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SOC 100

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The Political Compass

My result of the test:

**Economic Left/Right: -5.88**

**Social Libertarian/Authoritarian: -1.28**

**My dot located in green area.**

**My location in this test is very close to Nelson Mandela.**

My expected location is in the middle of the economic scale and a quarter distance to the bottom of the social scale. Actually, the result of mine was a little different than what I expected. It was too close to the communism on the economic scale, which means I am more libertarian in economic.

I’m not too surprise with this result, because I consider the environment that I grew up effects me a lot. My native country is China, and it is widely known that it is a big communist country. Our economic system is not as liberal as some developed countries, which makes me have more expectation on economic libertarian. For instance, in China, we cannot change the price of goods. On the contrary, even the price of gasoline is different in different gas station in USA. Therefore, Chinese government is also powerful to control the society. For example, we are not allowed to publish any bad messages about the government. At every day’s 7pm, all the TV channels of China are the same, the official news channel. Nevertheless, I really appreciate we could have freedom of speech in the future.

I learned some new knowledge about politics and authority. Politics is a power relation between people, which could be of a governmental or interpersonal nature. What is authority, “Authority is the justifiable right to exercise power.”(Conley 2011：547)

There are three types of legitimate authorities mentioned in the textbook:

First type of authority is Charismatic Authority, “authority that rests in the superhuman appeal of an individual leader.”(Conley 2011：547) Charismatic authority means that there is someone who is very charm and always gets people’s attention. These kind of person like a nature leader. The second type of authority is Traditional Authority, “leaders are designed according to traditional rules and are obeyed because of their traditional status.”(Weber, 1968) The last one is Legal-Rational Authority, “a system of authority based on legal, impersonal rules; the rules rule.”(Conley 2011：548)

In my perspective, I prefer the legal- national authority, because it seems fair to everyone. This authority makes every thing routinized, which means we will make decisions efficiently and fairly. However, this knowledge does not change my political participation a lot. The primary reason for this is that I have lived most of my life in China as a result the culture and the society has influenced my way of thinking, therefore it would take a lot more to alter my political participation. Nevertheless I do not think greatly of the politics in China as it opposes freedom of speech as well as free trade.

I firmly believe that people should be tested before engaging in political participation. I feel that most of the people who engage themselves in political matters do not really understand themselves and what they desire. Such a test would be extremely insightful and help them greatly in understanding their personal views and beliefs, consequently help them make better and informed political decisions.

My location on the scale is close to that of Nelson Mandela. Unfortunately I was not familiar with him before but after carrying out some research I have found that Nelson Mandela, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, was the President of South Africa from 1994-1999. He was an extremely charismatic individual who worked hard to transform South Africa into a better and more productive country. During his presidency he introduced a free-health care for young children and their mothers, he launched a reconstruction and development program in which he invested in housing and health care. Similarly he was responsible for increasing the welfare spending as well as significantly increasing public spending on education. “Welfare state is a system of government agencies and programs that provide benefits to the population.”(Macionis 2010: 442), which is a great contribution for the country. He introduced Child support grants to alleviate child poverty.

After reading about Nelson Mandela I consider him as an ideal. I have realized that there are similarities in our political views. Nelson Mandela focused greatly on education and children. I strongly feel that children are the future of every country and providing them with good health care and education would be extremely beneficial for a country both economically as well as politically. His introduction of child support grants to alleviate poverty was a big contribution in respect to civil rights. His increasing the welfare spending was also a great a contribution to social rights. Nevertheless there are some differences between Mandela and me. Although I do not like the government restricts a lot about people’s social life, in capitalist country people are too open mind about relationships between men and women. I think Asian countries are usually traditional in these relationships. Otherwise, I’m an atheist, so religion means nothing to me. It is not discrimination in religion; I just don’t care about that.

In conclusion, I pretty satisfy with my location in this test. It does reflect my real desire in political participation. I firmly believe more liberal in economic and social could lead a wonderful future of human.

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