

I was chatting with a friend, Jennifer, on facebook about Being and Doing and the conversation got around to a video I sent the link for about Smart Meters and Notice of Liability and such when she mentioned "I haven't watched the news or read the paper my entire life. I guess I knew deep down it was corrupt. Same with politics until this year."

As I was typing my reply I figured it'd make a good blog for me to write and here goes ...

Good for you on that. I switched off tv about ten years ago. I do, however, have a local tv station that I can pick up free over the air in true high def to watch the local ctv news, surprisingly enough not broadcasted in high def just to see what's going on in my small city, Barrie.

Politics, on the other hand, is a different story ...

My parents, who were in reality the first generation to be put under the new world order, both served in the Canadian Army during World War II. My Mom cared for soldiers who caught tubercloses and there were a lot of them. The war was just starting when she finished studying in the maternal child specialty of Nursing. My Dad, early on in the war, served With the Canadian Engineering Corp in Gibraltar hollowing it out building a city within the giant mount, gateway to the Mediterranean Sea to control help gain control of southern Europe. He then fought and was wounded while the Canadian Army was liberating the Netherlands taking shrapnel in his abdomen.

Through slick manipulation of that generations minds they believed in democracy and they had fought to slay a tyrant who aimed for world domination. Where are we today?

So many epiphanies these days, it's hard to keep track. This latest ...

When I was fifteen and ... born again, the crutch I used to help me cope with my Dad's death the year before, my youth pastor of a group I became part of took about a dozen of us out for a Sunday matinee to see, what I think, is the best movie ever made, The Great Dictator. A lot of people around the world will say it has the greatest speech ever made at the end of it. I can remember sitting in the cinema that afternoon with tears rolling down my cheeks as I watched that.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nKm_wA-Wdl4&ab_channel=Zosh

Coupling that with, and ironically I write this today when JFK Files were to be released, the JFK presentation I watched about the JFK Assassination and believing Oswald to be a patsy I can now today realize why Chaplin really fled the US for ... Switzerland ... a neutral country ... one where he could be truly free. He was warning us. He wrote, produced, directed, scored and starred in that movie. ... WOW ...

Anyway ... I digressed ... back to my parents and democracy ...

Although they would never speak of how they ever voted they did make a point of teaching, like the good corporate citizens they were taught to be, us kids the importance of voting. They had lowered the voting age to eighteen from twenty-one a few years before my eighteenth so I was eager, like the good corporate citizen I had been taught to be.

I can't remember if it was a federal or provincial election but my first Election day came and I could hardly wait ... geez ... eighteen ... was I really competent enough to vote? I attended my first Polling Place and lined up to Register ... hhhmmnnn there's that regis word again ... and made my way through the process to stand behind the partition and mark my first X on a ballot. I stayed up late ta watch the results to see if my party won ... wasn't I just a good little strawman!

One of the things I learned back then about the electoral system is that we didn't live in a democracy as I understood it. I thought, in a democracy that the majority should rule. School, after all, had taught me that fifty percent plus one is a majority. How could a Party get a majority of the seats in our Parliament with as little as thirty nine percent of the popular vote?

I was twenty-one the next time there was an election but this time I was prepared. I've always had a logical mind so even at that age I was able to logically look at our electoral system and saw a huge downfall in it.

I don't remember how I learned this but I knew that, until recently with Harper federally, we did have an option. Like the good little strawman I was I morally couldn't spoil my ballot, that was wrong, that was a slap in democracies face! We did have an option, a personal Vote of Non-Confidence, to Decline our ballot. I read up on how to do it and for that election decided I couldn't take part in the farce so I was going to Decline my ballot.

Election day came and I went early. There was a line up as all us good strawmen were doing our democratic duty. After registering ... hhhmmnn ... I finally got to the table where they were handing out the ballots in front of the table with the screen you go behind to mark your X. One clerk wrote My Name in a ledger as the clerk tore off my ballot from his book and tried to hand it to me. I had read that I could not touch the ballot (accepting a contract?!) but was to tell them I was declining my ballot. I stood there nervously but confident and stated, "As a Vote of Non-Confidence I respectfully Decline my ballot." I'd never felt prouder in my short strawman life.

"You can't do that," the clerk who tried to hand me the ballot said.

"I most certainly did," I replied.

They were stumped. This was 1978. There was no internet. There weren't any cell phones let alone smart phones. Rotary dial landline phones only. One of the Poll Returning Officers came

over and the clerks told them what was happening. The line behind me was growing. I had STOPPED the democratic process. A strawman was waking up.

About a half hour went by before the Returning Officer came back to the table telling everyone within earshot that she had called the Riding Returning Officer who looked it up in their manuals and told the clerks what to do. The clerk with the ballot in his hand wrote Declined on the outside of the ballot and put the ballot in the sealed box. The other clerk wrote beside my name in the ledger, Declined. Done and Done.

From that first Declined ballot I had not cast a ballot in either a federal or provincial election. I learned about our parliamentary system, how Canada or the provinces and territories were divided up into Ridings. In each Riding the candidate with the most number of votes would win the Riding and have a Seat in Parliament, a system known as First Past The Post. To get a Majority government a Party would need to get fifty percent plus one of the available seats. It told me that how the people voted had absolutely no bearing on the formation of a democratic government. The party with the most seats forms the government and if they have just over fifty percent of the seats in parliament it was a majority.

The option of a Declined ballot. a lot of people still don't understand is that, unlike a spoiled ballot that is counted for auditing purposes only, number of ballots handed out equals the number of ballots cast, the Decline ballot was indeed counted vote ... a Vote of Non-Confidence.

I thought about our First Past The Post system and realized that, since a Declined ballot is a counted vote then there could be ... one day ... just maybe ... in my Riding. most strawmen would Decline their ballot. That would mean that the seat for that Riding in Parliament would remain empty ... people didn't want any of the registered ... hhhmmnnn ... candidates as the Declined ballot was First Past The Post with the most ballots cast. I then extrapolated that across the country and hoped one day that the majority of Ridings would return a Declined ballot to their seats. Wouldn't that change things?

A couple of years before the last federal election Harper, in one of his numerous omnibus Bills, took away the Declined ballot option. I know here in Ontario we still have that option but we don't federally but now, knowing what I know now about jurisdiction I'm thinking I might just try it in the next election especially since Junior Trudeau stole my vote when he lied to me and hundreds of thousands of strawmen that 2015 would be the last election using the First Past The Post electoral system. If my strawman could have Declined his ballot he most certainly would have.

My strawmen has done a lot a great things over the years. His brain has slowly been growing ... acquiring a bit here, some there ... oh look some food for though ... Ooo whats this, yet the powers that were ... the has beens, kept stuffing him with fresh straw.