

The Rhetoric of Chiasmus #7

Politics

We are all political in a sense: unless insane, we all negotiate with others to get along, to survive, to progress. Politics is a fundamental underpinning of all societies irrespective of its size, wealth, location, history and so on. In short, we are all political animals.

Perhaps it was Aristotle who said that first, long ago? I'm not sure.

It's curious though, is it not, that the word 'party' has been in use for hundreds of years in connection with politics? Why not some other word - like 'group', 'faction', 'band', 'association'? By using 'party' almost exclusively, however, the politicians leave themselves wide open to chiasmic censure all *too* easily.

For example, there's no doubt **political parties need money to function**; quite often, though, it seems **political functionaries need money for partying**. And where does that money come from? Well, there are numerous sources, of course, starting with patrons of all stripes and types. Indeed, **some parties are quite prone to political patronage**; in contrast, **some patrons are quite prone at political parties**, know what I mean?

Well, now ... there's nothing like a good night out with boys - and gals - to keep the juice flowing, right?

So - is the description 'honest politician' an oxymoron? That would fit some no doubt, but *some* of those elected officials of **political parties would have many principles**, I'd say. Still, some **political principals certainly have many parties**, all too often.

All of which means **with the power to exercise one's desires, such desires are often simply an exercise of power**. And exercise the voice also, right? Whenever I tune into parliament, especially at Question Time (which is just piece of theater), one could be forgiven in thinking politicians are way, way overpaid. Because, with all the verbal shenanigans I hear and observe, I wonder **whether the act of simply serving in their roles makes them serve to simply act in their roles?**

All of which goes a long way to demonstrate a certain **poverty in politics** about ... the **politics of poverty**, perhaps? How many politicians are truly concerned with the plight of society's poor? Oh, to be sure, those who have seats in depressed areas are well aware; and they will, from my readings, tend to keep the issue alive.

Other politicians are ... not so vocal, as I'm sure you know. Moreover, some just don't seem to care at all. Indeed, it's fair to say, given the level of corruption in politics, some polities probably have a mantra like so: **"Whatever it takes, take whatever I want."**

Which, in my considered opinion, is much worse than, say, the attitude of parties that are - or are perceived to be - fiscally irresponsible, encapsulated perhaps in an idea that goes something like this: **"Spend today before today is spent!"** That works sometimes, of course. Indeed, during times of severe financial crisis, aggressive spending is often necessary.

At a personal level, though, I have to admit I seriously considered entering local politics decades ago. After due reflection, however, I decided against it after coming to the conclusion that, on balance, **it would be better to be a political dissident without than a dissident politician within.** That was at a time I had aspirations to take up a career in journalism....

Despite the shortcomings, though, we obviously need government and politicians; the alternatives are simply non-starters anytime and particularly in a globalized world. And while there are many who ridicule the democratic ideal of one person, one vote as being politically ineffectual, it seems to me that, these days in many countries, they're either **fighting to vote or voting to fight....**

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