

What's Wrong With Democracy

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Submitted by R.L. Parkey

Our government is in the habit of going around the globe and trying to establish democracy in as many places as they can, by force in some cases. Lots of nations refuse to establish a pure form of democracy,

Britain and France do not have a democracy as such, and that's because they don't want it that way. Not many of the large nations of the world subscribe to the mores of democracy.

Do you find it strange that the United States is among only a very few places on the planet that practices democracy? Ok, lets take a close look at this form of government, big money controls everything,

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April 1, 2009 Iowa Bystander

Submitted by Dave Leach

Shall Americans indeed be embarrassed by having more freedom than other nations, as R. L. Parkey advises? Shall we hand over the steering wheel of our lives to the next tyrant that offers to "judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles", so "that we also may be like all the nations"?

Those were the advantages Israel listed to justify insisting that God replace their representative democracy(see

www.Saltshaker.US/BibleStudies/Freedom.pdf) with tyranny! (1 Samuel 8:20) They had been discouraged because some of their elected leaders (Samuel's sons) had become corrupt while in office. Instead of doing the hard work of rebuilding a society that does not tolerate corruption, they imagined a tyrant whom they did not choose would treat them better!

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The First Democracy in History was in Israel, not Greece

By Dave Leach

Israel's government, before it rejected freedom for the tyranny of kings in 1 Samuel 8, was a representative democracy in which people voted for their own leaders. This is implied in Deuteronomy 1:17, which says Moses confirmed leaders who were "known" to the people; the Hebrew word indicates an intimate "knowing by experience". It is also suggested in Judges 17:6 and 21:25 which say "every man did *that which was right in his own eyes.*"

This interpretation is confirmed in Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 3, Chapter 4, Section 1. Josephus reports that leaders had to be residents of the communities over which they governed, as in today's American political system – it was not like the English system before our Revolutionary War, in which the King appointed governors over states whom the people had never before met.

(Cont'd page 3)

Encyclopedias say Greece had the first democracy! Not only did their "democracy" come 700 years after Moses, in 500 BC, but it wasn't much of a democracy and it wasn't stable from one generation to the next. They elected military generals only; all other officials were chosen by lot! Not for quality or wisdom, but by chance! Fortunately they ruled only one year. If they ruled poorly they could be banished! And only about 1/8th of those ruled over could speak for or against policies, the rest being slaves!

Wikipedia: All the male Athenian citizens were eligible to speak and vote in the Assembly, which set the laws of the city-state, citizenship was not granted to [women](#), or [slaves](#). Of the 250,000 inhabitants only some 30,000 on average were citizens. Of those 30,000 perhaps 5,000 might regularly attend one or more meetings of the popular Assembly. Most of the officers and magistrates of Athenian government were allotted; only the generals ([strategoi](#)) and a few other officers were elected.[\[2\]](#) The island of [Arwad](#), settled in the early 2nd millennium BC by the [Phoenicians](#), has been cited[\[23\]](#) as one of the first known examples of a democracy in the world. In Arwad, the people, rather than a monarch, are described as sovereign. In [Greek](#), Arwad was known as Arado or Arados. (Cont'd next)

Wikipedia, Democracy: [edit] Ancient origins (As of February, 2009)

The term *democracy* first appeared in [ancient Greek](#) political and philosophical thought. The

[philosopher Plato](#) contrasted **democracy**, the system of "rule by the governed", with the alternative systems of **monarchy** (rule by one individual), **oligarchy** (rule by a small élite class) and **timocracy**.^[21] Although [Athenian democracy](#) is today considered by many to have been a form of direct democracy, originally it had two distinguishing features: firstly the allotment (selection by lot) of ordinary citizens to government offices and courts,^[22] and secondarily the assembly of all the citizens. All the male Athenian citizens were eligible to speak and vote in the Assembly, which set the laws of the city-state, citizenship was not granted to [women](#), or [slaves](#). Of the 250,000 inhabitants only some 30,000 on average were citizens. Of those 30,000 perhaps 5,000 might regularly attend one or more meetings of the popular Assembly. Most of the officers and magistrates of Athenian government were allotted; only the generals ([strategoi](#)) and a few other officers were elected.^[2]

