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Merry Christmas And A Happy New Year

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To my valued Clients and Friends

As a rule I tend to put my thoughts on paper by the first week in November but this year I delayed that decision to await the outcome of the US presidential election.

It was such a fascinating and captivating lead up and though I doubt any American would know or care less whether Malcolm or Bill would triumph in an Australian election, I was taken aback by the almost unprecedented interest and commentary of so many around me. It was truly riveting!

Perhaps it was the unedifying spectacle of the many candidates vying for the position as the most powerful leader of the free world hurling abuse at one another while dredging up every conceivable scandal and wrongdoing ever committed.

It was no wonder that nearly 44% of eligible voters did not even bother to cast a ballot. Can you blame them? Faced with a choice between an establishment figure supported by big business and money and viewed as an out of touch elitist versus a vulgar narcissist bragging of sexual conquests and who managed to alienate most of the non-white population, many must have thought and did shake their head in disbelief while thinking that, no matter who was elected, life was not going to change for them.

The most difficult tasks will fall to thinking world leaders - who will be forced to call upon their considerable diplomatic skills when expressing their true feelings in future dealings with the new president!

But if like Brexit, this is symptomatic of underlying dissatisfaction, not only with living standards but with the view that England should control its own destiny, then it is entirely understandable that any appeal to the disaffected would fall on fertile ground in a country that is still a long way from recovering from the aftermath of the GFC.

Sadly, the cynic in me will not allow me to believe that the majority of politicians of any persuasion have at heart the interests of their constituents and not the means of furthering their own venal self-interests. And yet, even as we live in possibly the best

country in the world, many to whom I've spoken, are dismayed at the rising tide of anti- "anyone who is not like us", under the guise of patriotism or nationalism, which appears to be growing strongly in many western countries.

Where on earth is our humanity? Listen to the heart wrenching stories of those seeking solace on our shores and we hear of entire families and villages' brutalised and innocent people killed and raped. These weary, desperate souls are not terrorists nor are they here to take our jobs. They will not be a burden on our social security nor will they seek to usurp our culture.

Most are fleeing war ravaged lands where mere existence is a daily struggle. Yes, we have employment concerns, mortgage worries and paying the bills and, - which room will house the third HD television, but seriously, do we pause to contemplate the lot of those not as fortunate? Are we so inured to the images on our screens that twenty, forty or a hundred dead - no longer have any real meaning and are - just statistics? I do not pretend to think that we can find a solution to every problem but I venture that a touch more compassion and charity would go a long way.

I also honestly do not think we have to be religious to affirm that circumstances have allowed us to see life through a first world prism and maybe, just maybe we could think "There, but for the grace of God, go I" and be grateful that this beautiful country affords us so many privileges and opportunities. Perhaps we can share them.

As always I trust that 2016 has been a good year for you. May you spend the festive season in the company of loved ones, family and friends and I hope that next year brings you every happiness and good health.

Best wishes, Jaimie Juriansz

"Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see"

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