

Upside Down Mark Twain

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Mark Twain AKA Samuel Clemens (1835-1910) best known for his literary works like Tom Sawyer & Huckleberry Finn, was also a man with deep rooted empathy for any underclass containing people of color. Few readers of his works realize that he was also a staunch opponent of imperialism, having been president of the Anti Imperialist League from 1901 to his death in 1910. Twain wrote about the treatment of the Chinese in San Francisco during the Civil War when he was a newspaper reporter. In 1865 he astonished many passersby, even those who fought for the abolition of slavery years earlier, when he chose to walk arm in arm through the San Francisco streets with the editor of the recently established Afro American newspaper, the Elevator. Of course, one of his most famous quotes was on his definition of politics:

“To protect us from the crooks and scoundrels”.

He also said something that resonates so strongly today:

“Sometimes I wonder whether the world is being run by smart people who are putting us on or by imbeciles who really believe it.”

We just had a mid-term election that broke the record for both voter turnout and money spent, a real conundrum to say the least. The Two Party/One Party ‘food fight’ did have one added caveat, something that got this writer to actually do something I never do, and that was to vote across the board in my state of Florida for all Democrats.

Why? Well, as Bob Dylan sang so profoundly: *“You don’t need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows.”* Sadly, the ‘wind’ has been one filled with Fascist and even Neo Nazi elements, with such an exclamation point right here in the ‘Sunshine State’. One guy, the sitting Governor, has such a tainted past as a businessman that many felt he should have more easily been indicted than to be even running for office years ago. The other guy, a congressman running for Governor, had an electoral machine behind him with intentions of getting him from the Governor’s mansion to the White House in 2024. Running against an Afro American mayor of Tallahassee, his campaign supporters’ infamous *robo calls* played what many would call ‘Jungle music’ along with a voice that could be construed as that of a ‘Ghetto black man’. Between that and the fear card of an ‘evil caravan’ getting closer seemed to push some perhaps who maybe would have sat this one out, to get off their duffs and go and vote. After all, those good and decent taxpaying Floridians needed to be protected from the diabolical black and brown *undesirables*.

One could only imagine how Mark Twain would have reacted to all of the above... and much

more; That being the utter war mongering foreign policies of ALL of our recent presidents, including this latest *tool* of empire. He would have been out there 'front and center' protesting our nation's illegal and immoral *excursions* into Panama, The Balkans, Iraq 1, Iraq 2, Afghanistan, Libya and now Syria. Twain said it all in this quote of his:

"I have read carefully the treaty of Paris [between the United States and Spain], and I have seen that we do not intend to free, but to subjugate the people of the Philippines. We have gone there to conquer, not to redeem.... And so I am an anti-imperialist. I am opposed to having the eagle put its talons on any other land."
(New York Herald, 15 October 1900)

Though this writer did the *unimaginable*, by my principles, of casting votes for the Democrats this time around... never again! For, they now control the House, and perhaps in 2020 the Senate and even the White House, but what will change on the issue that Mark Twain devoted his later years to: Imperialism?

We know that even progressive Democrats like Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, and now Ms. Ocasio Cortez, remain silent on

- A) obscene military spending,
- B) 1000 foreign bases worldwide,
- C) our destruction of Libya and aid to the jihadists in Syria, causing *millions* of refugees spilling into Europe and elsewhere;
- D) NATO's planned encirclement of Russia and the diversion by the Russian election tampering hoax and
- E) Israel's continued fascist like treatment of Palestinians. Thus, the *only* hope to *finally* see Amerika become America is for tens, even hundreds of millions of working stiffs nationwide, to realize that imperialist and ultra militarist foreign policy *bleeds* our economy and destroys our nation's *moral compass*. Mark Twain knew that over 100 years ago. Why not us?

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