Morrison Gets A Miracle - Just....

Summary:
Election surprise. The ALP has a real knack of choosing flawed characters to lead from opposition. Bill Shorten had baggage. The public never warmed to him or trusted him. Rudd's second coming relied on the party locking in the leader. What could go wrong?

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Shorten snatches defeat from the jaws of victory

Some people may think that it will be business as usual with Morrison back as PM. Highly unlikely. Despite all the happiness and backslapping last night ScoMo knows very well he dodged a bullet ..... just.

It really is an amazing situation. **The LNP were a divided rabble with revolving door PMs in exactly the same way the ALP was with the Rudd / Gillard / Rudd debacle.** There were multiple corruption scandals such as the Barrier Reef fund, watergate and of course the collusion with the banks to put on a dodgy Royal Commission. Despite all that -

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Shorten's ALP couldn't win in 2019.

What about all the LNP characters that jumped off the gravy train? Bishop, Pyne, O'Dwyer. They didn't believe a win was possible. Pyne has been in the playhouse since he was 25 years old – unfortunately he probably will be eligible for a super pension at taxpayers' expense. There are many others in Parliament that have been career politicians with bugger all idea what it's like for people to earn a living in the harsh environment they help create. In fact many of those running at the election had as their primary motivator the pay and perks available to MPs and Senators. **What other job provides that sort of lifestyle for people who may have no relevant skills at all?**

Once you feed at the trough it's hard to give up. An overconfident Shorten was even toying with generously giving Julie Bishop an ambassadorship. All part of the game whereby the ALP and LNP look after each other despite who's actually in office. Bishop is unlikely to get a similar reward from Morrison but you can bet he will have a position or two for ALP members who are now out of work.

The ALP – as predicted by very few commentators - struggled to get above a 30% primary vote – 26% in Queensland. Both parties saw their primary vote go backwards. The surprise was that - as far as seats go - the LNP is pretty much in the same territory it was in after Turnbull took them down to a one seat majority in 2016. Both parties deserved a kick this time too. It's a pity the LNP's primary vote didn't suffer as much as the ALP's but activists are still in a good position if they work hard and smart together to influence policy. **It's policies that count - it doesn't matter which party or PM puts them in place.**

What went wrong for Shorten's ALP?

In two words - Rudd & Shorten.

Bill Shorten manipulated Rudd into leadership twice. First against Howard and then to replace Gillard – who Shorten also put in place. Rudd had baggage and a flawed nature that was well known to ALP insiders. They put him into the leadership anyway because Shorten and the unions felt the outsider Rudd had a better chance against Howard than someone like Gillard who was always the left's favoured leader.

Unfortunately for the ALP - but fortunately for Bill Shorten - Rudd made it a condition of his second coming that the leadership must be locked in. Thus the ALP ended up stuck with Shorten who was never popular with voters. Plibersek or Albanese would have romped home with a landslide …… provided they could honestly answer the questions Shorten refused to right through the campaign.

People also remembered the baggage Shorten carried. His fingerprints being all over the ALP's 2007 to 2013 shenanigans. This on top of unsavoury activities as a union heavy and some other matters that are coming back to bite him. Voters didn't trust him – just like many who knew him in business and politics. Even more critical for victims of bank crimes and misconduct - Shorten did nothing when the ALP was in power and he was Minister for Financial Services and Superannuation (14.9.10 – 1.7.13) / Assistant Treasurer (14.9.10 – 14.12.11). Shorten did not offer a pathway to remediation and never seriously worked toward a Royal Commission. In fact shocking legacy cases of bank bastardry occurred on his watch. Perhaps his inaction was in part due to the substantial donations the banks were providing both major parties.

The ALP has a real knack of choosing flawed characters to lead from opposition. Beazley was the last opposition leader that could have made a good go of it. The choice of leader has nothing to do with what's good for the country. Backroom deals involving factions are the primary consideration – not who has the ethics, skills and personality to serve the country well.

Thus the ALP had to live and lose through Latham, Rudd and Shorten. In the old days flawed characters could do well but they had to have the missing ingredient that none of these three had ….. charisma. Now-a-days even that might not be enough to overcome some flaws.

The corruption that the LNP has displayed is exactly the same as has existed during the years the

ALP ruled. Some people say “that’s life … **politics is a dirty business.”** True - and you will never get rid of corruption but there are some no-brainer policies that will help reduce it and both parties should see to it that they are put in place as a top priority. **This can happen but only with co-ordinated action from people who want genuine reform. Politicians will never do what is required without massive public pressure. It is critical to hit hard right now.**

A few other factors that influenced the result.

It wasn’t the big end of town that many people felt the ALP was targeting – it was the middle class. People who work hard to give their families opportunities resent governments changing the rules and stealing what they have built up. Of course the LNP do much the same they just try to do it quietly. Both parties have allowed the wealth of the nation to be stolen. This is why too many people are doing it tough. The problems are structural and so are the solutions.

Morrison’s speech made it sound like the LNP serves “you” – absolute rot..!!

There is absolutely no doubt that the Adani mine would have gone ahead under a Shorten government. Shorten was deceptive and the people in Queensland weren’t sure and some people in Victoria gave him the benefit of the doubt.

In addition people remembered how ALP Treasurer Wayne Swan promised surplus after surplus but never delivered one. Both parties rely on dodgy figures and projections. At this election Shorten and Morrison were lying. **It is highly unlikely Morrison and Frydenberg will deliver a surplus next year.**

A little Aussie Political History

Bob Hawke and Paul Keating led governments that put in place significant and overdue reforms.

