

IS THE U.S. A REPUBLIC OR A DEMOCRACY?

15 Minutes of Freedom by Aaron Ferguson

We must remember what we are! But what are we?

Defending Our Democracy?

At his inauguration ceremony, January 20, 2021, President Joe Biden opened his address with these words, “My fellow Americans, this is America’s day. This is *democracy’s* day... Today, we celebrate the triumph not of a candidate, but of a cause, the cause of *democracy*... We have learned again that *democracy* is precious. *Democracy* is fragile. And at this hour, my friends, *democracy* has prevailed.” Within the first two paragraphs of his speech, President Biden used the word *democracy* five times.¹

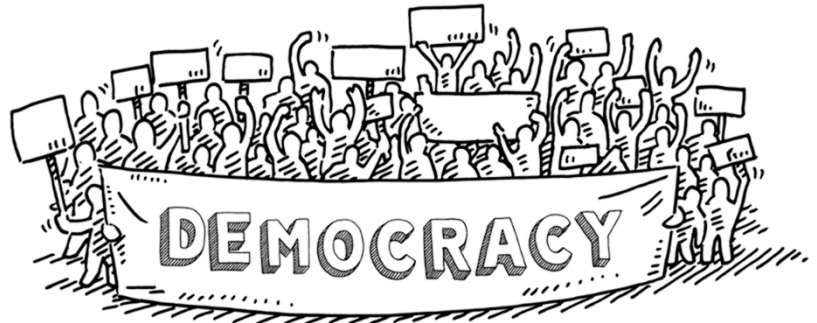
In another speech, one year later (September 1, 2022), standing in front of Independence Hall in Philadelphia, where the Founders drafted the Constitution, President Biden referred to America as a democracy sixty-four times. Sixty-four times! Here is an excerpt from his speech.

The threat to American *democracy* is real. But we are not powerless in the face of these threats. We are not bystanders in this ongoing attack on *democracy*... It is within our power, it’s in our hands to stop the assault on American *democracy*.

For a long time, we’ve told ourselves that American *democracy* is guaranteed, but it’s not. We have to defend it, protect it, and stand up for it. As your president, I will defend our *democracy* with every fiber of my being, and I’m asking every American to join me... *Democracy* must be defended.

Democracy begins, and will be preserved, in We the People’s habits of heart, in our character... We just need to remember who we are. We are the United States of America... May God protect our nation, and may God protect all those who stand watch over our *democracy*. God bless you. *Democracy!* Thank you.²

To be clear, Biden is not the only politician playing this “tune,” but he is an example of the song that’s been chosen. It has the same chorus — “America is a democracy! We must save our democracy! And those who say otherwise are a threat to our democracy!”



President Woodrow Wilson started this trend in 1917, when he called on Congress to declare war on Germany (April 2). “We must make the world safe for *democracy*,” he said. There it was. The seed of democracy was planted in the hearts and minds of Americans. Over the next century, the “America-is-a-democracy” narrative fully blossomed.

The big lie has now been repeated so many times that Americans believe it to be true. It’s taught as a fact in our schools and universities. For example, here is a paragraph in the opening chapter of *American Government*, a textbook published by Rice University in 2019.

Western *democracies*, like the United States, protect citizens’ freedom of speech and the press. The U.S. also allows its citizens to vote. This civic engagement ensures that representative *democracy* will continue to flourish. The right of citizens to participate in government is an important feature of *democracy*. Representative *democracy* cannot function properly without the participation of informed citizens.

In 2022, a viral video exposed dozens of news outlets repeating a script. The script goes something like this, “The sharing of bias and false news is all too common on social media. More alarming is that some news outlets publish these fake stories without checking facts first. This is extremely dangerous to our *democracy*.”³

According to today’s politicians, academicians, textbook publishers, and media moguls, America is a democracy. What’s ironic is that these entities criticize false news sources “that don’t check facts first,” when in fact they are the ones perpetrating false news.

President Wilson, who started this bandwagon, said in a speech at Swarthmore College in 1913, “A nation which does not remember what it was yesterday, does not know what it is today, nor what it is trying to do. We are trying to do a futile thing if we do not know where we came

from or what we have been about.” More than 100 years later, President Biden said the same thing. Remember his inaugural address? He said, “We just need to remember who we are.”⁴ But that’s just it. They don’t want us to remember who, or what, we are. They want us to remember what they tell us we are — a democracy.

If Not a Democracy, Then What?

