by buying politicians.

People in the USA want a fight on these issues, not because they are communist or democratic socialists, but just because they care, they have had enough and truly do want to drain the swamp.

In the USA, some Democrats are choosing to take on that fight against those corporate interests that put money and corporate interests ahead of people, when politics in a democracy should be about people before corporate power. I am hoping it is a fight that they win.