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JOHN BRUMMETT: Longing for Britain's mess

What has rendered the United Kingdom troubled by a tenuous piecemeal government might be just what the doctor ordered for the United States.

America could use multiple political parties with none achieving a congressional majority, necessitating that two of them go together to form a coalition government.

This would require cooperation and, ideally, isolate the polarizing extremes and provide direct political muscle to the nation's moderate independent majority.

Let's just suppose, for fun and intellectual exercise, that the United States had a parliamentary system featuring four prevailing political parties -- the Tea Party, covering the extreme right; Republicans, covering the mainstream right and a touch of the center; Democrats, covering most of the center and the mainstream left; and the MoveOn Party, covering the extreme left.

Let's say we were having an election, with these persons at the top of the four slates -- Sarah Palin for the Tea Party, Mitt Romney for the Republicans, Barack Obama for the Democrats and, oh, let's say Nancy Pelosi for the MoveOn Party.

Let's imagine that this process would not be burdened by the Electoral College by which we purposely skew our returns to empower the semi-sovereign states.

Permit me to take a stab as to how these returns would go.

Obama and the Democrats would lead the ticket with 39 percent. Romney and the Republicans would come in second at 33 percent. Palin and the Tea Party would cop 17 cent for third place. Pelosi and the MoveOn Party would bring up the rear with 11 percent.

You're not going to believe this. You're going to think I did this on purpose.

The natural centrist and leftist coalition, Democrats and MoveOn, combined for 50 percent. The natural mainstream right and extreme right coalition, Republicans and the Tea Party, combined for 50 percent.

However could we possibly fashion from that disorder a coalition providing a reasonable governing majority?

Here's how: Obama and Romney would tell Palin and Pelosi to get lost, then they would sit down together with their most trusted aides and advisers and put together a workable governing partnership from the center out by which Obama, having led the ticket, would get to remain the chief executive.

But Romney would get to the vice president, at which time he could go ahead and admit that

Obama's health care reform law is, truth be known, pretty much the same thing he pushed through in Massachusetts when he was governor there, and not socialism or radical or scary at all.

The rest of it -- congressional leadership, Cabinet jobs -- could be worked out as the two parties saw fit. Obama could oust Pelosi as speaker and let the Republicans have that one, so long as it was a moderate Republican. The Democrats could keep the majority leader's job in the Senate, though not with Harry Reid, who is too polarizing, but with, oh, Mark Pryor of Arkansas or Dianne Feinstein of California -- but not Joe Lieberman. They couldn't go that far.

The Republicans could put in some charter school and voucher champion as education secretary, but the Democrats would keep Hillary Clinton at state and Eric Holder as attorney general.

We'd find a pragmatic middle ground for a more secure border but with a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. We'd pass financial reform in a heartbeat. We'd follow the current policy toward Afghanistan and terror, but with broader backing. We'd still hit a roadblock, probably, on cap-and-trade.

Most importantly, we wouldn't be plagued by partisan talking points and obstructionism, except from the Tea Party and MoveOn, which would continue to exist and hold their own, since that's where most of the money and passion are.

We'd need them to hold their own, to keep the American mainstream scared into sane cooperation.

John Brummett is an award-winning columnist for the Arkansas News Bureau in Little Rock and author of "High Wire," a book about Bill Clinton's first year as president. His e-mail address is jbrummett@arkansasnews.com.

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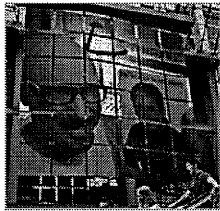
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JOHN BRUMMETT: Longing for Britain's mess

May 16, 2010 at 9:40 AM [2 comments](#)

I'm reprinting this article simply because it stirred so much thought.

Some of you won't like it.

Some of you will.

[John Brummett](#) is an award-winning, politically Liberal columnist for the Arkansas News Bureau in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Let me know what you think.

Longing for Britain's Mess

What has rendered the United Kingdom troubled by a tenuous piecemeal government might be just what the doctor ordered for the United States. America could use multiple political parties with none achieving a congressional majority, necessitating that two of them go together to form a coalition government.

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RG
United States
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You know how sometimes when you're driving and you need both hands to do something besides drive, so you drive with your knees? And you know how it feels like you're kind of in control, but kind of not? Well, welcome to American politics! rg

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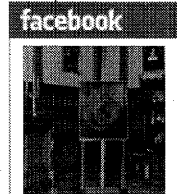
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ChristianColon28 wrote:
5 days ago | [Reply](#)

Wasn't Hillary Clinton that famous Head of State celeb?



ken wrote:
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for the most part this is what we normally have, and come nov. will have again, a dem. pres. a republican house and a toss up in the senate. or vis.-versa. with both needing to compromise to move the country forward. not the tyrant obama dictating to the country.

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