Propaganda has worked its magic. Ask ten people what form of government we have in this country, and nine of them will say, “A democracy.” But the truth is that the United States was founded as a republic, not a democracy.

I once had a student text me, “My dad thinks we are a democracy. Why do you think we’re a republic?” I responded, “Have him recite the pledge of allegiance.”

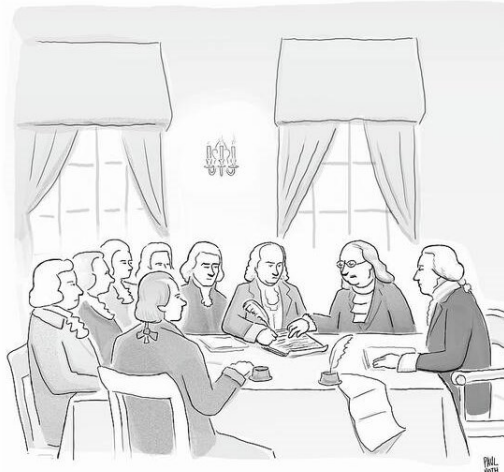
I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the *republic* for which it stands (not the democracy), one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

A few minutes later, the student texted, “Didn’t work. What else?” I pointed to Article 4, Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution, which says, “The United States shall guarantee to every state in the union a republican form of government...” Also, when Benjamin Franklin was leaving the convention that drafted the Constitution in 1787, a woman asked him, “What have you given us, sir?” He responded, “A republic, ma’am, if you can keep it.”

There was a long pause, then I got this text, “He still thinks we’re a democracy.” Propaganda works.

All we have to do to settle this debate is to read what the Framers of our government wrote and said about it. For example, on May 31, 1787, Virginia Governor Edmund Randolph, delegate to the Constitutional Convention, said, “The general object of the convention is to provide a cure for the follies and fury of democracy.”⁵

Eldridge Gerry and Roger Sherman, delegates from Massachusetts and Connecticut, urged the convention to create a system to eliminate the evils that flow from the excess of democracy.⁶



Alexander Hamilton, delegate from New York, said, “We are now forming a republican government. Real liberty is not found in democracy. If we incline too much to democracy, we shall soon shoot into a monarchy.”⁷

John Adams, one of the giants of the American Revolution, said, “Democracy will envy all, contend with all, endeavor to pull down all, and when by chance it happens to get the upper hand for a short time, democracy will be revengeful, bloody, and cruel.”⁸

James Madison, known as the Father of the Constitution (because he wrote the proposed plan), knew and said that enlightened men will not always be at the helm of government, to serve as proper guardians of the public. He knew that unlimited political power cannot safely be entrusted to our elected representatives, to use as a majority of them see fit because a majority of a group of men is far more likely to be tyrannical than one man is.⁹

The Framers never included the word *democracy* in the Constitution. The word *democracy* does not appear in the Declaration of Independence, nor in the constitution of a single one of our fifty states, not because they weren’t familiar with such a form of government, but because they were.¹⁰ They knew the dangers of democracy.

In an excellent speech in 1961, entitled, “Republics and Democracies,” Robert Welch, founder of the John Birch Society, warned, “The founding generation knew all about democracy, and if they had wanted one, they would have founded one. But look at the elaborate system of checks and balances which they established. Look at the carefully worded protective clauses of the Constitution itself, and especially of the first ten amendments (known as the Bill of Rights). All of these steps were taken, deliberately, to avoid and to prevent a democracy in the United States of America.”¹¹

Welch continued, “For over 100 years, American politicians, statesmen, and people remembered that this was a republic, not a democracy,”¹² and for good reason. A republic leads a nation to liberty, while a democracy leads a nation to tyranny.

But how many Americans know that today? How many know the difference between a democracy and a republic?

What's the Difference?

In an article entitled, "The Siren Song of Democracy," Gary Benoit of *The New American* magazine writes, "Understanding the difference between these two words — *republic* and *democracy* — is fundamental to understanding the principles of freedom."¹³ Though the terms are often used interchangeably, the forms are quite different. So, what is the difference exactly?

Benoit explains, "The word *democracy* comes from two Greek words — *demos* (people) and *kratos* (rule). Since the people have different opinions about who their rulers should be or how they should be ruled, rule by the people has been understood to mean majority rule. But the word *republic* comes from the Latin *res publica*, which means literally, "the public thing," that is, the law."¹⁴

"Therefore," Benoit continues, "democracy is rule by the majority, and whatever the majority says (or wants) goes. Democracies are destructive of liberty because there is no law to prevent the majority from violating the rights of the minority."¹⁵ That explains why the Founders referred to democracy as "mobocracy," as the mob can demand and determine what is said and done, whether it is fair or not, and whether it's moral or not.

