

Anti-establishment Trump a voice for the West's silent majority

By Maurice Newman, The Australian, 8 June 2016

Donald Trump is a political outsider. Predicted by most pundits to fall at every hurdle, he defeated 17 GOP insider rivals.

The Republicans, the Democrats, big business, the media, Wall Street donors, foreign leaders and other members of the establishment threw everything at his campaign, including protest rallies, violence and 55,000 negative advertisements.

Columnist George F Will described him as “the most anti-conservative presidential candidate in the party’s history”. Will went so far as to say: “If Trump is nominated, the GOP must keep him out of the White House.” In other words, disregard the unprecedented number of ordinary Americans who are rising up in their millions, buoyed by Trump’s unpredictable path, to “make America great again”.

The panicked anti-Trump forces know better. They have reached across the so-called political divide and, from Barack Obama to former Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney, combined to ensure there will be no president Trump.

In a similar demonstration of power, the threat of a British exit from the European Union club was enough for the Pope, Obama, Angela Merkel, IMF chairwoman Christine Lagarde, the G7 and Bank of England governor Mark Carney to voice their opposition. Even 1990s British prime minister John Major has weighed in, describing the “leave” campaign as “verging on the tawdry”. Why? Perhaps, like the anti-Trump establishment, they all know better than the broad left, right coalition of “Little Englanders” who hate the EU and want no part of it.

Their scare campaign was notable for its omissions. It disregards Norway, outside the EU and the eurozone, which, without relying solely on oil and gas, consistently outperforms its European neighbours.

It dismisses uber-successful Switzerland’s withdrawal of its bid for EU membership. And it ignores the majority of Swedes who want to follow Britain out. When elites talk of Britain’s “loss of influence on the world stage” maybe it’s more about their one-world views and the threat to their own stocks. Like millions of Americans who support Trump’s “America first”, ordinary Britons feel exploited.

They are tired of being ripped off and dictated to by unelected supranational bureaucrats who live in luxury and demand damaging treaties be signed.

They see the world stage as a net negative and believe virtue lies in self-government and bilateral relationships. The four latest polls have the leave vote in front.

In today's Western democracies, the power elites are not presidents or prime ministers. They are special interest lobbyists, political donors and opinion makers with a highly developed sense of moral entitlement.

In his book *The Power Elite*, C. Wright Mills talks about "interlocked prongs of power" being political, military, and business.

Writing about the world of the 1950s he says "below them are professional politicians and pressure groups and professional celebrities who have the ear of those with direct power". In Mills' world of the 50s, "men and women of mass society feel they are without purpose in an epoch in which they are without power". Sixty years on, little has changed.

The establishment Mills describes largely remains. It is not a conspiracy with unified leadership, but "more like a club where members know the rules and abide by them".

What has changed in the 21st century is the military's loss of primacy. It has been displaced, to quote CS Lewis, by "those who torment us for our own good (and) will torment us without end, for they do so with the approval of their consciences". These are the right people fighting for the right causes.

In Australia, these good people have engineered the abridgement of free speech, promoted big government, championed taxpayer protection for failing and favoured industries, dismantled border protection, pushed climate change policies at serious cost to the poor, overseen Marxist indoctrination in schools and lavished unsustainable benefits on pet projects. Even the military has been captured by "progressive" ideals.

In the US and Britain, people have barely recovered from the global financial crisis.

Many who lost their jobs, their houses and their savings are still destitute.

Yet when extraordinarily wealthy Wall Street executives, high street bankers and their shareholders lost money through reckless behaviour, the establishment bailed them out, enlisting support from central banks and taxpayers.

These actions have understandably left an indelible impression that the system is for the few, not for the masses.

It now seems the "right people" have had a hand in a probable fraud in the recent Austrian presidential election where the far-Right Freedom Party candidate lost to a Green.

Just in case subsequent investigations change the result, European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker promises to exclude the leader of the Freedom Party from all EU decision-making, saying: "There will be no debate or dialogue with the far-Right."

That's the ruling class view of democracy.

No wonder millions of voters in Western democracies, including Australia, see elections and democracy as a facade where the same power elite is in charge whichever party is elected.

It explains why anti-establishment Trump wins support from Republicans, registered Democrats and the uncommitted and why establishment-weary Britons of Left and Right are voting to exit Europe on June 23.

They realise they have been conned by those who claim to be saviours. They also watch how those ruling class “saviours” in countries like Greece and Venezuela show the callous indifference expected of con-artists to the suffering of the most vulnerable.

After five prime ministers in as many years, Australian voters are cynical. Only true believers still consider their vote counts for much.

With no Australian Trump, independents like David Leyonhjelm, Nick Xenophon and other non-establishment figures should attract strong support. But Australia’s power elites needn’t worry. Until the majority of voters decides to support a courageous political disrupter, they’re safe.