Now the ALP likes to boast about the great dynamic duo of reform but they never mention that those reforms came out of the Campbell Committee inquiry instigated by John Howard.

The reforms that opened up our economy were just as likely to have been LNP reforms. That’s why the LNP were happy to wave them through unopposed. Where Hawke’s skills came into play was getting the ALP rank and file and the unions to support the program. They didn’t want job losses in manufacturing when tariffs were reduced and abolished. A lot of the reforms were needed and timely. Australia is better for them ….. up to a point. The problem is the GDP benefit has not fed through to a large portion of the population. The social wage policies were important but it is not enough because the major parties have let much of the country’s wealth be stolen by the elite though systemic exploitation. While the wealth is stolen the parties are supposed to ration out what the elite leave us. We should have top class "hospitals, schools and roads" now … in fact years ago. How do people stand hearing that mantra at every election? **Australia is a wealthy country but the fetish for perpetual growth in a globalised world is ripping off the people and their country.**

We should particularly note that **Hawke and Keating deregulated the banks and sold our national bank - the Commonwealth bank.** This set the scene for the finance sector to drain a disproportionate share of the nation’s wealth. Billions going overseas every year. In fact some of the worst legacy cases of bank bastradry involve the CBA at around this time. Pigs will fly before you hear the truth about what went on then from any banker or politician ….. including Paul Keating. Have a read of then Senator Paul McLean’s book *Bankers and Bastards.* BRN has brought it to the attention of several bank CEOs and executives over the last few months. CBA and Westpac feature heavily.

A simple way to look at the situation is that too many of us make our money in the service sectors – particularly finance and government. All of us want to buy cheap products that happen to be produced by workers who are often exploited in very poor conditions overseas. BUT we insist on having great pay and conditions here. Globalisation doesn’t work like that and that’s one contributor to the cost of living pressures many are living with. It’s also why we are looking at rising under and

unemployment.

Opportunity exists for laser focused unity to bring about much needed reforms but only if people stop blindly supporting parties and politicians. Had we been better organised we could have seen independent warriors elected to the Senate fighting for victims of bank crimes and meaningful reform. You always have to hold your nose when voting, particularly for pollies that have been there for a long time. Fresh people were called for. There were some good independent and minor party candidates but you had to look carefully.

Critical reforms that must be pushed for hard from right now are listed below. **Activists must contact marginal LNP MPs and all Senators. The crossbenchers are critical. They must be shown that these issues are demanded and important to voters. The more emails, calls and visits they receive the more likely significant change can be achieved. People just can't rely on elections every three years to save the country. Morrison and his party must now be dragged toward genuine reforms. There are people in Parliament right now that will help.**

What do we want?

1). A properly bank funded remediation program for victims of bank crimes and misconduct. Proper funding does not have a cap.

2). Legislation that ensures bankers involved in crimes are stripped of their assets and face jail terms where appropriate.

3). The establishment of an Australian sovereign wealth fund.

4). The establishment of a national bank.

5). The gradual implementation of a Citizenship Dividend which will guarantee a useful job to every citizen.

6). Properly funded access to justice for all citizens involved in a legal dispute with a corporation or government.

Points 3 -5 are the BRN #SUMIR proposals - link below. Most minor party and independent candidates that responded to our survey were either in favour of the lot or interested in more details. **All of them wanted the banks brought into line.** One marginal seat holder responded with a classic brush off – he was ousted at the election.

In addition BRN has from the start campaigned for political advertising and donation reform. This is now critical.

So let’s add to our list –

7). Political Donation Reform – Individuals can only donate up to a maximum of $1,000 to one party of their choice. No foreign donations. No corporate donations. All donations collated and listed in real time by the AEC.

8). Political Advertising – Every candidate that runs for election should have a webpage on the AEC website. On that page there can be a video explaining their policy and some notes. The parties and candidates do not run ads at all. The AEC runs ads in print, radio, TV and web portals giving the link to the site where the information can be found. Voters can visit the site to find out what the candidates stand for and offer.

9). A Federal ICAC … with teeth. Not the watered down rubbish proposed by the LNP recently.

Why are these reforms long overdue?

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Corporations are aided in corrupt behaviour by their links to political parties. No business or corporation gives money to a political party without expecting the gesture to be helpful in some way to their business.

Businesses and unions should not be able to donate at all. Fundraisers such as $20,000 per plate dinners where a businessman can sit at a minister's or shadow minister's table are not acceptable. The beauty of the proposed reform is that the only way for parties to raise donations is by actually earning trust and respect from ordinary voters. This is done by displaying integrity, honesty and wise policy formulation - good for our democracy and good for our people.

Political parties should not be permitted to use advertising companies at all. We don't want the party with the best ads on TV to govern us. We need the party with the best people and policies. Advertising should only consist of candidates discussing policies and facts – simple and clear. If a politician (and party) cannot do this without a slick marketer holding his or her hand they clearly are unsuited to the job.

Also these reforms would see parties require much less money to run a campaign. The money they do raise can pay for signs and how to vote cards. Wouldn't life be much sweeter without all the BS we get every three years. Of course all the material the parties produce for the AEC web portal should be fact checked.

These are all pretty simple reforms. The parties don't want it for a host of reasons. If you do -make some constructive noise ..... now!

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