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Épreuve de : Langue vivante A ELVI : Anglais

Consignes

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RAC : According to Document 1 and Document 2, what role did money play in last year's American presidential election?

As political funding reached record-breaking amounts in last year's American presidential election both Slate and The New York Times published articles, which offer an appraisal of the role money played in it.

First and foremost, both journalists condemn the newfound American use of money as a political tool. In fact, Slate explains how candidates to the White House have grown dependant of billionaire's money, to set their campaign in motion, which is as unhealthy as it is unfair.

However, the two journalists would agree that money is mostly a tool for megadonors, called out as oligarchs. Commenting Biden's farewell address, The New York Times points out the former President's warning about an emerging oligarchy of very wealthy people, seeking to gain a stranglehold on American politics. According to political science professor Jeffrey Winters, interviewed for Slate, billionaires donate money to buy their way into power out of sheer self-interest, and to foster the outcomes they wish for. Thus, money has become an

unquestionable political tool for politicians as well as for a newfound oligarchy in the United States.

Secondly, both journalists highlight how money has taken a toll on the election's fairness and on their outcome, which preys upon democracy.

In fact, Jeffrey Winters¹ is adamant, that oligarchs²⁰⁰ wield influence over people's votes as they publicly endorse a political figure (Plata). Moreover, both journalists voice concerns about the working-class being led into hoping for support from republican-led oligarchy, which neither Biden nor Winters believe in. Therefore, money is blinding²⁵⁰ when it comes to political transparency.

Thus, both journalists worry that money was weaponized to a point of no return, meaning it is threatening the cornerstones of democracy.

In fact, they lament the fact that Elon Musk has been given a role in Trump's administration as he is gaining power³⁰⁰ not because of his political skills but because of his investment in the President's campaign.

Therefore Biden warned Americans about a dangerous concentration of power, who will not favor the people, but its own interests, eating away at the foundations of democracy and allowed to do so only because³⁵⁰ of money and its significant role in the election.

359 words

The richest man of the United States, if not the world, has been very generous regarding financial means, thus becoming a necessity to Donald Trump's campaign: who promised him to appoint him as head of a department aiming to evaluate the efficiency of the American government, in order to profoundly "reorganize" it [...].

After investing 75 million dollars (69 million euros) in the republican candidate's campaign, Elon Musk promised to offer a million dollars everyday to a voter chosen "against all odds" on the electoral lists of swing states in exchange for their signature of a petition, which states that the first and second amendments of the *Constitution shall not be infringed. They are the ones protecting the freedom of speech and the right of the people to keep and bear arms, which he claims "traditional media won't talk about".

The media is another target of conspiracy theorists... The social media X is offering them "an unheard-of fiery power". Elon Musk blames Democrats for massively welcoming "illegal" immigrants to swing states so they obtain the American nationality and vote for them.

ESSAI: In your opinion, to what extent is democracy at risk within the United States?

In 1962, J. F. Kennedy said "those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable". Therefore Trump's administration's attempt to reduce free speech and demonstrations on Harvard University's campus in the name of free speech is not only ironic but deeply corrosive to democracy, as it is one of its lynchpins. Democracy being the equal distribution of power (Document 1), I believe it is nowadays wobbling on its foundations as money has become the ruler of American politics, placing political leaders above citizens, fostering cults such as MAGA, who encourage a roll-back on civil rights and free speech.

First and foremost access to power has been made unfair by the idolization of money, which I find deeply unsettling.

In the United States, an oligarchy (document 2) as revealed itself in the last presidential election. In fact, billionaire have been massively funding political campaigns to later be involved and considered in the decision-making times. And they unfortunately got what they hoped for hence the figures of document 4, showing how Trump's victory increased the wealth of the ten richest men in the country by 64 billion dollars. Therefore, while the U.S. means to be a beacon of democracy for the world, it is now the epitome of a corrupted political regime.

Moreover, recent rollbacks on civil-rights and equality are enhancing the shadowing of democracy by Trump's administration.

In fact, seldom has the Supreme Court backpedalled

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on rights, yet, what with its 2021 decision to overturn ²⁵⁰
Roe v. Wade, to the end of affirmative action, to
absolute immunity being granted to Presidents
(document 2), constitutional rights and protections
are now jeopardized, paving the way for authorita-
rianism and the further erosion of hard-fought
civil rights, including contraception and LGBTQ+ ones
- all on the political agenda of Trump's stewards.
As a citizen I find it unacceptable that political ³⁰⁰
leaders, in this case Presidents can now flout the
law as if being an embodiment of a nation's choices
carried not added duties but fewer constraints.
Therefore, the U.S. rolling back while democracies in ³⁵⁰
the world are going forward is worrying.

Finally, I would argue that the very
foundations of democracy are falling apart in
the United States.

At the mercy of jingoism, schools have indeed
been suffering from censorship issues primarily because
of a Republican-led panic over "a woke ideology".
Thus, books ⁴⁰⁰ such as To Kill a Mockingbird by
Harper Lee have been banned because of "Horns for
Liberty" as they retrace the story of Black
people. Therefore, children are not being taught
to consider one another beyond skin colors or

social backgrounds!

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Isn't it ironic that MAGA, who sees Trump as a Messiah uses the argument of free speech?

All him and his staunch followers do is lie and cheat people in a society where a voice is valuable enough to be heard because one has paid for it (document 5). I believe that they ⁵⁰⁰ should practice what they preach and promote the truth.

All in all, the question is not whether the American democracy is at risk - it is to a point of no return, but how can such a historical champion of democracy remain a world leader, when it has been toppled.

550 words.

