

Democracy is a False God

Democracy is not all its cracked up to be. In fact, it's a system of government with a built-in self-destruct mode.

Democracy, at its core, is about forming policy on the basis of majority rule. If you can get enough votes, for example, to make eating hamburgers illegal - then you can "democratically" deny the right of any person to eat them. Sure, that's an exaggerated example, but the principle stands (remember the Prohibition!).

From the perspective of a democrat, this is fine - as it represents the majority will of the people. But what about the minority - which in many cases, could be as high as 49%? I recall, many years ago, hearing a politician answer a question on the subject of abortion - where the questioner wanted to know where this particular politician stood on the issue. He gave a "democratic" answer - and stated that he would vote according to the majority wishes of his own electorate. He defended his answer by saying he was a true democrat and a representative of the people.

Bunkum! What he was really doing was avoiding a moral choice and justifying his position on the grounds that he was being democratic. And in current parlance "democracy = good".

I wonder if he would have been quite so "democratic" if the question had been, "Hands up those who support the idea of ethnic cleansing?"

This illustrates the essential problem with majority rule - that it is just as likely to deliver evil as good - and perhaps, more likely.

If you take an extreme case of democracy - and ask people's opinion on the outcome - the answers are interesting.

For example: If a nation decided that homosexuality was a capital crime, by conducting a referendum on the issue and winning 51% of the vote - the outcome would be democratic, and also a death sentence to all those so convicted.

Or, another example - a nation decides to vote on the issue of incarcerating Muslims - on the basis of potential links to terrorism. Once again, 51% vote YES, and tens of thousands of people are carted off to concentration camps.

Of course, any democrat would label such examples as "extreme" or unrealistic. But that's not the point. In principle it could happen - UNLESS there was some form of limit on the process of democracy.

This idea of a "limit" is what was behind the forming of the original American Republic - where there were constraints put in place by way of a constitution.

Thus the USA became a democracy tempered by a constitution.

The idea has appeal - provided the constitution is both sound, enforceable and not subject to change on the whim of either an individual or the majority - which raises a whole lot of other issues.

However, the very acceptance of the need for such a limit underlies the real issue at

stake - one to which democracy has no answer. Democracy can be a tool of despotism, and it has no built-in safeguards against such abuse.

Democracy cannot deliver what it implicitly promises.

What's really important in a societal context is NOT democracy, but FREEDOM. And the foundation of any meaningful freedom is the nuts and bolts mechanics of protecting property.

If there is no protection of property, then there can be no freedom.

In other words, the essential building block of any free and prosperous nation is the concept of property rights. If you look after that - then you have freedom. And if you have freedom - you have no need for democracy or the counting of heads.

Hong Kong was an interesting example of this policy (while under British control). Hong Kong had no democracy - and yet it was perhaps the freest place on earth. Why? Because those in Hong Kong were subject to the best of the British legacy - a respect for property rights and the Common Law.

Under the "hands off" approach of the British (unlike their hands-ON approach in the UK), the people of HK were able to build a modern, thriving economy from what started out as virtually a bare rock. No natural resources, no welfare, no democracy - just freedom, as defined by the protection of property.

Of course all that has changed now - and one of Britain's tasks - before HK was handed over to the Chinese - was to attempt to generate some interest in the idea of democracy. And that was a hard task indeed - for the HK Chinese could not really see the point. After all, they already could do what they wanted, whenever they wanted. Things were so rosy, that they had a saying - "you can walk down the street and kick gold".

Now, they ARE interested in democracy - because their true freedom was taken off them, and now they have joined the "rest of us" in attempting to protect what they've got (and trying to get what others have got) by way of voting.

Democracy is like cancer. Once you accept the idea, then politics is introduced into every nook and cranny of everyday life. From there, it eats away at the soul of both the nation and the individual.

Democracy undermines the very concept of individual freedom.

You want to open a restaurant? Well, forget the idea that you are the "owner" of such an establishment. If the government, by democratic edict, declares that you cannot allow anyone to smoke in your restaurant - then that is the end of the matter - unless you want to get into trouble.

No one raises the point that it is YOUR property - and that you have the right to either exclude all smokers, allow some smokers, or even make your restaurant exclusively FOR smokers.

All concerns over "whose" property are swept away before the god of democracy.

Democracy "politicises" all human interaction. Everything is now a matter of political process.

There are homeless people on the streets? No problem, start a campaign to support

them from taxes - and some political group will join in, and fight an election on such an issue. And before you know it, you'll be taxed - to solve the problem. In this way, democracy divides society, by fuelling a feeding frenzy of "needs" and an ever increasing number of demands. It sets one group against another. It creates an atmosphere of entitlement. It makes everything subject to "politics".

But this cannot go on forever. The "have-nots" cannot forever vote themselves a living at the expense of the "haves". The "needy" cannot forever solve their problems by blaming and draining the "greedy". Society cannot become prosperous by the process of theft and disregard for property rights.

In the end, democracy can effectively vote away whatever lifeblood is still left in a nation - and preside, in triumph, over a lifeless corpse.

So, is there an alternative?

I'm a great believer in "business" as a template for rational action. Sure, it's not perfect - but it beats the pants off democracy.

In business, there is no room for silly theories, pet projects, or pointless ideologies. What is required is results. If a business cannot achieve a profit, then it ceases to be. There is no "democratic" bailout and no sympathy.

Business is organised to achieve its goal - which is profit - and it either succeeds or fails. On the other hand, society - via the political process - is largely irrational. The results of a particular policy are never judged by any scientific method or even common sense like "does it actually work?", rather by an ideological one way mirror.

For example: Whereas a business knows the limits of borrowing as a strategy for success. Society, as a political entity, has no such qualms - and will quite happily borrow itself into fiscal collapse.

Business is organised for success. Sure, if you own shares in a business, you get to vote. But you do NOT get to vote on strategy or policy. You only get to vote on who makes the decisions. And because such decisions are evaluated in the light of the company's profits - voting is always about ensuring the best outcome - for ALL shareholders.

No business shareholder can cast a vote to enrich himself at the expense of another shareholder in the same company.

And THAT is the difference between democracy and business.

Business builds - and democracy destroys.

At some point, enough people will hopefully wake up to the fact that democracy, politics, voting et al - are all useless in the quest for freedom and prosperity.

Democracy is like some major religion that has outgrown its usefulness. Maybe it worked in a local village, a long time in the past - but in the modern world of mass society, it is hopelessly dysfunctional and downright dangerous.

We can no more vote ourselves out of poverty, war, epidemics, or violence - than we can vote ourselves into freedom, health and prosperity.

Democracy - like religion - is a matter of faith. It is nourished by tradition, regenerated by education, and not subject to any form of scientific scrutiny. For if it was, then we'd all be

shouting, "the Emperor has no clothes!"
And that would be the end of it!