

Trump's Victory: Arrogance Defeated

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Global Research, November 13, 2016

[CounterPunch](#) 11 November 2016

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Poverty & Social Inequality](#)

Hillary Clinton called half of Trump voters "a basket of deplorables". In all the discussions I have had with American "liberals", they explained to me that Trump supporters were mostly uneducated white men.

However, I am old enough to remember an era when the all the leftwing parties, socialist or communist, and even American Democrats, were based on the workers or the "working class" or the "common man". Nobody thought to inquire whether they had university degrees or to investigate whether or not their opinions were politically correct on issues such as racism, sexism or homophobia.

What defined the workers as progressive subjects was their economically exploited condition and not some ideological orthodoxy or moral purity.

At the end of the 1970s a great change took place within leftwing parties. They were increasingly dominated by academics and their ideology changed radically from that of the classical left.

Far from aiming to establish some form of socialism, or merely of social justice, the left turned into the champion of the fight for equal opportunity, against discrimination and prejudice, and - with the rise of globalization - the opening of markets.

The more or less mythical hero of the left was no longer the proletarian but the marginal, the migrant, the foreigner, the dissident, or the rebel - even if he happened to be a religious fanatic that no leftist intellectual would have anything to do with. One recalls how Jean-Jacques Rousseau made fun of those who pretend to love the Tartars in order to avoid loving their neighbors.

Little by little a new class alliance formed: the one percent as it is called, or more realistically the richest ten percent who benefit from globalization are allied with the middle class intelligentsia to sell us globalization in the name of "openness to others" and which flaunt the specter of racism or sexism to attract minorities and certain feminists (for although women are not a minority, certain feminist demands are similar to those of minorities).

But that alliance was extremely unnatural in socio-economic terms, because the main victims of globalization are the least qualified workers, often women or members of minorities.

The left's pro-globalization bias led it astray step by step. First it gave up all effort at regulating the economy, satisfying itself with claiming to share the fruits of growth fairly by ensuring "equal opportunity". But in the real world, inequalities grew far more than the

economy.

They also imagined that international law could be abolished and that a certain “international community” – in practice the United States and its allies – would maintain world order by military means. Again, in the real world that only created chaos, refugees and resistance to that American order. In fact, in the long term, the American population itself came down with a strange disorder, “war fatigue”. Except for a minority of ideologues, hardly anyone in the United States wants to bear the costs of an empire

(see <http://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2016/10/30/the-fatal-expense-american-imperialism/teXS2xwA1UJbYd10WJBHBM/story.html> for a lucid analysis of those costs).

The protests of the victims of globalization had to be dealt with. The trick was to use the ideology of tolerance: any objection to globalization was labeled racism, xenophobia. Intellectuals took up the “fight against racism” with enthusiasm, with an eye to preserving their own privileged social position, sheltered from the economic storms of globalization.

In the United States, it was enough to stigmatize bad thoughts; in Europe, they were taken to court.

All that had to explode sooner or later, just as the Berlin Wall came down and the USSR collapsed, and for the same reasons: a self-satisfied but fairly incompetent elite, isolated from social realities, which claims to do what is best for the people without consulting them, and which finally doesn't even deliver the promised benefits, ends up provoking rebellion against itself.

First the Brexit, then Trump. Whatever one may think of that individual, the worse the things said about him by American “liberals”, the more they expose the enormity of their defeat. After years of political correctness and sermons on feminism and antiracism, what can be more humiliating than the election of someone as demonized by feminists and antiracists as Trump?

For ardent supporters of the European Union, globalization and humanitarian wars, the victory of Trump has an effect comparable to that of the Polish worker strikes on the ruling Communist Party; they exposed the discontent even in the proletariat that theoretically exercised its dictatorship. The election of Trump shows the revolt of the American population in the very citadel of free markets and imperialism.

It remains to be seen whether Trump will carry out the progressive aspects of his program; protectionism and peace with Russia. Those are the aspects that most infuriate the oligarchy, much more than his rude remarks and contradictions. Those are thus the aspects that will require the most intelligence and determination if they are to be realized.

A left which dares take a close look at its past errors should do all it can to push Trump in that direction, rather than to alienate the population still more by once again mounting its high horse of moral superiority and selling its soul to the leaders of the Democratic Party responsible for their own defeat.[1]

Jean Bricmont, 11 November 2016

The original French version of this article was published by RT at

<https://francais.rt.com/opinions/28803->

Note

[1] Sanders seems to go in that direction : « To the degree that Mr. Trump is serious about pursuing policies that improve the lives of working families in this country, I and other progressives are prepared to work with him »

<http://www.sanders.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/sanders-statement-on-trump>

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