

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نباشد تن من مباد
بدین بوم و بر زنده یک تن مباد
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم
از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

By Marc Vandepitte

02.12.2022

Trump and America's Political Rot



Sources: By Wereld Morgen

Translated from Dutch for Rebellion by Sven Magnus

According to the mainstream media, democracy has triumphed in the United States, as Biden has retained a narrow majority in the Senate in the midterm elections. But it's a superficial read. If we dig deeper, we see a great rottenness of the political system. Today more than ever, democracy is in danger, especially now that Trump has again declared his candidacy for the next presidential election.

In the [State of the Union](#) in March 2022 President Biden spoke in response to the war in Ukraine of the great struggle between democratic countries and autocratic people all over the world. But it is possible that the battle between Democracy and autocracy have to be fought over all within the the United States itself.

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

The Trump factor

The Putrefaction of the political system began a long time ago. [Since The](#) Republican Party has been flirting with paranoid figures, extremely conservative and right-wing (1). People as Joseph McCarthy (2), Barry Goldwater, Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, Newt Gingrich (3) and Pat Buchanan (4) they paved the way for a figure like Trump. In other words, The rot is decades old and deeply rooted in The Republican Party.

In other countries the extreme right invariably germinates *alongside* the mainstream parties. But in the United States the electoral system does not allow it, so the extreme right has to take root *within* one of the two big parties.

Trump prolonged the process of rightward drift and rotting that already exists from the 1950s, But he did more than that. Since his arrival at the White House, he accelerated the putrefaction process and began to control the Party Republican.

Fake news

The Trump's hallmark is fake news. During his tenure he launched a media of more than seven [lies](#) or misleading statements daily. And what is more serious, great Part of his electoral base created them. For [example, three Quarters of Republican voters](#) remains convinced that Biden stole the election. [The Half of his supporters](#) believe he fought against child sexual abuse at the highest levels of society. Party Democrat (5).

The Fake news and conspiracy theories are nothing new in the United States, but Trump has managed to turn these inventions in a [Just great story](#) and give it presidential legitimacy. The Party Republican It has left truth and reality behind. Facts and science already They don't count.

Three A quarter-quarters of Republicans believe a bad reaction to The vaccine [is riskier than contracting one's own COVID-19](#). Martin Wolf of *the Financial Times* quotes to [Timothy Snyders](#): "Post-truth it is equal to pre-fascism and Trump is our president of the post-truth". Wolf [adds](#): "If truth is subjective, violence decides. So not There can be a true democracy, only There will be room for the gangs of rival thugs or for the gang dominant leader."

Radicalization, polarization and violence

During long time proliferated in the United States extremist, hateful and violent beliefs, but in most The cases were confined to the margins of political debate. During Trump's presidency and through his actions they have "normalized" views such as "white supremacy," the Islamophobia, homophobia or wild conspiracy theories. Herself became mainstream and more and more people They began to share and promote those views.

After the deadly performance of neo-Nazi groups in Charlottesville in 2017 Trump as president spoke of "[people very good](#)" among the protesters. Under his tenure, there was never any problem. with openly racist statements or displays of hatred towards women.



Photo: Neo-Nazi rally in Charlottesville in 2017 (Anthony Crider, Flickr/CC BY 2.0)

The Trump supporters were also radicalized by [the infiltration of fascist groups](#) in pro-Trump channels, aiming to push their supporters towards the extreme right. Apparently successfully.

Trump It has managed to merge extremist and sometimes marginal ideas very different in [a Single and clear political project](#). A project that makes people feel part of something that [transcends to himself](#) and manages to mobilize them. That movement and that mobilization as well. They show increasingly violent traits. The assault on the Capitol of 6 January 2021 was the [culmination](#) of four years of escalating far-right violence, from torch-carrying protesters in [Charlottesville](#) shouting against blacks and Jews, [militias heavily armed](#) who demonstrated against the lockdown, up to plans for Kidnap and possibly remove the [governor of Michigan](#).

Herself estimates that there are currently [hundreds of paramilitary groups](#) operating in the United States. Some possess very heavy weapons. Together they have about [50,000 members](#). The United States is saturated with [400 millions of firearms](#), Including at least [20 millions of assault rifles](#), the most of which are owned by right-wing rascals. The Great

Trump's electoral support gives life to the groups Far-right paramilitaries and makes them bolder.

The White supremacists and other right-wing extremists were responsible for two-thirds of [all attacks and terrorist plots](#) on U.S. soil. Half of that violence is directed against Protesters. Polling stations, schools, centres Doctors and library staff in many places are being [besieged by neo-fascist gangs](#). Remember the fascist gangs of thugs of the 1930s.

