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Written by [James Lawson](#) [2] | Monday 11 October 2010



To many, the election of a clown to government in Brazil is of little surprise. After all, we've had our fair share of clowns in Britain. If the last Labour government had proposed to change the name of the Commons to the House of Clowns, it no doubt would have met significant public approval.

Prime Trickster Gordon led a particularly funny act as ringmaster. He corrupted the word investment (to mean spending), woefully mismanaged the economy and continued the assault on our freedoms. It was one hell of a trapeze act for Britain, and quite a memorable piece ? we will be paying for his crafty spectacle for generations. No wonder so many people suffer from coulrophobia (a fear of clowns). Though, Brown?s walk the plank item on May the 6th did make for a happy ending.

So what?s so funny about Brazil?s clown? Unlike most clowns in politics, recently elected Francisco Everardo Oliveira Silva, whose stage name is ?Grumpy?, knows he?s a clown and admits it. In fact, he has actually worked in a circus before his congressional career. His campaign slogans admirably included, "What does a federal deputy do? Truly, I don't know. But vote for me and I will find out for you," and "It can?t get any worse". He received more than 1.3 million votes. It is good to see somebody aim the cannonball at corrupt politicians and poor policies.

Unfortunately, it seems that this clown may have pulled some pranks too; his campaign was not quite as rebellious as the smoke and mirrors suggest. In Brazil, politicians can pass surplus votes on to others. Grumpy is a member of the left leaning coalition which includes the ruling Worker?s party. According to David Fleischer of the University of Brasilia, these sorts of candidates "are promoted by their parties in the hope that they will get enough votes to pull some two or three less-voted-for candidates into office." It seems the clowns have the last laugh.

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