

# Election 2018: You Have Democracy If You Can Keep It

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*Can President Donald Trump's white, rural and older base in America be ever moved from their granite-like mindset that seedy operatives and duplicitous right-wing spinsters on GOP-controlled media and church pulpits solidified since the days of Goldwater and Nixon? They are the card-carrying smug Republican patriots with children sometimes aghast at their ignorance or children so indoctrinated by them that a deeper racism and bigotry has now so divided the country that comparisons made to days preceding the Civil War and War of Independence are not too far-fetched.*

Make no mistake about it: racism and bigotry are the roots of the Trump phenomena. It is directed against people of color, gender, sexual orientation, immigrants, people of non-Christian beliefs, people espousing human rights and world peace, people opposed to the war machine, people who dare insult "the flag", people who detest and counter the libertarian creed of neoliberalism and market-based governance, or people who simply protest, disagree, dissent or oppose the deadly anti-democratic forces now undermining this nation. The word "democracy" is hardly uttered by Republicans; instead, they chant money, profits, markets, GDP and the one word that rivets the voter's attention and excels beyond all other canards to gain votes: TAXES!

Money, markets, taxes, profits, greed, ruthless competition, do-or-die economic Darwinism, material wealth, property values, consumerism - this is the religion that now grips this once-great nation and threatens its birthright; for America is no longer the great hope of the world but under the spell of its aspiring world autocrat, President Donald J. Trump, is quickly becoming the world's pariah.

Donald J. Trump is not God's chosen saviour of America as some evangelicals continue to believe. He is a demagogue and tyrant. He is the choice of the very ones who turned reality on its head when they applied those labels to Barack Obama. He is the choice of the very ones who turn the Sermon on the Mount on its head by sadistically denying government assistance to help cloth the naked, feed the hungry, shelter the homeless. Republicanism is the choice of those seniors who vote to take away future health care benefits from their very own children and grandchildren while lavishly consuming Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid for themselves - benefits awarded them by FDR in 1930s and LBJ in the 1960s (Democrats all!). They, together with the mushrooming forces of wealth, corporatism and Wall Street, have turned The Great Society on its head and installed the John Birch Society in its place.

Because of the Republicans' allegiance to a political party that champions, justifies and coddles a lawless, anarchic president who disdains legality, human rights, freedom of

speech and the press – if not the actual Constitution itself – the children and grand-children of elderly Republicans should be asking them: “Why do you, who benefit the most, vote to steal health care, unemployment benefits and other safety net programs from me, should I ever need them? Why?” They should be asking them, “Why do you preach God and call yourself Christians when your party revokes every unambiguous injunction given in the Gospels? You are hypocrites!” They should be asking them, “Why do you support a party that deregulates powerful corporations and is taking away every legal protection we have against business malfeasance, malpractice and corruption?” They should be asking them, “Why do you vote to give industry the right to pollute and emit poisons into your own, mine and your own grandchildren’s bloodstreams?”

Donald J. Trump is no leader of the free world, and the party of Trump – the Republicans – is leading this nation into a death spiral. He and they do not deserve to be called leaders of the free world, or the G7 or of any American who cherishes justice, freedom, equal rights and democratic rule. He is the leader of those voters (less than half in the 2016 election) who wish to advance bigotry, racism, xenophobia, nationalism and hatred for each and every social and humanitarian advance achieved by our nation over the last century. The Trump-evangelical is no Christian and the Trump-nationalist is no patriot.

The present American dilemma fraught with extreme division is on par with similar periods preceding the Civil War and War of Independence. It is worthy of the title Founder Thomas Paine gave his broadside, “The American Crisis”.

Citizens of the Western world, if not the entire world, are asking themselves, “How could that great nation elect such a man as Trump?” “Why hasn’t he been stopped?”

The answer is found in studying the details of the “Crisis”. But if the Trump phenomena advances in America without restraint, and metastasizes to other Western democracies, liberal democracy itself will be buried.

“These are the times that try men’s souls,” wrote Paine in 1776 – as true today in America as then.

Americans had used the doctrine of popular sovereignty–“democracy”–as the rationale for their successful rebellion against English authority in 1776. Today Red state, far-right and libertarian Republicans often quote Ben Franklin who upon leaving the Constitutional Convention in 1787 was asked by a group of citizens, “What kind of government have you given us, Dr. Franklin?” Franklin replied, “A republic if you can keep it.” The question today isn’t whether America will remain a republic; it is what type of republic will America become under continued right-wing Republican control? A tyrannical one like the Republic of North Korea and People’s Republic of China, or will it remain the republic that gave the world its template of democracy?

The November elections will be a verdict on these questions of whether this great nation will remain a democracy or become an authoritarian right-wing plutocracy benefiting the most wealthy at the expense of all others.

Today, Dr. Franklin, if asked, might clarify his answer, “You still have a republic and it will remain one, but it is more. You also have a democracy.

“Will you keep it?”

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Source

Richard R. Beeman, Ph.D., "[Perspectives on the Constitution: A Republic, If You Can Keep It](#)"

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