This Radicalization translates into extreme polarization: Trump or it is against it. His provocative style feeds perfectly this polarization. Every time you go over the line and He is attacked for it, he can shout that his adversaries try restrict their freedom of expression.

The Dominant media play a key role in that polarization. The outbursts of strength of Trump guarantee the spectacle and are good for the numbers of sale and, therefore, for advertising revenue. Degeneration of figures like Trump is a side effect of what Thomas Deceus describes it as democracy of the spectacle, but what is extremely dangerous (6).

One Such extreme polarization makes it virtually impossible to democratic functioning, especially if it is questioned to the point of questioning own election result. The Martin cited above [Wolf](#) rightly asks: "How can democracy work? If a majority of voters for one of the two major parties believes that the elections that have been lost are a selections What have they been stolen? How can power be obtained peacefully and kept from Legitimate way? In Ultimately, who decide, apart from violence?"

Control over the match

In six years Trump has managed to completely subdue the Party Republican at your will. Many of the parliamentarians, governors and mayors are [acolytes Trump loyalists](#). [93%](#) of Trump's preferred candidates won the primary Republican. Many of them were not elected in this election. Intermediates, but that doesn't stop Republican lawmakers from be even more in tune with him than before.

Many Party members who disagree with him dare not open their mouths, [for fear](#) of being attacked in [the social networks](#) or that in the next nominations a aspirant who is more in line with Trump. [Thus, eight of the ten Republicans](#) who voted in the House of Representatives to impeach him for the storming the Capitol retired or were expelled in the Internal Party Elections Due to your pressure.

The Party Republican It is no longer defined by ideology or conviction, but primarily by [loyalty to Trump](#). Was Very clear after the refusal of the vast majority of his party to speak out against his role in the storming of the Capitol.

His Popularity has fallen recently, but his followers are still being numerous. Among Republican supporters, he can count with the approval of [65%](#). For the next race to the White House [the 48%](#) of Republicans prefer Trump, he is say, almost twice as much as his alleged opponent, Ron De Santis, the current governor of Florida.

Control over institutions

Low Trump's leadership Republicans are working to undermine and destroy democracy from within. They do [it by infiltrating at the highest levels](#) of the States and the federal government.

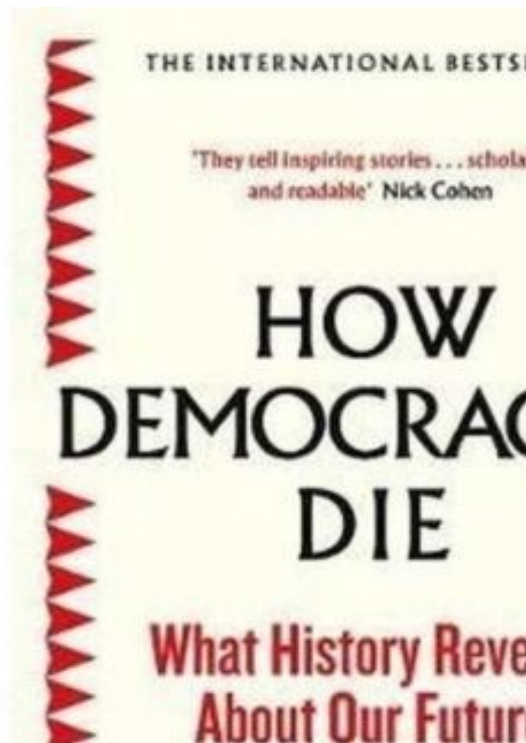
Currently already have [the Majority of the Federal Judiciary](#), including the super-powerful Supreme Court. In the elections of Midterm also prevail in the House of Representatives. Currently control at least half of the most influential people in the country. And perhaps most importantly, they plan [gain control of election commissions](#) in states appointing personnel loyal to Trump. In quite a few states They have already achieved it, the that if necessary facilitate the declaration of illegality of the result of the 2024 presidential election.

To the After all, Trump will continue to have a machine Very powerful propaganda, both through the media of communication as of social networks (alternatives), in part thanks to Musk. He also appointed many [judges. conservatives](#) and converted the Supreme Court in a conservative stronghold.

Undermining democracy

No It would be the first time that a Western parliamentary system is undermined and destroyed from within. Let's think about a large part of the European democracies of the 1930s and, more recently, in Turkey, Hungary, the Philippines, the Savior...

In his book *How to Two Harvard* professors describe that history shows that It's even that difficult. The elimination of the democratic system It requires a number of things: Conquering control of power Judicial, intelligence and law enforcement Police; leave the political opposition out of the game and, preferably to the media; Put the economic and cultural elite as far as possible; and, by Finally, bend the electoral system to their will (7).



