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**THIS HOUSE HAS NO CONFIDENCE IN THE AMERICAN
ELECTORATE**

Proposition 1: Lucas Fear-Segal

Lucas Fear-Segal, an English barrister but a product of the US elementary school system, opened by saying “since the 19th April 1775 the American people have made a series of poor decisions”. He went on to say that “it is the sum total of those decisions that indicate that we should have no confidence in the American Electorate”. He reflected on events within the history of the United States and presented his first argument that the “political system has such a deep strain of racism and that defines the nation”. He went on to say that the “failure of the American Electorate to grasp this is a reason why we should have no confidence”. Moving on, he presented his second argument that capitalism was another reason why the Electorate should not be trusted. He elaborated by declaring that “what politicians can get away with [in the United States] is unheard of in Europe”. He concluded his speech by qualifying that he “would not replace the system of checks and balances with [his] own political opinions”.

Opposition 1: Alex Sundstrom

Alex Sundstrom, a member of the board of Republicans Overseas UK, noted that the American Electorate “often finds the status quo boring”. He went on to declare “democracy is the only vehicle that can advance the interests of the people” and questioned the scope and meaning of “having no confidence”. He submitted that the debate should revolve around whether the American Electorate could be trusted in “making decisions that are in their best interests”. As such, he asked the chamber whether “in this environment of increasingly worse economic conditions, is the status quo something the Electorate should propose”. He proposed that we “should look at the system that Americans find themselves in”. He elaborated this point by saying “there is not a whole lot of difference candidates, they are both a product of the system”. As such he submitted that “the system does not give people many choices, you either need to be a person that people want to give a lot of money to, or you have to be a billionaire celebrity”. He concluded his speech by saying “the American people, the nationalist movement, is a return to the time where the interests of the worker are focused upon, and that should be embraced”.

Proposition 2: Dr. Mark Shanahan

Dr. Mark Shanahan, a lecturer in Politics at Reading University, began by recounting the first time he visited the United States. He witnessed a “crisis of confidence in the American people”. He reasoned this due to the “massive decline in traditional industries, the anger at Washington, the anger at President Carter and that the people were angry as hell”. He went on to say in reference to Donald Trump that “America is angry again and another great outsider has swept himself on the ticket”. He summarised his key arguments as “the influence of the media and its categorisation of politics as entertainment, the right turning of the Republican Party, and the heart over head politics that has swept society”. He highlighted that in current time there is a notion that “we will make America great again by rejecting the norms of politics” and reminded the Chamber that “political parties exist by the will of the people”.

Opposition 2: Dr. Nina Ansary

Dr. Nina Ansary, an Iranian-American historian, opened by saying that “considering the recent media with the election, it is understandable why this House may not have confidence in the American voter”. She went on to say that “confronted with these abysmal choices, it is easier to conclude the American voter has lost their collective mind”. Instead she drew upon the fact that “the research indicates that the people do not want these people- just 38% of registered Republicans and 35% of Democratic registered voters are satisfied with these candidates”. As such, she purported that “most Americans do not feel represented by Democrats or Republicans”. She based her argument on the fact that “the dissatisfaction extends to the electoral system in itself”. She presented her arguments as “the establishment can no longer be trusted, the issues with the primary system, and the media machine and its influence on the Electorate”. She rounded off by saying that “it is tempting to choose the simple answer that the Electorate is to blame and cannot be trusted, but simple answers are seldom the right ones...if we want a better course, we must begin to identify the underlying problems”.

Proposition 3: Connor MacDonald

Connor MacDonald, a second year HSPS student at Emmanuel, opened his speech by declaring that the current American election “was not as competitive as it should have been”. He went on to say in reference to Donald Trump that “the person [the Republican Party] chose to nominate is a representation of politics itself”. He went on to declare that “Barack Obama’s presidency has been a political failure- he has compromised on so many points of his platform, and no other President has so utterly managed to fail expectations”. He went on to say that President Obama “could not escape politics even though he promised to”. The thrust of his argument was that “in politics, something always means nothing” and continued by saying that “Trump is offering something- something that is deeply hateful and problematic to the democratic American institution”. He concluded his argument by saying “I have lost in the American people because they have fundamentally forgotten how to do politics...the choices they have offered and put forward are two profoundly flawed candidates”.

Opposition 3: William Barnard

William Barnard, former Chair of Democrats Abroad UK, opened his speech by saying “in Europe the term populous is almost always with a negative connotation, in the United States, it is a more nuanced concept”. He went on to say that “populism sometimes appeals to the worst instincts of the voters” and that there was a “tangled history of populism in the United States”. He continued by admitting that “change in the United States is always discomfort, it creates anxiety and sometimes fear”. “We see an outcome of this fear in support of a candidate such as Trump. Who should we hold responsible for this fear? The American elite.” He noted that “we should realise that we live in an incredible time” and implored the Chamber to “hold responsible people responsible” for the state of the American Electorate. He encouraged the Chamber to “not lose faith in the American Electorate”, and highlighted the fact that “two emotions underline political campaigns: hope and fear”.