

Political Linguistics in America

The American Kleptocratic "Necrocracy": A "Democracy" that Kills

by Prof. John Kozy

Languages are called living because they constantly change. There's no way to stop that, of course; people use languages as they will. Linguists often speak approvingly of the change, citing the richness that adds to language and inventiveness of the human mind, but the change also has unintended consequences that are often overlooked. The change, after all, is what makes works written in old and even middle English unintelligible to modern speakers of English.

Some attempts have been made to control linguistic change; they have not had much success. L'Académie française, for example, has continuously fought a losing battle against changes in French, and even the U.S. governments attempts to advocate Simplified English show few positive results. Yet attempts to control linguistic change arise because of an irrefutable fact, namely, that linguistic change often makes speech and writing ambiguous which obscures meaning and leads to muddled thinking.

Take the word 'democracy,' for instance. It has come to mean something like a government whose agents are 'elected by the people.' But that's a slippery definition.

Democracy originally meant *rule by* the people, but the people do not rule in governments whose agents are merely elected.

If there are legal or financial restrictions on who can seek office, what is called democracy can be any one of a number of different kinds of government. If only clerics of a specific religious sect can seek office, the government that results is really an ecclesiocracy. If only the affluent can seek office, it would be a plutocracy. If only geniuses are allowed to seek office, it would be a geniocracy, and there are numerous other types. Merely calling a nation democratic is so ambiguous it has no real meaning.

When President Wilson went before Congress on April 2, 1917, to seek a Declaration of War against Germany in order that the world “be made safe for democracy,” exactly what was he pleading for? Almost a dozen major and numerous minor wars since have apparently not made the world safe for anything, no less, democracy. The world is more dangerous for nations and their peoples than ever.

When US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton met with more than 20 Arab foreign ministers in Marrakesh, Morocco to promote democracy in the region, what exactly what was she promoting? After all, the Iranians hold regular elections.

When President Bush told a gathering of the Asian American Heritage month in Washington that "We're working with

India to promote democracy and the peace it yields throughout the continent, " exactly what was he promoting, especially since Arundhati Roy, an Indian woman, writes in *Listening to Grasshoppers; Field Notes on Democracy*, that democracy has "metastasized into something dangerous." She argues that democracy in India is not for, of and by the people but "designed to uphold the consensus of the elite for market growth," which is, of course, exactly what American democracy has become.

P.R. Sarkar, the founder of Prout, the Progressive Utilization Theory, is cited as saying that democracy can never be successful unless the majority of the population are moralists, that there needs to be a trend that supports humanistic values, and that capitalism breaks down whatever remains of those very values. "In its relentless quest for individual material acquisitions and selfish comfort it makes us all insensitive to the suffering of others and prone to divisive tendencies." Sarkar is right, of course. After all, even the Papacy has been corrupted at various times in history. Any system can be corrupted when it is controlled by the immoral.

Roy claims that this late phase of mature capitalism is headed for hell. But people living in capitalist economies have always lived in hell. Dante's *Inferno* has seven levels; today's capitalist democracies have many more, and only the level distinguishes one capitalist hell from others.

Roy approves of violence as a means of people's resistance to injustice. She claims that many of the poor are "crossing over... to another side; the side of armed struggle." Certainly that observation is true, but the crossover has not yet occurred within capitalist democracies, and the Western democratic attempt to "promote democracy" is merely an attempt to extend the boundaries of this hell to other regions. Yet, success may be illusory.

Victor Davis Hanson, a patrician, conservative, American historian, who writes on war but has never himself served, claims that "the usual checks on the tradition of Western warfare are magnified in our time." He argues that there are five traditional checks on it. One is the Western tendency to limit the ferocity of war through rules and regulations. Second, there is no monolithic West; the U.S. and its allies often can't agree. Third, it is very easy to acquire and use weapons. Fourth, there are ever-present anti-war movements in the West, extending all the way back to Classical Greece, citing Euripides' *Trojan Women* and Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, and fifth, it's not easy to convince someone who has the good life to fight against someone who doesn't.

Although all of these are true, Hanson, like many historians, fails to probe deeply by asking, Why? The why may lie in the increasing recognition of the insight President Eisenhower described when he said, "I hate war, as only a soldier who has lived it can, as one who has seen its brutality, its futility,

its stupidity . . . every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed." That recognition may in the end be the ultimate check on the Western way of war, and patricians like Hanson are right to be concerned. The time that the poor are willing to fight to preserve the patrician lifestyles of the wealthy may come to an end as the perpetual war of Western nations against the rest of humanity is exposed by the stream of people in body bags returned to their homelands for burial.

The democracy being promoted and made safe is not the one of rule by the people. It is a kleptocratic necrocracy that kills so that it can scavenge the carcasses of the dead and dying so that America can continue to be the largest consumer of the world's resources. Such is the democracy that the youth of Western nations are being asked to fight and die for, and it is made possible by the ambiguity in the word democracy what has made the term meaningless.

Napoleon is cited as having said that religion is what keeps the poor from murdering the rich. As the poor grow more and more numerous, being stripped of their meager holdings by kleptocratic capitalist political economies whose greed knows no bounds, this may change, and Arundhati Roy may be right in believing that many of the poor will cross over to the side of armed struggle. If so, the Western patrician class has good reason to be concerned.

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