

Democratic or undemocratic



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Democratic or Undemocratic Section March 2007 Democratic or Undemocratic The United s Constitution is both democratic and undemocratic, having been bred out of false beliefs, past mistakes, and morally grounded principles. Indeed, the constitution is the very heart of society, the government that guides society in establishing and maintaining peace, justice, and unity. However, it has not been spared by the imperfections of man and the world to which he lives in. Such is the case of Article 1, Section 8, which stipulates the federal government to “ support and regulate commerce and protect the interests of property” (Parenti, p. 46). In layman’s terms, the government is mandated, among other functions, to regulate commerce and collect proper taxes and tariffs on imports, except for commercial imports.

With such emphasis, aside form other financial policies; the constitution mainly protected the interests and concerns of wealthy businessmen. Because it was only the wealthy and the privileged were the ones who can afford to run for public office, as opposed to the poor, the hopeless, and the uneducated, one need not wonder why such provision is so. Politicians cannot gain money from public office. Hence, they can only utilize their power to manipulate and protect their own interests at the expense of the underprivileged members of society.

On the same basic premise, Article 6 also protected the wealthy by stipulating that allowed speculators to make considerable profit. Public treasury were used to create private capital and credit for huge investors, thus debit payment came from the pockets of the public into the pockets of the wealthy, high class members of society. Another issue that was given special commendation in the constitution was the issue of slavery, as those

member states who had three fifths of slave population were given more seats in Congress, more than it should have given its number of voting population.

The aforementioned were only a few of the numerous “ undemocratic” provisions in the constitution. Through time, and some careful amendments done, lawmakers have done some democratic concessions that had somehow compromised its earlier mistakes and misgivings. One important democratic provision was the election of the president and legislators at a limited span of time, thus eliminating lifetime claim in public office. This aspect eliminates, or limits, the possibility of corruption, dictatorship, or any other vested interest in one’s leadership.

On the other hand, Article 6 indicated that “ no religious Test shall be ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States” (p. 52). This prohibits the possibility of advancing into public office due to religious affiliation. It also allows all states to treat all religions as equal from seeking public office. Religious discrimination is also prohibited, particularly for those individuals who still bear untoward behavior against the Jews who were once the subject of unreasonable maltreatment.

When the Bill of Rights were included in the Constitution, its first ten commandments gained considerable support and adoption, namely: “ freedom of speech and religion; freedom to assemble peaceably and to petition for redress of grievances; the right to keep arms; freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures; freedom from self-incrimination, double-jeopardy, cruel and unusual punishment, and excessive bail and fines; the right to a fair and impartial trial; and other forms of due process” (p. 52). The Bill of Rights was instrumental in making a more democratic

process in delivering the rights of man, until proven guilty of a crime. It had also somehow compromised its past mistakes, particularly in the aspect of slavery, corruption, and unlawful acts of inequality among classes. Thus, slavery no longer exists, accused criminals are read out their Miranda Rights before being arrested and sent to jail, the government is now open irregardless of wealth, class order, religion, race, gender, and the like.