

Commentary

I Am Not Joe the Plumber by Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'

There are three kinds of Americans, Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. Democrats and Republicans are happy people depending on who is in power. Independents are always unhappy. The Independents are like pendulums. They keep oscillating between the Democratic and Republican parties but go nowhere. Consequently, they are always grumpy and frustrated.



Right now, in the year 2021 Anno Domini, the Democrats are happy bunches. Nothing bothers them at the present. Inflation doesn't affect them. I called a die-hard Democrat friend of mine and asked him, "Do you feel the pinch of gas prices?"

"No, not at all," he replied.

"Do you feel disturbed by the open-border policy where everyone is just walking into our country unrestricted?" I asked further.

"No, not at all. This was their country to start with. We took it from them."

"Are you bothered by increasing crime in big cities?" I asked.

"No, not at all. My house has an alarm system plus I live in an affluent suburb away from the inner city," he replied.

"Does parents having no voice in public school policies and curriculum bother you?"

"No, not at all. My children are adults now and my grandchildren go to private schools," he seemed unbothered.

On the contrary, the Republicans feel miserable in 2021. Many of them miss Donald Trump. Others are financially pinched by high inflation, crime rate, open border, and the U.S. falling behind China.

Then there are the rest of us, Independents. Our miseries are perpetual. We are never satisfied with the party in power. To add insult to injury, we are also called undecided, fickle-minded, pending, undetermined, unresolved, unsettled, Joe the plumber, and lost between parties. That is bothersome.

Just the other day, a Republican friend of mine accused me of being a pointless voter. He assumes that I support certain candidates simply to be contrarian. Of course, this can be a routine scenario for Independent voters in the United States because they support candidates and political parties that may go against the established system.

To tell the truth, I really don't like any of the candidates - not the main two, not the others. I really don't care to give my vote to any of them. But everyone always says it's one's duty to vote.

Isn't this my duty to be also true to myself and not endorse someone I don't think should be in a position of power and leadership?

Of course, you can do whatever you want. Vote for one of the candidates on the ballot, write in a name (Elvis, Mickey Mouse, and God are among your infinite choices), stay home, whatever. It's your right to vote, which includes your right not to vote.

By the way, I am going to write my own name on the ballot next time. Can I be worse than the others? I don't think so.