

# **It Keeps Happening Again And Again And...**

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The problem for those who twist everything that affects power and profit into a form that best suits their interests is that they also tend to forget how to keep things straight in their minds.

First there was Brexit. The mainstream purveyors of opinion billed the creation of the EU as the biggest thing since our ancestors developed a consciousness and became human (and ‘civilized’). But others saw it as basically a trading consortium that only works well when the world economy is doing well, when it isn’t the principle of working together among a den of thieves becomes a joke. And for the working classes it means they have a second set of bosses screwing them over, only this one in Belgium. Many thought that with something so entrenched the degree of disgruntlement could not reach a departure. But it did.

Then there is Trump’s run to the White House. The Republicans ran a plethora of candidates, some having served many years in executive office, private and public. Since the economy had recovered, surely one of them would get the nomination when all was sorted out. But there were a lot of pissed off Republicans and the last thing they wanted to hear is that things have improved, and that under experienced Republican leadership they will be much better, when they felt they had worsened. So they voted for the guy who kept saying everything was going, or had already gone, to hell even though he was an ignorant buffoon who in normal times wouldn’t be trusted to take our your garbage let alone run your country.

But these aren’t normal times, so we got Trump. The Democrats were ecstatic. Their candidate Hillary Clinton was very experienced in governmental affairs. But she was also a corrupt political hack and war criminal whose experience evoked disgust rather than delight. And so ‘the nation that leads all others’ is now run by a person whose brain hasn’t the slightest chance of keeping up with his mouth.

The election of Macron as president of France doesn’t get as much attention but is from the same mould. He ran as a candidate of a party that he created on the fly. So France has a leader not tied to any well established party (the reason he won). And since he was the only candidate he is at risk of being very lame duck from the start unless he can get a lot of friends elected to the national assembly.

And then there is the British PM May. She took over from Cameron because of the discredit of the Brexit debacle. The official opinion is that she had done remarkably well – reflected in the fact that the economy didn’t fall apart because of the vote – it’s even said to be surprisingly robust. Since she only had a 5 vote voting margin in parliament she broke her promise about snap elections and went for it – ride to a resounding victory on the crest of her great achievements, and not incidentally smash the ‘radical’ Labour Party of Corbyn so that the crony capitalist Blairites retake the leadership. Instead she has now lost the small margin that she previously had.

The Conservative Party has a more than 50 MP margin over Labour, but it's important to note that the popular vote was much closer – Conservatives a little over 13 million and Labour a little under. The UK does not have a very democratic parliamentary system. May is going to rely on the support of 10 MP's from N. Ireland. Those 10 were elected with less than 300,000 votes. The Greens got more than 500,000 votes and got one MP. The UKIP got almost 600,000 votes and got nothing.

What's been happening is something like the longest shot winning every race on the card. That could mean that something like the Occupy phenomenon, which came to nothing, might happen again and this time come to something – perhaps a political democracy that provides choices that are not trash.

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Germany has its scandals, like VW most recently, but corruption at the highest level appeared to be less frequent when compared to other leading nations. But history has shown that when Germany does bad, it can be very bad. A tax scandal that may have stolen \$36 billion from government coffers over the years was reported this week. One of the methods of theft had German banks and brokers purchase shares for foreign investors and use them for tax refunds for which they were not eligible. Another seemed to take advantage of Germany being the source of much of the world's knowledge of advanced physics. It involved the purchases of shares just before and after dividends were to be paid but through some very complex paperwork managed to have single shares owned by more than one individual or institution, kind of like propelling them into quantum superposition. Evidently the state corruption ran deep because attempts to stop the theft date back at least to 1992 at the governmental level, and 5 whistle blowers have also tried to get something done. Finally a clerk in the central noticed that a single American pension fund was receiving huge rebates. Now dozens are working at totaling up the damage.

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*Is Socially Responsible Capitalism Losing?* Asks Sheelah Kolhatkar in a recent *New Yorker* article. On the rare occasion a capitalist enterprise decides that now and then doing a nice thing for their employees is good business in the long run, the shareholders scream bloody murder. Recently American Airlines agreed to raises for pilots and flight attendants. The response by Citigroup analyst Kevin Crissey "This is frustrating. Labor is being paid first again. Shareholders get leftovers." And from Jamie Baker of JPMorgan "We are troubled by AAL's wealth transfer of nearly \$1 billion to its labor groups." In other words, when those who create all the wealth of an enterprise get some of it, the parasitic class that lives off it have a fit. Let it be known that labor is only paid for its labor power (which is essentially purchased by an employer like any product), but unlike an inanimate object, it in the aggregate produces value far in excess of the cost of labor. That's how investor/parasites are able to live so finely even though they manage to be perfectly unproductive.