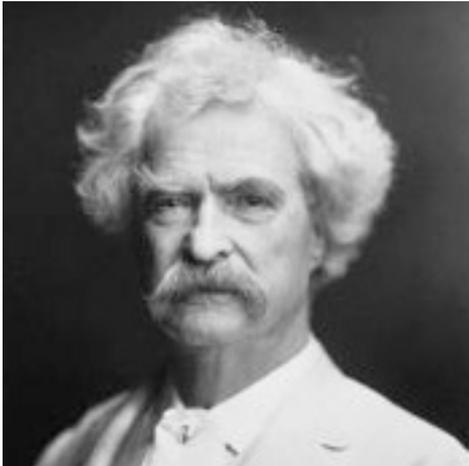


Does Voting Change Anything

Written by A.P. Grozdanovic
Monday, 11 May 2015 08:45



That pearl of wisdom oft quoted by Mark Twain that "if voting made any difference, they wouldn't let us do it" sprang to my mind after the unexpected results of this years general election became known. The reason, the saying couldn't possibly be right - right?

The Torys have won a majority, albeit small, to govern the country on their own terms without the so-called shackles of the Lib Dems. The polls had Labour and the Tory's at neck and neck with only the width of a ballot paper between them. There will be a seismic shift in the way polls are conducted, I suspect, in the future.

It seems obvious now that the people who were unable to separate the two main protagonists before the election will surely find the differences after.

By the same token, the electorate who chose neither of the two heavyweights will find that their voice may not even be heard. First passed the post is an unforgiving version of democracy. The only party to gain in this election other than Cameron's Tory's was the Scottish Nationalists. More of them later.

In the last years, the Tory's have hammered home the nonsensical view that Labour caused the 2008 crash with great success. I'm sure they'll attempt to blame Labour when the next

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downturn hits these shores too; these things happen. However, it won't be Labour, it will be Greece, the Euro, Oil Prices, Putin, the EU Central Bank; in fact anyone but them.

They've also traded on fears and misconceptions. All people on benefits are scroungers and skivers. There are too many foreigners not paying their way, in fact there's too many of them. If it wasn't for the EU, we'd stop them. Only hard working families are deserving. Business will go bust without a flexible zero-hour employment strategy. All benefit recipients live in mansions with Sky Television and numerous spare bedrooms.

If they can think it up, believe me, their gonna scare the bejesus out of you!

If we turn the coin over, it's a completely different tale of course.

The only wealth creators are the millionaires and billionaires who come and reside here.

Tax them and they'll be off! Let them stay for free. It makes sense. While we're at it, let's reduce tax for the top end earners. People who work should be able to keep more of the money they earn. Those cheeky bankers who crashed the economy have learnt their lesson, bonuses are good, it creates competitiveness.

You can see where I'm going with this can't you?

Of course, it's one rule for the poor and another for the rich. And if you're working and earning a living they have you believing it's you paying for the idlers and foreigners. And because they've taught you that if you earn more you should keep more, you can't argue that a multi-millionaire shouldn't keep more because he's earned it too; he's no different to you, is he?

Except, he is. He can afford to dip into his pocket a little more to help the needy and the less well off.

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The division the Tories are reaping on this country are going deeper though. Their policies are dividing the nation to stretching point.

Let's nip back to the Scottish referendum. After the three main parties had promised Scotland a new devolutionary deal if they voted to stay in the Union, what did Cameron do? He walked out into Downing Street the following morning and talked about England. Not about Britain and the equality of the nations, but England. It's no wonder the Scots have jumped on the Nationalist bus and abandoned Labour, for they were seen to be culpable, having joined with Cameron over the referendum.

Cameron's short-sightedness - short-sighted because his intention was to inflame Scottish Nationalism - was designed to cripple Labour up north for the election. He wasn't thinking about the inevitable pull of another referendum, which will surely be greater now with in excess of 50 of Sturgeon's representatives in Parliament. Events will surely overtake the Prime Minister on this.

As they will with Europe. He let the cat out of the bag with his EU referendum pledge. This was to lance the UKIP boil that was infecting his party. No Prime Minister worth his salt would want to leave the EU, warts and all. This utopian view that we can be better out is complete nonsense. The Norwegian minister for Foreign Affairs, Vidar Helgesen, says that we will lose influence and put our security in doubt if we leave the Union. They find it very difficult to influence economic affairs that affect them at European level because they are not full members. Norway is often cited as an example to us of being a country operating outside the EU but trading with it. If we went down that road it would lead to ruin.

But again, for short term gain, Cameron out-flanked Labour because he knew Miliband would not countenance a euro referendum that would inevitably lead to Britain leaving the EU. For far too many years, the press have been battering the EU, and now the popular opinion appears to be one of disdain. A result to stay in is inconceivable at this time, especially with Farage's UKIP gaining votes at this election.

So was Twain right to say that they'd stop us voting if it changed anything? Well, voting this Tory Prime Minister in will certainly change one thing, and that is the path this country takes. It does appear we're on the road to division at home and abroad. The will of the Scottish people

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is moving away from the Union, that's a given. Also, with the rise of the UKIP and Tory right a separation with Europe is inevitable. Cameron has bound his own hands tightly with his referendum pledge.

So, he got it wrong? Well no, he hasn't. Because the rich are still getting richer while the poor are getting poorer. Come rain or shine, crash or no crash, that division of wealth will always be there. We are living in a world where the rich systematically take from the poor and can justify it that well that the poor actually vote for it. How's that for a paradox?