

Letters from our readers

13 December 2011

On “Canadian report shows growing political alienation”

This really hits home. The lack of participation in the political process in this country must be second to none in the world. For anyone who cares, it often feels like living among zombies.

The *National Post* is becoming more atrocious by the day. One only needs to look at the headlines to be stupefied.

The CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) recently celebrated its 75th anniversary, but the coverage of its history as a public broadcaster was wretched. I’ve heard better stories about its past, as a truly informative and life-enhancing connection (especially in the radio days) between far-flung people in a vast land, from many of the old people I’ve worked with at my job.

Why the apparently disconnected topics in this letter? The unifying theme is: induced amnesia, induced apathy, makes for a compliant population.

Kamilla V
Canada

10 December 2011

Reporter Danny Kresnyak’s recent pre-election column entitled “Why won’t Saskatchewanians rock the vote? Here’s what they say” echoed the Samara Report findings that non-voters are neither ignorant nor apathetic about politics, but rather are alienated from a political system that they clearly view as serving the interests of those established within it.

Kresnyak’s column offered the following sampling of non-voter opinion:

“I’ve never voted and I can’t think of a reason to start now,” says Sean DeVries, 23, of Saskatoon. “I watch the news and I don’t see a difference between the two [parties],” says DeVries. “Does it really matter which rich white guy is in power? Either way, I’ll keep treading water and going to a job that doesn’t pay enough.”

“Who am I supposed to vote for? Lingenfelter? Wall?” asks Terry Taylor, 46, a gas-station attendant in North Battleford. “I wouldn’t trust either of them with a length of rope to straighten their necks.” Taylor says the first, last and only time he has ever voted was for Grant Devine’s Conservatives and he hasn’t cared to cast a ballot since.

“Life on reserve is life on reserve,” says Harley Kowalski, 28, an artist and bouncer and a non-voter who grew up on the Muskoday First Nation but now lives in Regina. “NDP, Sask Party, Liberals or whoever, the ghetto is the ghetto and things there don’t change.”

“Between 18 and 20, I voted in every election I could,” says Taneille Young. “Provincial, city, everything. I felt it was important but then I just quit caring. It wasn’t like things got better because I voted. Just politics and BS.”

Saskatchewan voters also shared sentiments similar to those in Samara’s baseline group. Kresnyak wrote, “I did speak to a few people who are headed to the polls on Nov. 7. Sadly, the majority of them shared a pessimistic perspective. Some said they had never actually voted for someone they believed in. Others maintained their vote is little more than a habit formed out of civic duty.”

Kresnyak’s response to his findings was limited to the non-analysis and non-reflection that is standard media fare. All this desultory reporter could write was, “We live in Downersville ... Welcome to democracy, Saskatchewan-style.”

In summary, these interviews support the contention that high voter abstention rates actually reflect a rudimentary recognition amongst a rapidly growing demographic that none of the existing parties represents the interests of working people.

And as the comrade notes, the danger facing working people is that their contempt for the political elite has not yet been translated into the building of an international socialist political party that represents their independent interests.

And this is where the *World Socialist Web Site* and the Socialist Equality Party come in—to build just such a movement!

Dan
Canada
11 December 2011

On “Brussels summit ends with isolation of Britain inside the EU”

The British financial elites have now lost any political mechanism that prevents the future redirection of its current trade into the euro zone. That is if the euro zone survives. And if the euro zone collapses the business is gone in any case. However, on balance, the failure of the euro zone may be less of a threat to the City of London financial monopolies than its survival. And presumably it was this realisation by the German and French political elites, in part, that led to Britain’s exclusion; the belief that the British would do all in their political power within the EU to ensure the failure of the attempt to save the euro.

Chris
Ireland
10 December 2011



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