Is Democracy Dying in The Us?

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***Introduction***

Democracy is a comprehensive discipline who’s understanding depends mostly on the subjects, in most cases the citizens of a particular country. It can be defined differently and, in this case, we are going to discuss democracy as a system where the citizens of a particular country have power over it by exercising their voting rights, (Knutsen, 2010). By voting, this is how they control the decisions of the country. This process has to be free and transparent. The following paper is going to be analyzing the state of democracy in the country and discuss the question at hand as (Merkel, 2014) puts it, “is democracy in the United States dying?”

***Abstract***

Democracy is defined by the ability of people to exercise their voting rights and make decisions by voting. Democracy in the world is a slowly diminishing idea. It is the same case in the democracy of the united states, but despite this fact, the United States is the best example of countries that still uphold democracy. The freedom of speech and the committed judiciary system are an example of this. However, the issues that came up in the 2016 electoral process undermining the integrity of the electoral process prove otherwise. The following paper is doing to analyses democracy in the united states. Is it dying?

***Background information***

The United States over the centuries has had one of the most democratic constitution and system of government, most countries have struggled to put up a better democratic system of governance, but the whole idea hasn’t yet borne any fruit. There are many definitions and views about democracy, but one of the main functions of democracy is to protect state and individual rights through the constitution. This defines the American democracy and other western forms of democracy. United States has been well known as a super nation and better yet as a country which is very democratic. Other countries have always termed it as the perfect example. However, lately, there have been actions that have altered its democratic system. Democracy is rooted in free and fair elections, and it is at this very point that doubts about democracy in the United States started.

The 2016 United States General elections was the main deal that made Americans go back to the drawing board and ask themselves what is happening with their democracy this was still evident in the 2018 primaries where in some states especially Georgia (Omi & Winant, 2014). Its alleged that voter registration process was faced with a lot of discrimination where almost 75% of non-Caucasian voters names were missing from the voters register (Du Bois, 2014). This problem has been increasing as years pass by and thus putting American democracy system under serious scrutiny

One of the most significant aspects of a democratic country is the characteristic of free and fair elections, which are free from foreign influence. After the 2016 election where president Donald Trump was elected, the country does not think that the process was very transparent. There is overwhelming evidence that Russia meddled with the United States election to some degree. The leaking of the Democratic Party candidate’s private emails to WikiLeaks was designed to undermine the opponent’s popularity, which is not what free and fair elections are about. The Democratic tallying center in Washington was also hacked. There was also the use of digital social media platforms to spread propaganda about the democratic party candidate also undermined the right to fair elections. There is strong evidence that the Russians were deeply involved in the negative influence on the election. This defies the democratic right of Americans to have a free and fair elections as stated by Achen & Bartels, (2017).  which are free from foreign influence.

The United States for a long time has been on the forefront of democracy however its democratic system is dying and diminishing in some areas and states respectively a good example is the water company saga in Oxford, in the state of Massachusetts where the locals were angered by the company that had taken control of water supply, the locals had protested poor service delivery by the company and inflation prices by the company but unless the local population wanted to survive without water, they had to comply with these prices all the time.

Oxford residents decided in a lengthy town meeting in a local high school auditorium to buy the company, they overwhelmingly voted to raise the millions of dollars needed for the buy out but all was in vein in vein one vote stood their way, locals who had sacrificed to get this done were engulfed by company lobbyists new comers who campaigned against the residents needs. When they decided to call for the vote, the plan failed and since then Aquarion remained oxfords water supplier, a second trial by the buyout supporters was faced with force as they were quickly evacuated from the auditorium.

This case shows how democracy failed to be respected, and the right of Oxford residents was violated and yet nothing was done to the perpetrators of the unfair treatment, (Underkuffler, 2012). Both the National and state governments failed to protect the democratic right of their citizens by allowing big companies to exploit locals, extort extra charges with poor service delivery and above all going against the agreement by the Oxford town locals to raise money and purchase the company (Nussbaum, 2010). This clearly shows how the American democratic system is failing its citizens

This is a suspicion is brought out broadly by the fact that among a wide range of issues, public policy doesn’t reflect the will of American public majority, if it did campaign funds would have been more tightly regulated and equal prosecution of the violators, Marijuana would be legal and the problem of gun control would have been resolved but since this doesn’t work it is a system which makes the country’s democracy ineffective to protect all citizens.

Despite all of this, the United States is still the best example of democratic countries in the world. A clear example is the freedom of speech demonstrated by individuals and the press. FOX news is an outspoken station that has been known to bring out the positive side of the Republican party while being harsh when it comes to the Democrats as explained by Carothers & Young, (2017). CNN too is another example of this. The station has been particularly known to zero in on the negative side of President Donald Trump, without fear of expression.

The same freedom goes to other media stations and reporters. It has been clear from the interviews where the reporters are not relenting about asking the President, Donald Trump questions regarding the harsh truth and on sensitive matters. This freedom of speech has extended to individuals in the united states. It is one of the few countries where citizens can express their views without fear of being dealt with by the government. This is clear on social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook.

The rule of law continues to govern the United States regardless of acts that make it seem like democracy is dying. As Driscoll & Nelson (2019) explain, the Judiciary is still on top of matters a deal with all rule breakers, regardless of who they are. After the allegations that the 2016 elections were under foreign influence, the judiciary worked to deliver justice to the American citizen. Michael Cohen was sentenced to three years in prison for violation of campaign rules and misuse of campaign money. Paul Manafort was also awaits sentencing for the same charges of campaign rules. Robert Muller, who is special counsel was quoted saying that Paul Manafort and Roger stone should be sentenced to between twenty to twenty-four years in prison for undermining the integrity of the electoral process. As this few cases show, the judiciary is still committed to ensuring a democratic country.

***Recommendations and opinions***

It is my opinion that democracy in the united states is dying. Even if the judiciary has made some effort in rectifying the situation, the truth remains that these deeds that undermine democracy still happened. In a real democracy, the acts would not have happened at all. However, democracy is not entirely dead as Westbrook, (2015) says. The other aspects like freedom of speech still stand strong and Americans should be proud. The government should take serious steps in dealing with people that undermine democracy. It should also start reminding the people that it is this democracy that made us great in the first place and it is our responsibility to maintain it. This way, we will be proactive rather than reactive. If we do this, we will deal with the democracy crisis that is going on in the country.

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