Subtle Observations About the 2011 Federal Election

Description

So in following up on the obvious and newsworthy events arising out of the 2011 Federal Election, I am following up with a list of more subtle, interesting, or amusing events.

First, despite all of the pro-democracy people talking about how the people have spoken I will think of it as a bit of a sham. It is not rule by the people. It is rule by a minority of the people. We can see this thanks to the Historical Voter Turnout report by Andrew Heard. It appears that Canadians turned out in greater numbers this election reversing a downward trend. This demonstrates a desire for change and an appeal to a positive image by NDP Leader Jack Layton, but I will be surprised if this reversal is permanent and we see rising voter turnout. Elections Canada has bent over backwards to make voting more accessible to people, but tweaking the mechanics of voting will not fix the fundamentals of what we are voting for.

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Unless political parties change their purpose, Canadians will continue to stay away from voting in greater numbers. Canadians do not vote because of the steady predominance of parties and policies over leaders and inspired action. It has been demonstrated in our media and our folklore that we all seek to be inspired, have a connection to people, yet political parties will focus on ideology and platform only. Until political parties become quality leadership making machines, we will see our society continue to drown under policies, laws, and government interference, and further killing voter interest.

Second, this election result has done permanent damage to the fair vote movement in my eyes because Canada continues to be governed competently despite a flawed electoral system. A proportional or fair election result may help political parties, but it does not translate into good government or a successful nation. Look at Spain, Portugal, Greece, and Ireland; each of them have a form of Proportional Representation and yet they are all in absolute shambles economically. Yes, PR gives the people the exact kind of government they want, but as I said before in Why Economics Trumps Democracy, giving people what they want perpetually is a recipe for disaster! This is why we need leadership who have vision and can make hard decisions. We donâ??t need Proportional Representation despite it being a â??fairerâ?? system. Its a giant red herring and a bit painful revelation for me since I spent many years working in that movement.

In the spirit of full transparancy, the U.S.A. has a similar voting system to Canada and it is in a financial mess, but this just proves that the electoral system does not really matter as far as economics are concerned. The voting system is about enshrining oneâ??s cultural values, because I believe that the system has become so co-opted by political parties for their own purpose, that tweaking it does not really matter.

Third, whether you agree if the Conservative Majority is deserved or not, the result will be good for Canada economically. I would expect Canada to continue to outstrip the other industrialized nations and continue to be a beacon of fiscal prudence and stability. I just hope Harper will use his four years to find efficiencies and reduce the size of our bloated government. We are facing a future social and fiscal crisis as the Baby Boomers retire and come to be even greater takers from the health care and pension

systems. Hard decisions need to be made.

Fourth, is the revelation that now that Ottawa is controlled by two Western Canadian political parties! The Barbarians are definitely at the gates and I could not be happier. The shift in power from the complacent eastern establishment as enshrined by the Liberal Party, Progressive Conservative Party, and Bloc Quebecois to the Conservatives and NDP is the first time ever this has happened.

The Government Conservative Party gets its origins from the Alberta-born Reform Party, which took a brief profile change as the Canadian Alliance, and finally as the Conservatives. The Official Opposition New Democratic Party got its start as the Saskatchewan-born Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, a socialist & populist response to the Eastern business establishment. I would expect politics in Canada to now change as Western Canadian political culture gets exported to Ottawa.

Fifth, I was pleased to see a new political party that is trying to shift the focus away from traditional politics by using the Internet as its tool of governance. The Online Party of Canada has some fresh ideas. Some of them are simply too unrealistic thought. Banning the Provinces? Really? While I do agree in principle that cities and rural municipalities are a more reasonable way to run a country, the existence of Provinces are enshrined in the constitution and you will NEVER get any Province to agree to give up its autonomy and power. But, I appreciate a number of their other positions. Hopefully, they will find inspired leadership. I wish them luck.

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Finally, I did find Elections Canadaâ??s list of registered political parties amusing because one of the parties did not follow through on full registration. The Work Less Party lived up to their name by voluntarily not wanting to register. A political party that keeps to its platform! I would have voted for them. ð???

Category

1. Political Ponderings

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