As the US Losses its ‘Democracy’, Geography Crashes the Scene

Two weeks ago, to halt demonstrations against police brutality, President Trump dispatched federal troops, as well as private military contractors, to Portland, Oregon, raising fears of authoritarianism. Now, the Republican controlled Senate is refusing to extend relief for workers forced to stay home due to the Covid pandemic, setting the stage for more demonstrations that would ‘justify’ sending federal troops to more cities — especially those controlled by Democrats, as the President threatens.

The media barely suggests that Trump may be a fascist, while old school Republicans fear losing re-election, and the Democrats continue incapable of forceful behavior. Although the polls show their candidate, former Vice-President Biden well ahead, they are wary of counting their chickens before they’re hatched. As COVID deaths mount, first in one state, then in another, from sophisticated California to the deep south, Biden has merely urged people to wear masks.

Unlike more centralized countries whose governments are either run by, or include socialists, the Trump administration has left the individual states to meet the challenge without help from the federal government. The situation is so dire that the Center for Disease Control has approved the ‘death panels’ that anti-Medicare Republicans imagined during the 2016 election: Before admitting COVID patients, hospitals will evaluate the chances that treatment will save them. If not, they are turned away to die at home.

As America approaches the November presidential election, nothing more eloquently illustrates the deliberate withholding of foreign policy information from votes than the accusations of foreign interference by not one, but three ‘evil empires’, Russia, China and Iran, which are said to target less educated minority voters on the internet. In reality, not even the most sophisticated American voters know that the NATO troops withdrawn from Germany were not brought home, but moved across the border to Poland. Russia’s historical nemesis is delighted to facilitate the rotation of NATO troops to its border where they have been stationed since the demise of the Soviet Union. Notwithstanding this reality, the latest yarn being peddled is that Russia is convinced that the Cold War is still going on, while the US seeks cooperation.

Of all the terrible things that have happened under Donald Trump, his indifference to deaths from a pandemic that other governments are taming has turned many loyal Republicans against him. Although as yet none have dared to challenge him, the president threatens to postpone the election. Cary Lam just did this in Hong Kong, but the US Constitution prevents Trump from imitating her.

In 1904, the prominent British geographer, Sir Halford Mackinder, realized that: “Who rules Eastern Europe commands the Heartland, Who rules the Heartland commands the World Island, Who rules the World Island rules the world.” Recognizing that Russia, with its eleven time zones, cannot be integrated into any grouping, the Heartland Theory required diplomacy to be in charge of relations, while the labelling of the Americas and Australia as ‘outlying islands’, (with Japan and the British Isles designated as ‘offshore islands’), was wildly off the mark: Since the end of World War I, first Britain, then the United States dominated the world.

The ‘Americanization of the World’ was recognized by friends and enemies alike, until the end of the twentieth century, when China and Russia began to act on Mackinder’s realization that land links made Africa and the Heartland the largest geographic entity on the planet.

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