Is very Of course, Trump has already come a good part of this way. If They question again The upcoming presidential election in 2024 could lead to the Chaos and a serious [crisis constitutional](#).

According to [Robert Reich](#) former Secretary of Labor in the United States, "the Donald Trump's protofascism represents the greatest internal threat for American democracy since the Civil War." (1861-1865). Reich is more than right, yet we have to Dig a little deeper.

Is It is true that Trump bears a great responsibility for the high degree of putrefaction of the current political situation in the United States, But the problem is deeper and does not depend on your person or charisma. In case Trump is struck down by an illness or have to leave for legal [action, you can be easily replaced by Florida's](#) proto-fascist governor Ron DeSantis, who It is potentially even more dangerous.

There's At least two fundamental flaws of the political system Americans who allow and perpetuate the current rot: the terrible social condition of a large part of the population -of which Democrats are partly responsible – and control of the Large companies about politics.

The Social graveyard and the responsibility of the Democrats

[58%](#) of the citizens of the richest country in the world live in the day. They often must Accept two or three jobs so as not to fall into poverty. Many over 65 years old also cannot afford to retire and continue working, literally, until they drop dead.



Photo: A homeless couple in San Francisco (Franco Folini, Flickr)

About [130 million Americans](#) (a 40%) They don't have enough money in the bank to cope with a \$400 emergency. Of [these, 80 millionones](#) (the 25%) Postponed the treatment of a serious illness due to its cost. In this High-tech country a out of nine people herself Go to bed hungry.

In Nowhere in the Western world is the gap between rich and poor as big as here. [0.1%](#) of the rich own the same as the 90% of those at the bottom.

The Republicans do not They are by no means solely responsible for this situation. Democrats too. Applied anti-social austerity policies. Is unforgivable that A party that calls itself progressive has allowed this degradation social.

The people who regressed socially in the last 40 years they feel Abandoned by the Democrats and they start to look for alternatives. A frighteningly large proportion of the U.S. population is apparently so disturbed who is looking for a strong leader, even if that leader says the biggest Nonsense and even go against their own interests.

No it is surprising that Trump has many followers among [the social layers with little education](#), in this Case on all of the white population. The last midterm elections showed once again that Democrats have lost some of their traditional [base of Working population](#).

The History shows that a social cemetery is an excellent broth of cultivation for the extreme right to flourish. See that today happens even in other countries such as Hungary, Brazil (Bolsonaro), Turkey, India...

Result impossible Ignore the conclusion: the putrefaction of politics has had Place especially in the bosom of the Republican Party, but the Democrats have helped create a fertile ground for it. But the rot is not limited to But a deeper layer must be dug. We must See who controls that class.

The Role of the economic elite

In a country The high degree of spectacle makes it easy to have the impression that the politician is the decision-maker most important policies, but Behind the scenes it is the big companies who They mark the lines and define the main orientations.

One Government can afford a certain margin, but it has limited room for manoeuvre. When progressive forces seize a share of the power of the State, as for example in Greece during the euro crisis, End of the game (8).

The The political class is, so to speak, tied on a leash to the large capital groups. That control – or leash – in the United States It is more obvious than in any other country. In the crisis of coronavirus The pharmaceutical giants were The protagonists and got Huge proceeds. Now it's the energy giants who have The climate crisis has been hijacked and they are winning money at the expense of the citizenship with The current energy crisis.

And Today it is the military industry that feeds the fever of war and It is done with great benefits. In 2008 it was the big banks Americans responsible for The financial crisis, but it was the people Workers Who They paid the price.

That control becomes even more evident in election campaigns. To be elected in the United States, you have to have a very high budget for the campaign and this comes mainly from the business sector. For example, Biden was able to count on the [massive financial support of Wall Street in the](#) last presidential election, just like Hillary Clinton and Obama before him.

The Economic elite thus selects to "his" political staff. That Same iron control was What it also prevented the very popular but left-wing Bernie Sanders from outside presidential candidate of the Democrats. For large companies such a person is Simply unthinkable.



Photo: Bernie Sanders (berniesanders.com)

The History teaches us that the economic elite prefers leaders willful and predictable politicians, but If there is no alternative, he does not hesitate to offer a lifeline to the buffoon more brazen or irresponsible, as long as it defends their interests. That explains why Trump had [a enormous budget](#) to be elected in 2016 and that principle of its mandate could have the support from [The great majority of the economic elite](#) thanks to the significant tax cuts it approved (9). Even After storming the Capitol, Trump continues to count on his Generous support. In the Past elections Partial was the [eldest Fundraiser](#) for his party.