The island of [Arwad](#), settled in the early 2nd millennium BC by the [Phoenicians](#), has been cited^[23] as one of the first known examples of a democracy in the world. In Arwad, the people, rather than a monarch, are described as sovereign. In [Greek](#), Arwad was known as Arado or Arados. Another possible example of primitive democracy may have been the early [Sumerian](#) city-states.^[24] [Vaishali](#) in what is now [Bihar, India](#) is also one of the first governments in the world to have elements of what we would today consider democracy, similar to those found in ancient Greece (although it was not a monarchy, ancient Vaishali is perhaps better described as an [oligarchy](#)). A similar proto-democracy or oligarchy existed temporarily among the [Medes](#) in the 6th century BC, but which came to an end after the [Achaemenid](#) Emperor [Darius the Great](#) declared that the best monarchy was better than the best oligarchy or best democracy.^[25]

Even though the [Roman Republic](#) contributed significantly into certain aspects of democracy, such as Laws, it never became a democracy. The Romans had elections for choosing representatives, but again women, slaves, and the large foreign population were excluded. Also the votes of the wealthy were given more weight and almost all high officials, such as being member of [Senate](#), come from a few wealthy and noble families.^[26]

A serious claim for early democratic institutions comes from the independent "republics" of [India](#), [sanghas](#) and [ganas](#), which existed as early as the sixth century BCE and persisted in some areas until the fourth century CE. The evidence is scattered and no pure historical source exists for that period. In addition, [Diodorus](#) (a Greek historian at the time of [Alexander the Great](#)'s excursion of India), without offering any detail, mentions that independent and democratic states existed in India.^[27] However, modern scholars note that the word *democracy* at the third century BC had been degraded and could mean any autonomous state no matter how oligarchic it was.^{[28][29]}

[\[edit\]](#) Middle Ages

During the [Middle Ages](#), there were various systems involving elections or assemblies, although often only involving a minority of the population, such as [the election of Uthman](#) in the [Rashidun Caliphate](#), the election of [Gopala](#) in [Bengal](#), the [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth](#), the [Althing](#) in [Iceland](#), certain [medieval Italian](#) city-states such as [Venice](#), the [tuatha](#) system in early medieval Ireland, the [Veche](#) in [Novgorod](#) and [Pskov](#) Republics of medieval Russia, [Scandinavian Things](#), [The States](#) in [Tyrol](#) and [Switzerland](#) and the autonomous merchant city of [Sakai](#) in the 16th century in Japan. However, participation was often restricted to a minority, and so may be better classified as [oligarchy](#). Most regions in medieval Europe were ruled by clergy or feudal lords.

A little closer to modern democracy were the Cossack republics of Ukraine in the 16th-17th centuries: [Cossack Hetmanate](#) and [Zaporizhian Sich](#). The highest post - the [Hetman](#) was elected by the representatives from country's districts. Because these states were very militarised, the right to participate in Hetman's elections was largely restricted to those who serve in the Cossack Army and overtime was curtailed effectively limiting these rights to higher army ranks.

The [Parliament of England](#) had its roots in the restrictions on the power of kings written into [Magna Carta](#). The first elected parliament was [De Montfort's Parliament](#) in England in 1265. However only a small minority actually had a voice; Parliament was elected by only a few percent of the population (less than 3% in 1780.^[30]), and the system had problematic features such as [rotten boroughs](#). The power to call parliament was at the pleasure of the monarch (usually when he or she needed funds). After the [Glorious Revolution](#) of 1688, the [English Bill of Rights](#) was enacted in 1689, which codified certain rights and increased the influence of the Parliament.^[30] The franchise was slowly increased and the Parliament gradually gained more power until the monarch became largely a figurehead.^[31]

Democracy was also seen to a certain extent in [bands](#) and [tribes](#) such as the [Iroquois Confederacy](#).

However, in the Iroquois Confederacy only the males of certain clans could be leaders and some clans were excluded. Only the oldest females from the same clans could choose and remove the leaders. This excluded most of the population. An interesting detail is that there should be consensus among the leaders, not majority support decided by voting, when making decisions.^[32]^[33] Band societies, such as the Bushmen, which usually number 20-50 people in the band often do not have leaders and make decisions based on consensus among the majority. In Melanesia, farming village communities have traditionally been egalitarian and lacking in a rigid, authoritarian hierarchy. Although a "Big man" or "Big woman" could gain influence, that influence was conditional on a continued demonstration of leadership skills, and on the willingness of the community. Every person was expected to share in communal duties, and entitled to participate in communal decisions. However, strong social pressure encouraged conformity and discouraged individualism.^[34]

Democracy in Greece (Greece, Ancient, World Book Encyclopedia, 1958.)

