



COMMENT CHECK: Obama Has No Mandate, And Might Does Not Make Right

Thu, 11/29/2012 - 1:20pm | posted by [Jeremy Kolassa](#)

A commentator going by the handle of “Travis” posted an, shall I say “intriguing” [comment on my recent post about Grover Norquist](#). Travis writes:

This has nothing to do with the evil media, this has everything to do with elections.

Your slash-taxes-and-government policy preferences were put up to a vote earlier this month, and they lost.

The American people re-elected a president who campaigned on raising taxes on the wealthy, protecting entitlements and preserving government services.

This is just [the bandwagon fallacy](#).

To illustrate my point, let me put it to you this way: Suppose Candidate A (for a naughty word Jason says I cannot type) campaigns on a platform of fixing our economy [by killing all the poor people](#). Now, let’s say that, for whatever reason, [a majority of Americans disagree with Candidate A’s policy position](#), yet, strangely, they end up electing him into office anyways. Does this mean that Candidate A’s policy to kill the poor is the right thing to do?

That was a rhetorical question, there’s really no need to answer.

Yes, Obama won the election. But just because a guy wins what is essentially a popularity contest does not mean that his policies are *ipso facto* the right ones and everyone else should roll over and play dead. I guarantee you that liberals would not have done that if Romney won, as they did not do it when Bush won (particularly after 2004, when he won the popular vote.)

Travis doesn't use the word, but a lot of pundits are using the phrase "mandate." Guess what. There is no such thing as a mandate in democratic politics, and I wish people would stop using the phrase. It doesn't exist. It's made up. It's phony.

Now, I'm going to veer into dangerously anarchist-y territory by saying that might does not make right—even at the voting booth. (I am still a minarchist, don't worry.) Our rights are not granted to us by government. They are supposed to be *protected* by government, but that's a different story. Our rights are natural, which we have because we are self-aware, sapient beings with free will. Just because a bunch of people get together and vote for some guy doesn't change any of that. There's a concept the libertarian Yoda—by who I mean Tom Palmer from the Cato Institute—explained to me once, called "[rule according to a higher law](#)." Whether you're a god-fearing Christian or a godless heathen, a pinko commie or a freewheeling capitalist, there is a higher law based on the fact that we are free willed sapient beings. No government rule can change that.

Now that this BS argument has been thoroughly debunked, I return you to your regularly scheduled United Liberty.