GET THE POINT

THE IRONY OF DEMOCRACY

By Fritz Pointer

Voting

According to Profs. Thomas Dye and Harmon Zeigler, in their book, *The Irony of Democracy*: **Democracy means more than ELECTIONS.**

1. Elections are imperfect instruments of accountability
2. Virtually all modern political systems – authoritarian and democratic, capitalist and communist – hold elections.
3. All political regimes seek to tie the masses to the system by holding symbolic exercises in political participation to give the ruling regime an aura of legitimacy.
4. Elections do not serve as policy mandates; instead they function as symbolic reassurance to the masses.
5. Elections allow the masses to help choose **personnel** for public office, but **not** future **policy.**

This is not to say that we should abandon electoral politics. It is to say, however, that we must better understand and must redefine the terms upon which our people participate in this **hypocritical, criminal system**. (When someone e.g. Snowden and Manning, exposes crimes and is treated like a criminal we're being ruled by criminals). **Democracy, by definition requires participation: Democracy is not control of politics by a few:**

Democracy is not control of the economy by a few: Democracy is not control of the press by a few.

Again, the words of Malcolm X:

> The 30 million victims (of Democracy) are waking up. Their eyes are coming open. They're beginning to see what they used to only look at. They're becoming politically mature…it's possible for them to see that every time there's an election the races are so close that they have to have a recount…Well, what does this mean? It means that when white people are evenly divided, and black people have a bloc of votes of their own, it is left up to them to determine who's going to sit it the White House and who's going to be in the dog house.

The June 25th 2013 Supreme Court 5-4 decision came down on party lines with the 5 Republican nominated justices, lap dogs: John Roberts and Samuel Alito (G.W. Bush appointees); Anthony Kennedy and Antonin Scalia both (Reagan appointees) and Clarence "Uncle" Thomas (G.H.W. Bush appointee) voting for one side; and 4 Democratic nominated justices: Stephen Breyer and Ruth Bader Ginsburg (Clinton) and Elena Kagan and Sonia Sotomayor (Obama). **What this means is that we, the American people, do not have an independent judiciary (even Supreme Court) that they too, like our so-called "free press" are available to the highest bidder.**

Perhaps, someone can tell me how these supposedly **free-thinking**, **objective, enlightened, exceptional** individuals end up thinking along party lines? How do such supposedly unique minds, diverse minds end up in the same (political/religious) box? Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg understands, and says in her dissent that the Voting Rights Act…"was made with great care and seriousness…The same cannot be said of the Court's opinion today. The Court makes no genuine attempt to engage with the massive legislative record that Congress assembled." That is justices are inept and/or too lazy to grapple ("engage") with the depths of the issue, according to Justice Ginsburg.

Both sides recognize that with the Voting Rights Act in effect: Black politicians hold office in unprecedented numbers. There are more Black judges. The Congressional Black Caucus membership list is at an all-time high.

Yet, despite the number of Black elected officials, judges and political appointees, black communities across America are disintegrating before our very eyes. Our institutions of higher learning are starving to death. The land grant colleges and HBCU's are being abolished in State after State. Our children are roaming the streets in packs killing each other and maiming the weak and the elderly. The prisons are bursting at the seams with our young men. The crumbs of the welfare state on which many of us have subsisted are being withdrawn; including anti-poverty programs, job-training programs, food stamps, unemployment compensation, welfare payments, student loans and Medicaid.

A Revolution of Values

It could be suggested that electoral politics and the right of Africans in America to participate therein, have brought us to this point in our history. To look to electoral politics alone as the be-all and end-all, the panacea of our political engagement is to be at least naïve; or, blind to Dr. King's admonition that what is needed in America is a Revolution of Values.

- From a THING-ORIENTED society to a PERSON-ORIENTED society
- From PROFIT MOTIVES and PROPERTY RIGHTS being more important than people
- From RACISM, EXTREME MATERIALISM and UNENDING MILITARISM
- Dr. Martin Luther King: "A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.

As for me, and the 2020 Elections this November, I'll stand with Dr. W.E.B. DuBois who after seven decades of voting and believing left us with the following admonition before packing his bags and moving to Ghana:

> "The two parties have combined against us to nullify our power by a 'gentleman's agreement' of non-recognition, no matter how we vote ... May God write us down as asses if ever again we are found putting our trust in either the Republican or the Democratic Parties."