

Demise of Democracy

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“The function, the very serious function of racism is distraction. It keeps you from doing your work. It keeps you explaining, over and over again, your reason for being” – Toni Morrison

Every day, we are bombarded with news that America is being remade by someone and for someone that does not look like me. On November 7, 2024, I “woke” up to fear that America has regressed some 75 years into an abyss, “like nobody has ever seen,” giving reassurance to some, but creating fear in all that America is moving towards autocracy.

To America’s chagrin, the country is becoming the bastion of white grievances against diversity, equity, and inclusion. This goes further than DEI. The Trump administration portrays itself as the archangel of white grievance to preserve white supremacy and privilege worldwide.

Much was made during the run-up to the presidential election about Project 2025, a movement spearheaded by the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank based in Washington, D.C. The key tenets of Project 2025 were to return America to a puritan society by defining marriage, removing federal non-discrimination protections, lateralizing civil rights, and repositioning America’s humanitarian position in the world by dismantling the Centers for Disease Control and USAID.

Couple all of this with the capitulation of Congress, the concurrence of the Supreme Court, the coercion of the media, and the use of military force to impose executive orders, and America’s investment in democracy has changed. I suggest there is a whitewashing of democracy, only concerned with the protection and promotion of Anglo-Judaea values – a cancel culture.

Most notable are the daily reports of masked officers of ICE and CBP abducting people for no reason other than the color of their skin from their workplaces, court houses, shopping malls, educational institutions, and places of worship.

Black America has seen this before. Pre-Civil War Northerners promoted the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 to strengthen the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793, fearing that overpopulation of non-slave states with runaways and freedmen would corrupt the cultural fabric of America. This new Act created a federal commission to oversee the return of fugitive slaves with federal marshals and other officials responsible for enforcement. The Act imposed significant fines and imprisonment for those who aided fugitives or obstructed their capture. Suspected fugitives were denied the right to a jury trial and could be returned to slavery based on the testimony of their claimant alone.

The act's severity and federal overreach led to widespread resistance and a surge in abolitionist sentiment in the North.

The same is true today. Current polls are showing that the nation, once favorable to Trump's Immigration Policy, is shifting in its opinion and support. Once viewed as an emergency response to stem illegal migration and evict criminals from the country, it is now being seen for what it is, an imposition of a racial policy, a new slave act, aimed at reassuring that American culture will be white.

Some members of the Black community have expressed approval of the challenges experienced by Hispanic and Latino voters who supported Mr. Trump's election; however, responding to widespread immigration raids with sentiments such as "you get what you deserve" is not right.

Racism has but one aim: to distinguish the difference between the white race and all others. And while racism is a deplorable disease, here, racism is the distraction. Democracy as a whole is at risk, so we must act without delay on eligibility debates. If there is to be solidarity in the fight to keep a free and fair democracy, Blacks, Latinos, and Hispanics must be in the same boat. This movement towards authoritarianism will require all of us to stop defending who has the right to freedom and begin the fight to protect democracy and ourselves.

Recognize that President Trump has gone full fascist, saying, "whether it's right or wrong, it's time to go after people" – in short, we are seeing the demise of democracy. In a rephrasing of Gil Scott Heron's lyrical retort, you can't afford to stay home, you need to be plugged in, tuned in, not streaming, and stop the rhetoric and complaining because this revolution is being televised.

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