

CIA Consultant Thinks US Close to Civil War

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The fragility of the American democracy seems to be already visible even to pro-Western analysts. Recent studies and reports indicate that the American state is among the most politically vulnerable to internal threats in the world. This diagnosis is currently shared even by some of the biggest supporters of Washington. The internal reality of the US is showing itself as a major source of concern for the American government, which, on its part, should decline some of its international interests in order to improve its domestic scenario.

In November, the Stockholm-based International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance named American democracy as one of the most backward in the world. The institute emphasized the emergence of several authoritarian tendencies in the US, which can be perfectly understood when we look back on some recent events, such as the electoral violence last year, the constant allegations of electoral fraud, and others. However, this negative and “pessimistic” opinion about the future of the US now seems shared even by CIA advisers.

Barbara F. Walter, a CIA executive consultant and expert in analyzing scenarios of political instability, pointed out in a recent publication that the US is on the brink of a civil war. Barbara has written a book on this topic, which has been reviewed by The Washington Post. According to her, the process of polarization of American society has already surpassed the stages of “pre-insurgency” and “incipient conflict”, making it literally on the brink of starting an internal armed conflict.

These are some of Barbara’s words:

“We are closer to civil war than any of us would like to believe (...) the one wants to believe that their beloved democracy is in decline, or headed toward war. [...] If you were an analyst in a foreign country looking at events in America — the same way you’d look at events in Ukraine or the Ivory Coast or Venezuela — you would go down a checklist, assessing each of the conditions that make civil war likely (...) We are no longer the world’s oldest continuous democracy (...) That honor is now held by Switzerland, followed by New Zealand, and then Canada. We are no longer a peer to nations like Canada, Costa Rica, and Japan, which are all rated at +10 on the Polity

index”.

The author believes that her country has entered a very dangerous stage of political security, especially after the events earlier this year, when protesters invaded the Capitol during the height of popular demonstrations. For her, this event seems to have paved the way for Washington to enter the stage of “open insurgency”, which is a dangerous step towards a civil war. According to her, this entire scenario is a consequence of the anti-democratic process that advanced during the Trump administration, making the American state a sort of intermediary between an autocracy and a real democracy.

Considering all these factors and pointing to several indices from previous polls, the CIA consultant concludes that her country’s current political status can be defined as “high risk of civil war”, something truly similar to the internal scenario of polarization in the 19th century, before the beginning of the only civil conflict in American history. A combination of bad governance with undemocratic policies and institutional weakening makes Washington vulnerable to all internal threats.

Walter appoints Trump and the Republicans who for her have pushed the US into an “abyss” as culprits. She believes that Joe Biden’s government and the Democrats’ hegemony would be a hope for the American, but at the same time points out that the Trump administration left such a negative legacy that it makes it practically impossible to achieve the Democrats’ goals – materialized in Biden’s Build Back Better agenda, which becomes more and more unachievable.

In fact, much of the data pointed out by Barbara Walter is true, but in the end, the aim of her work seems to be just an attempt to legitimize the actions of Democrats and condemn all aspects of the Trump administration. While it is undeniable that Trump represented several setbacks for American democracy, it seems a real exaggeration to point him as the culprit in this entire process.

The first mistake is to idealize American democracy as the most perfect example of a political regime to be followed. Structural problems such as racism, social inequalities and public security crisis are nothing new in American history, but a reality that has been with the country for decades. The main problem that Trump represented for American democracy was precisely to damage its image, as the Republican president was explicit in its authoritarian and right-wing tendencies, while Democratic praxis consists of disguising such tendencies by promoting an agenda in defense of ethnic, sexual and social minorities. Trump has been explicit and Biden has been more moderate, but both represent the same advanced stage of US democratic decadence.

The arguments exposed in Barbara’s book seem like a true apology for Biden and his model of governance, as well as an attempt to highlight, from a strategic perspective – considering Barbara’s position at the CIA – the importance of implementing the Build Back Better agenda, which currently faces strong rejection in American political society. However, despite her overly pro-Biden stance, Barbara deserves special attention for correctly diagnosing the danger that currently most affects American society.

Civil war is no longer a distant scenario for the world’s greatest power. Social polarization in the country has reached really high levels. Racial tensions, political conflicts, separatist groups and several other factors have contributed to the increase in the country’s internal

crisis. The uncontrolled immigration that began with the Biden government makes the situation even worse, escalating social problems and racist and xenophobic reactions. Amidst a scenario of weak democracy, polarization and totalitarian tendencies gain space and, with this, future scenarios such a civil war, Balkanization or even the beginning of a dictatorship are expected.

The best thing for the American government to do is to interpret Barbara Walter's book as a true warning, a report by a CIA consultant about the problems that affect America, and not as a simple apology for the Biden administration. Washington's problems are serious and it is no longer a matter of "Republicans vs. Democrats" but of "democracy vs. civil war".

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