The earliest form of government in ancient Greece was the tribe. In most areas, the tribes eventually united under one government called a polis, or city-state. The city-state was a natural development in the isolated areas of Greece. [Ed. Then if it is so natural, why didn't it develop all over the world, since the whole world, in the beginning, was "isolated"?] Each large settlement and the surrounding villages and countryside formed a unit. Every island also had its own government.

The city-state resembled a modern city in size, and a modern nation in its independence. Laws limited the authority of public officials and regulated government activities. Each Greek citizen owed his allegiance to his own city-state. Only male citizens could vote.

Aristocrats ruled the city-states for many years. In many cities, a champion of the people finally overthrew the aristocrats and became dictator. The Greeks called these men tyrannoi, from which the word "tyrant" is derived. But the first tyrants were often capable men who greatly improved conditions in their cities. The tyrants represented a step toward democracy, because they depended for their power entirely upon the support of the people. [Ed. What a revisionist spin! EVERY tyrant depends upon the support of the people! Hitler was even elected! Hamas was elected! King Saul was basically elected! Their government was NOT what we, today, call "democracy"!] The sons and grandsons of tyrants often had less ability than their parents, and did not rule as wisely. Most city-states eventually threw out their tyrants and set up democratic governments. Historians know how Athens and Sparta were governed, but have little knowledge of other city-state governments.

The Government of Athens went through many changes in democratic forms. [Ed: in other words, like Italy today, it tries out a new constitution every few years.] The best known government was based on a constitution worked out by the statesmen Cleisthenes in 508 BC. This government consisted of 5 rulers called archons, 10 generals, a citizen assembly called an ekklesia, and a council, or boule, that was divided into 10 executive committees called prytaneis. A complicated system of people's law courts administered justice. All officials except generals were chosen annually BY DRAWING LOTS. Generals were elected. Unpopular politicians could be banished for 10 years by a vote of ostracism, but they did not lose their citizenship.

The First Democracy was in Israel, Not Greece! (Cont'd)

Here is Josephus' testimony: "[the leaders were] denominated from the number of those over whom they are rulers".

Josephus also reports that all the people ruled over by a particular leader "tried" and "approved of" that leader before being officially installed by the national leader. Josephus described it this way: "[the leaders were] such as the whole multitude have tried, and do approve of, as being good and righteous men".

The translator of Josephus, William Whiston, publishing Josephus' works in 1828, gave more details in a footnote. He said the people "voted" for their leaders, after campaign endorsements. He also says this example of electing leaders was copied in many Christian churches. Here is the footnote:

This manner of electing the judges and officers of the Israelites by the testimonies and suffrages of the people, before they were ordained by God, or by Moses, deserves to be carefully noted, because it was the pattern of the like manner of the choice and ordination of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, in the Christian church.

"Suffrage" is a word seldom used today. Fortunately we can determine what the word means because a dictionary was published in the very year Whiston published his translation: the 1828 dictionary by Noah Webster, America's first dictionary.

Webster defines it:

SUF'FRAGE, n.[L. suffragium.] 1. A vote; a voice given in deciding a controverted question, or in the choice of a man for an office or trust. Nothing can be more grateful to a good man than to be elevated to office by the unbiased suffrages of free enlightened citizens. [An example of how the word is used in literature:] Lactantius and St. Austin confirm by their suffrages the observation made by heathen writers.

2. United voice of persons in public prayer.
3. Aid; assistance; A Latinism. [Not in use.]

Israel's democracy is often called a "theocracy" because its ultimate lawmaker was God, but the people of Israel voted for God to be their Lawmaker four times, according to Exodus 19:8, 24:3, 7, Deut 5:27-28, and Jos 24:22. This vote was no rubber stamp but a real vote, because God had expressed genuine reluctance to assume jurisdiction over the people until they voted.