The Situation It can be summarized as follows: the Economic elite does not tolerate a left-wing exit from the crisis economical, only Accept one that suits your interests. In a political climate polarized that Departure goes inevitably in address to the extreme right. This It is the fate of a political system in which, ultimately, instance, who Mandan Son large companies.

What to do?

For A number of things must happen to reverse that trend. To counteract The threat of armed violence must be contained to militias paramilitaries. This would have to be accompanied by a review and purging of the police forces and the army, as well as A change in gun law.

For Eliminating the breeding ground of the extreme right is Need A kind of [new social contractor](#), rather, a Marshall social plan. Their Main ingredients are one Fair taxation, accessible healthcare, rising wages (minimums) and pensions, and cheaper education superior.

The Own political system as well needs a *deepreset*, What It involves several aspects that transcend this article. Even more Fundamental is to finish with The control of the

unelected economic elite over the seizure of political decisions, which only It will be possible if it runs out with its disproportionate power.

Undo the Polarization and recovering a serene political debate will require putting Under democratic control the media and networks social, now in the hands of powerful capital groups.

So Much work remains to be done, but the situation is not so desperate. With the arrival of Bernie Sanders has been Deeply shocked the political landscape of the parties American. After the 2016 and 2020 election campaigns, A new hopeful movement has begun. How In many other countries of the world, these Progressive forces face an enormous challenge.

Notes:

(1) In the 1950s McCarthy organized a Witch hunts of anti-communists. In the 1960s it was the very Conservative [Barry Goldwater-close](#) friend of the Communist hunter Joseph McCarthy- who was a candidate presidential in 1964. From the 1970s the party Republican deliberately targeted racist voters of The southern states. He took advantage of their fears and stoked them. also to establish there, successfully, a republican stronghold. It was the so-called '[strategy' Southern'](#) by Nixon and others.

With the advent of Ronald Reagan in the 1980s the Government was branded as inherently bad. In the decades of 1980 and 1990 [Newt Gingrich](#) poisoned the political culture of the United States. He used conspiracy theories and invective to discredit his political opponents. With a Obstruction policy made it virtually impossible to cooperation between both parties.

(2) [Joseph McCarthy](#) was a politician of extreme right of the Republican Party. Partly under his impulse, It unleashed a veritable witch hunt in the mid-1950s. against progressive people, which was presented as a campaign against communism. The tactic used to accuse people On the basis of weak or even non-existent evidence received its Name: McCarthyism.

(3) [Newt Gingrich](#) was a member of the House of Representatives from 1979 to 1999. He was its president between 1995 and 1999.

(4) [Pat Buchanan](#) is a Republican Arch-conservative who has been an advisor to several presidents. Especially in the 1990s it came to the fore. According to him, The repression of immigration was too lax. He considered the homophily "unnatural acts". In an [infamous](#)

[speech](#) warned of a Culture war: "There is a religious war in this country. It is a Culture war, so crucial to the kind of nation we will be like the Cold War itself, because this war is about the soul of United States."

(5) This is the totally insane conspiracy theory called [QAnon](#). Its defenders believe that the Democrats, the super-rich and Hollywood celebrities control the world and engage in pedophilia. They are convinced that Trump, as Messiah, is fighting these satanic forces.

(6) [Thomas Decreus](#): "In a Democracy of the spectacle Political conflict is created or fostered professionally and then unleashed in society. Conflict is a political-commercial product and, therefore, reflects less and less the fault lines that prevail in society, but create their Own fracture lines adapted to a complex media-political and an audience of media consumers. In the extent to which they manage to arouse strong emotions in the public -and, therefore, become interesting media products-, These created flaws continue to resonate and, therefore, are more and more real."

(7) Levitsky S. and D. Ziblatt, *How democracies die*, New York, 2018, p. 77v.

(8) In Greece the government of left led by Syriza and supported by a convincing majority In a referendum he wanted a social solution to the debt crisis. However, the European Central Bank made it impossible by threatening to with cutting off the money supply. At that moment the Syriza government.

(9) Their trade wars, His fickle policies and ties to the far right [eroded](#) [that support](#). A significant part of the businessmen did not support his policy anti-immigration. However, Trump could continue to count on sector capitalists [like](#) energy, agribusiness, transport and construction.

Source: <https://www.dewereldmorgen.be/artikel/2022/11/14/trump-en-de-politieke-verrotting-van-de-vs/>

This translation may be freely reproduced provided that its integrity is respected and that the author, the translator and Rebellion are mentioned as the source of the translation.

Rebellion 01.12.2022