However, as Dan Smoot explained in one of his 1966 Reports (April 18), "In a constitutional republic (which is what we have in the U.S.), the people select rulers who make laws on their behalf, but the rulers cannot make any laws they please because the Constitution severely restricts their lawmaking power."¹⁶ In other words, the rights of all people, including minorities, are naturally protected by law, no matter what the majority wants. John Adams, leader of the American Revolution, said it this way, "A republic is a government of laws, not men."

When President Wilson (1913-1921) manipulated circumstances to "make the world safe for democracy," Harry Fuller Atwood responded with a timely book entitled *Back to the Republic* (1918). Atwood described the reason why Americans should avoid Wilson's democracy. "The attitude of democracy toward property is communistic or socialistic. It negates property rights and results in chaos, mob mindedness, and riot, finally terminating in destruction of the

property itself. The attitude of democracy toward law is that the will of the majority shall prevail, regardless of whether it be based upon deliberation or governed by passion, prejudice, or impulse, without restraint or regard to consequences."¹⁷

Atwood continued, "The attitude of a republic toward property is that of individual ownership, resulting in thrift, respect for law, individual rights, and orderly, sensible, economic procedure. The attitude of a republic toward law is the administration of justice by fixed principles and established evidence, with strict regard to consequences."¹⁸

Finally, Atwood concluded, "We should return at once, with all the humility and penitence of the prodigal son, to a strict and literal adherence to the republic!"¹⁹

However, "that understanding [of the value of our republic] has been eroded over the years by the siren song of democracy," says Benoit.²⁰ Sirens were mermaids in Greek mythology, dangerous creatures who lured sailors and ships to doom with their music and voices.

Our "ship" of state has, indeed, been lured towards dangerous rocks. From Atwood's perspective, "We have drifted from the republic toward democracy, from statesmanship to demagogism (orators convincing people to follow them), from excellent to inferior service. It is an age of retrogressive (backward or declining) tendencies."²¹ So, why, then, would Americans desire a democracy?

Why Desire a Democracy?

While a democracy sounds good, like the siren, it caters to the desires. Political leaders desire power and control, and the people desire security, equity, and free stuff.

That makes for a dangerous combination.

The people think that they are winning, when in fact they are being led happily to their doom.

We must remember, too, the Marxist maxim, "The issue is never the issue. The issue is the revolution." Marxists desire change (revolution), and they will do whatever it takes, no matter how long it takes, to get what they want, even sing the tune of democracy.



To Marxists, democracy means something entirely different than it does to the American people. It means the removal of all the barriers that stand in their way (i.e., the Constitution, religion, morality), in order to clap the manacles of tyranny on whomever they choose.

Karl Marx wrote in *Communist Manifesto* (1848), “The first step in the revolution is to raise the proletariat (working class) to the position of ruling class.” How? “By winning the battle for democracy.” Simply put, by convincing enough people to follow their “beautiful music,” they can use them to take power. As Founding Father Eldridge Gerry once said, “People are often dupes to pretending patriots.” Once the Marxists have power, the “useful idiots,” as Nikolai Lenin called them, will be oppressed like everyone else. Thus, democracy is a means to an end.

The great Englishman, G.K. Chesterton, put his finger on the basic reasoning behind the determined efforts of the Communists to convert our republic into a democracy. “You can never have a revolution,” he said, “in order to establish a democracy. You must have a democracy in order to have a revolution.”²² Both are happening today.

The Roman philosopher, Seneca, wrote, “Democracy is more cruel than wars or tyrants. The man usually chosen as leader by an ungoverned populace, is someone bold and unscrupulous, who curries favor with the people by giving them other men's property.”²³ It is only when we learn from history that we can avoid its horrible mistakes.²⁴

Alexis de Tocqueville, who visited from France in 1831, wrote of America, “If ever the free institutions of America are destroyed, that event will arise from the unlimited tyranny of the majority.”²⁵ But a majority, says Welch, will never be permitted to exercise such tyranny so long as we cling to the ideals of republican liberty and turn a deaf ear to the siren voices calling us to democracy.²⁶

Back to the Republic

Welch continues, “Sadly, though the American republic is the highest form of government, it requires the highest type of human nature — a type nowhere at present existing. We have not been that kind of people — educated, godly, moral, self-governed — to preserve the republic for quite some time.”²⁷ As the character of the people diminishes, so does our ability to sustain a republic.