Israel's democracy was no more a theocracy than U.S. law, in two ways: (1) it did not eliminate the need for human Israeli lawmakers/judges to create "case law" applying Moses' very general principles to specific situations, just as our Founders studied the Bible for principles upon which to fashion laws; and (2) our own Declaration of Independence declares our government legitimate by authority of "the laws of nature and of nature's God", and states that human laws are not legitimate to the extent they infringe on rights spelled out by God: "...all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." Yet we don't call our system a theocracy. We call it a "Republic".

Antiquities of the Jews, by Josephus

Book 3

CHAPTER 4

HOW RAGUEL [Jethro] SUGGESTED TO MOSES TO SET HIS PEOPLE IN ORDER, UNDER THEIR RULERS OF THOUSANDS, AND RULERS OF HUNDREDS, WHO LIVED WITHOUT ORDER BEFORE; AND HOW MOSES COMPLIED IN ALL THINGS WITH HIS FATHER-IN-LAW'S ADMONITION.

1. THE next day, as Raguel saw Moses in the crowd of business for he determined the differences of those that referred them to him, every one still going to him, and supposing that they should then only obtain justice, if he were the arbitrator; and those that lost their causes thought it no harm, while they thought they lost them justly, and not by partiality. Raguel however said nothing to him at that time, as not desirous to be any hinderance to such as had a mind to make use of the virtue of their conductor. But afterward he took him to himself, and when he had him alone, he instructed him in what he ought to do; and advised him to leave the trouble of lesser causes to others, but himself to take care of the greater, and of the people's safety, for that certain others of the Hebrews might be found that were fit to determine causes, but that nobody but a Moses could take of the safety of so many ten thousands. "Be therefore," says he, "insensible of thine own virtue, and what thou hast done by ministering under God to the people's preservation. Permit, therefore, the determination of common causes to be done by others, but do thou reserve thyself to the attendance on God only, and look out for methods of preserving the multitude from their present distress. Make use of the method I suggest to you, as to human affairs; and take a review of the army, and appoint chosen rulers over tens of thousands, and then over thousands; then divide them into five hundreds, and again into hundreds, and into fifties; and set rulers over each of them, who may distinguish them into thirties, and keep them in order; and at last number them by twenties and by tens: and let there be one commander over each number, **to be denominated from the number of those over whom they are rulers, but such as the whole multitude have tried, and do approve of, as being good and righteous men;** (8) and let those rulers decide the controversies they have one with another. But if any great cause arise, let them bring the cognizance of it before the rulers of a higher dignity; but if any great difficulty arise that is too hard for even their determination, let them send it to thee. By these means two advantages will

be gained; the Hebrews will have justice done them, and thou wilt be able to attend constantly on God, and procure him to be more favorable to the people."

2. This was the admonition of Raguel; and Moses received his advice very kindly, and acted according to his suggestion. Nor did he conceal the invention of this method, nor pretend to it himself, but informed the multitude who it was that invented it: nay, he has named Raguel in the books he wrote, as the person who invented this ordering of the people, as thinking it right to give a true testimony to worthy persons, although he might have gotten reputation by ascribing to himself the inventions of other men; whence we may learn the virtuous disposition of Moses: but of such his disposition, we shall have proper occasion to speak in other places of these books.

ENDNOTE

(8) This manner of electing the judges and officers of the Israelites by the testimonies and suffrages of the people, before they were ordained by God, or by Moses, deserves to be carefully noted, because it was the pattern of the like manner of the choice and ordination of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, in the Christian church.

“What’s Wrong with Democracy” (by Parkey, Continued from Page 1)

Our high-ranking government officials are put into office by people that can afford to spend large, their campaigns are paid for by the rich,

And consequently, the wishes of the rich are satisfied first.

Now these people will tell us, and by “ us “ I mean those of us that do not have lots of money. They tell us that we have the opportunity to get rich as well, and that’s true in theory, but if you try to get into a position where you could make lots of money, you will find insurmountable obstacles, put there by the rich to keep you from becoming one of them.

If you don’t have substantial income, you probably don’t have health insurance, people have been turned away from certain hospitals because they didn’t have insurance. People that don’t have the price of a good lawyer usually get plea-bargained into a long jail sentence,

So it’s all about money. The question has been asked, “what do people want that have lots of shoes, and the answer is, more shoes,” this also applies to people with lots of money.

