

Brexit and Trump - an up-date, January 2018

Notes based on earlier *Discussion in Pubs* (DiPs) and *Philosophy in Pubs* (PiPs) discussions during 2016/17.

We aim for our discussion to be 'evidence-based' as far as possible, using references to:

- i) Noam Chomsky's latest *YouTube* presentation/s on Donald Trump – where Chomsky argues that 'things will get worse before they get better' - a view that applies to Brexit also.
- ii) A September 2016 article by Alan Finlayson, Professor of Political & Social Theory, University of East Anglia, published in *Renewal: a journal of social democracy*, Vol 24. (**With thanks to DiPs colleague David Whalley from The Park Inn, Macclesfield for references and notes**)

1. The situation we face globally, nationally and locally is unprecedented, unpredictable and volatile. Going round, any Qs and comments on this and especially on anything not mentioned below.
2. Chomsky's key argument: things will get better, because the growth of opposition to Trump ('below the radar' at the moment) will strengthen to replace Trump's policies with more positive values and policies from late 2018 onwards... That argument also applies to the EU and Brexit?
3. Many other major thinkers, authors, and political analysts are engaging with all relevant issues.
 - a) Take, for example, Stephen Hawking's, contribution to this debate: visit on web '**Stephen Hawking on Donald Trump and Brexit**'. "We are at the most dangerous moment in the development of humanity"; and the final episode of David Attenborough's landmark TV series, **The Blue Planet**.
 - b) Nations and Nationalism - with reference to historian Donald Sassoon's lecture **Nation States and Memory – Brazil, Berlin and Burslem: Memory, Identity and Place**...(visit RWF web, as below, to read the full lecture on 'Padlet'); & Anthony Barnett's e-book **The Lure of Greatness: England's Brexit and America's Trump**.
4. The 2016 British Referendum: 51% vs 49% - the complexity of majority/minority issues in referenda; How can the 'minority' be heard?
5. Within the UK, all elections are now undertaken via one of various forms of proportional representation (PR), except for the election of local Councils in England, Wales, Scotland and the election of Westminster MPs. Has the time come to replace first past the post (FPTP) for these local Councils and for the Westminster Parliament?
6. How do we, as individuals, now define ourselves? English, British, 'Welsh/European', 'citizen of the world'...?
7. Given the increasing divergence of aspirations and needs within different regions of England how can the voices of regional England be best represented? Has the time come for regional government, of some sort, within England and, if so, how?
8. Media issues: Trump's latest tweets... Tabloids; main-stream media and social media on Trump and Brexit... Has the BBC been objective and impartial? Local media issues?
9. Education on all the key social and political issues to assist well-informed voting is crucial, of course... But, currently Language-education in German and French especially is being cut from the curriculum in English schools...
10. Back to Chomsky - given global warming and ecological issues, are you pessimistic or optimistic about future trends?

Visit www.raymondwilliamsfoundation.org.uk (RWF) for more on all the above references. Please bring with you any of your own references for recommended reading/viewing... with, if possible, an i-pad; i-phone; lap-top, as we may be referring to web/YouTube presentations during the session.

Don't worry, if none of this works and if we only reach point 3. in the above discussion it will still be a fruitful and enjoyable learning experience!

The PiPs, DiPs, Sci-Bar, *café-philosophique* and faith group discussions on this big issue had led to 2017 Day events and residentials linked to the *Jo Cox Foundation's* aims: "We have more in common than that which divides us", with the RWF focus, proposed by our Chair, Sharon Clancy, on the **Keywords: Democracy through Tolerance and Understanding**. Extended activities on this in 2018... Keep an eye of the RWF web for plans and details... DT, Jan 2018.