So then, how has this gradual destruction taken place? Every government bears within itself the seeds of its own destruction, but thankfully our soundly conceived and solidly endowed republic has required more time for those seeds to germinate and grow.²⁸

However, our enemies (i.e., the Fabian Socialists), invaded America during the Progressive Era (1890-1940). They all knew and agreed that they would have to destroy both the republic's constitutional safeguards and the underlying philosophy. The Fabians advanced during the presidencies of Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt.²⁹

Today, the same poison is being diffused in an effective dosage — newspapers, books, speeches, classrooms, pulpits, and media. All are pointing to democracy.³⁰ But the Founders warned us. Alexander Hamilton wrote, “The ancient democracies never possessed one good feature of government. Their very character was tyranny.”

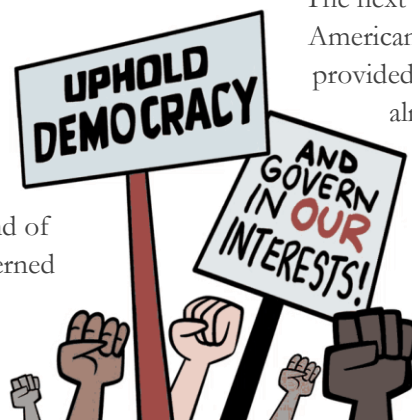
James Madison wrote, “Democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention, have ever been found incompatible with personal security or the rights of property, and have been as short in their lives and they have been violent in their deaths.”³¹ John Adams, our second President, wrote, “Democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself. There never was a democracy that did not commit suicide.”

Atwood closed his book *Back to the Republic* with a heartfelt plea. “The people of this country, for their own good, should get back to the Republic as soon as possible. The sooner this happens, the sooner retrogression (backsliding) will end, and progress begin.”³²

Welch ended his speech in similar fashion. “The most important event since creation was the coming of Christ, for He came to establish the standard of right living for all.

The next most important event was the founding of the American Republic under the Constitution because it provided for the standard form of government. With

almost superhuman wisdom, foresight, and skill, the Founders accomplished a constitution that protects individual liberty from invasion by the powers of government itself, as well as from invasion by others who are more powerful and less scrupulous than us. We are not a democracy. We are a republic! Let's keep it that way!”³³



¹ “Inaugural Address by President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.” 2021. The White House. January 20, 2021. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/01/20/inaugural-address-by-president-joseph-r-biden-jr/>.

² The White House. 2022. “Remarks by President Biden on the Continued Battle for the Soul of the Nation.” The White House. September 2, 2022. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/09/01/remarks-by-president-bidenon-the-continued-battle-for-the-soul-of-the-nation/>.

³ ShootMeDead. 2018. “Multiple Local News Stations Say the Same Thing Verbatim.” *YouTube*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ksb3KD6DfSI>.

⁴ The White House. 2022. “Remarks by President Biden on the Continued Battle for the Soul of the Nation.” The White House. September 2, 2022. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/09/01/remarks-by-president-bidenon-the-continued-battle-for-the-soul-of-the-nation/>.

⁵ Smoot, Dan. The Dan Smoot Report. April 18, 1966. “We Are a Republic, Not a Democracy.”

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Welch, Robert. 1969. *Republics and Democracies*.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ “The Siren Song of Democracy.” 2024. The New American. September 10, 2024. <https://thenewamerican.com/print/the-siren-song-of-democracy/>.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Smoot, Dan. The Dan Smoot Report. April 18, 1966. “We Are a Republic, Not a Democracy.”

¹⁷ Atwood, Harry Fuller. 1918. *Back to the Republic*.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ “The Siren Song of Democracy.” 2024. The New American.

September 10, 2024. <https://thenewamerican.com/print/the-siren-song-of-democracy/>.

²¹ Atwood, Harry Fuller. 1918. *Back to the Republic*.

²² Welch, Robert. 1969. *Republics and Democracies*.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Hamilton, Alexander, John Jay, and James Madison. 2021. *The Federalist Papers*, No. 10. Portland: Mint Editions.

³² Atwood, Harry Fuller. 1918. *Back to the Republic*.

³³ Ibid.