If you don’t earn at least twenty five bucks an hour, here is a list of things you can’t afford: a new car, a new house, health insurance, a vacation to rest your mind and body, a good lawyer, life insurance so you can have a decent funeral, not to mention car ins. The list is long and sad. Some of the things that were once available to people of limited means , are no longer very easy to attain, such as ; going to the movies, watching television, eating at a fast food restaurant. An admission ticket to a movie is now seven dollars and up, and popcorn and candy are out of sight. Cable television , when we first got it, was eight dollars every two months, and it was five dollars every two months for those who lived further west of town. These days cable TV can cost as much as one hundred dollars and more depending on what you want.

My brothers and I used to go to the East Town theater nearly every Sunday after church, we had twenty cents each, a dime to get in and a dime for popcorn, you could stay all day and see two films a cartoon and a news reel. When Mc Donalds first came to Des Moines, a hamburger was fifteen cents, a fry was ten cents, and a drink was ten cents. Now these same items are several dollars, our hourly wage has not risen by that percentage. My general thought is, how is the average family going to be able to afford these things,it would seem that the people that could benefit most from these things can’t have them anymore. It is a fact that the rich don’t go to the movies or Mcdonalds,

So what do they care.Most of the increase in cost is brought about by the greed of the people who provide these goods and services, and no other reason. Those people who have all the money like to stand and exclaim, “ America is the greatest country on earth,” well I say is consistent with the humane treatment of your subjects.

We have people in this country living on the streets, children living on next to nothing to eat, and some starving, some dying from lack of food and care.

I would be ashamed to use the word “ great,” to describe what I see going on in this country, I think most people that care, would agree with me. Our government and the rich, are guilty of license, actually, are one

and the same, a plutocracy is where we are at present, you can actually buy a Presidential election, we should all be ashamed of ourselves that we can acquiesce in the face of so much wrong...God help us.

What's RIGHT with Democracy (Cont'd from Page 1)

Has indeed our century and a half of freedom (two centuries for whites) become so tiresome that we are anxious to wear the chains of the next thug who offers to be our Antichrist or Big Brother?

Yes, big money buys elections. No, that is not because of too much democracy, but too little maintenance of it. It's because when virtuous but unfunded candidates host public forums, (Jonathan Narcisse for example), you don't show up. After they spend months knocking on doors and leaving literature, you read it an average 10 seconds and throw it away, mad at being bothered. You sit home and watch TV, so the only candidates who have a chance are those with enough money to bombard you with enough TV spins (uh, ads) to get you more irritated with the other guy. Do you think letting an unelected tyrant take over will make it *harder* to buy influence?!

Parkey lists luxuries beyond my own desires, and complains that democracy has not provided enough opportunity to earn them. Shall we move to Cuba or North Korea for economic opportunity? Parkey lists what most of us must settle for, which only the super rich in most countries enjoy, and yearns for the tyranny suffered by the rest of the world so we can be wealthier!

Parkey's most legitimate complaint is the restrictions on defending yourself in court without an expensive lawyer. Until about a century ago, it wasn't like that in America, and it is possible to reclaim the courtroom freedoms our forefathers left us. But not if we won't get out of our TV chairs.

But would you prefer justice aka Mexico, Iran, or China?

In 1960, I remember gas was 29.8 cents a gallon, minimum wage was 75 cents an hour, double features were 10 cents, and Drake University tuition was \$250 a semester. Gas, wages, and movies are up about 10 times. (You can rent 2 movies for \$1 at Family Video.) Education and health care have shot up by closer to 50 times because government bureaucracy has gotten involved. But would you rather have your hip replacement operation in Cuba, which is not tied down with so much democracy? Inflation results from government debt, caused by people staying in their TV chairs while their elected representatives spend their grandchildren's inheritance.

A theme throughout Biblical history is God sacrificing Himself to set people free, whose natural inclination is to return to slavery. We as a nation likewise have a history, not of conquest but of offering freedom, even to our enemies in war. Should some ever refuse it, that will not make our offering less noble.

"It has ever been my hobby-horse to see rising in America an empire of liberty, and a prospect of two or three hundred millions of freemen, without one noble or one king among them. You say it is impossible. If I should agree with you in this, I would still say, let us try the experiment, and preserve our equality as long as we can."

--John Adams, letter to Count Sarsfield, 3 February 1786