

The West themselves don't practice democracy; why should Muslim?

News:

Secret CIA Assessment says Russia was trying to help Trump win White House

The CIA has concluded in a secret assessment that Russia intervened in the 2016 election to help Donald Trump win the presidency, rather than just to undermine confidence in the U.S. electoral system, according to officials briefed on the matter.

Intelligence agencies have identified individuals with connections to the Russian government who provided WikiLeaks with thousands of hacked emails from the Democratic National Committee and others, including Hillary Clinton's campaign chairman, according to U.S. officials. Those officials described the individuals as actors known to the intelligence community and part of a wider Russian operation to boost Trump and hurt Clinton's chances.

"It is the assessment of the intelligence community that Russia's goal here was to favor one candidate over the other, to help Trump get elected," said a senior U.S. official briefed on an intelligence presentation made to U.S. senators. "That's the consensus view." [The Washington Post]

Comment:

The allegations about Russian interference are only the latest addition to a long list of deficiencies in the American election process. During the Republican Party primaries, there were accusations of media manipulation, with Trump, an outsider in politics, receiving unparalleled free coverage on American television propelling him to win the party's presidential nomination. And in the general election, Trump is set to win the Electoral College even though two million more Americans voted for Hillary Clinton than for him. And these were just complaints from this year. More long-standing issues concern the influence of money in politics, bipartisan domination of the election system, corporate control of media and the influence of the corporate elite in American politics generally, which President Eisenhower warned of as the 'military-industrial complex' in his outgoing television speech more than fifty years ago (and in an early draft of the speech is said to have been named as the military-industrial-*congressional* complex).

The West has never been comfortable with elections. Indeed, democracy itself was only accepted as a political ideal by Western countries within the last 150 years or so. Democracy is in fact an ancient atheistic idea revived by Europe's materialists and popularised in the nineteenth century by mass socialist movements. It was only under threat of revolution that Western governments began cautiously to open up their political process, with 'universal franchise' not fully adopted in most of the West until well into the twentieth century.

Prior to the adoption of democracy, the West idealised the Roman idea of 'mixed government' as the best form of ruling, bringing together the three imperfect systems of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy in such a manner that each could cancel the negatives of the others. Democracy alone was viewed as carrying the risk of anarchic 'mob rule', just as aristocracy carried risks of oligarchy and monarchy of dictatorship. Even today, Western political science students are taught the advantages and disadvantages of all three ruling models, naturally filling them with suspicions regarding each one. Western

commentators, in response to Trump and others, decry the dangers of 'populism', i.e. the attempt of politicians to actually do what the masses themselves want, something that one would expect to be the objective of democracy, but which is often countered with the puzzling explanation that the West practices not democracy itself but rather 'representative democracy'.

The post-election actions of President-elect Trump demonstrate, in fact, that the American political establishment has prevailed even now in the case of this most populist of candidates. Key cabinet selections reflect establishment demands that differ greatly from Trump's own campaign rhetoric. And the first two Trump appointments, his Vice President and his Chief of Staff are both solid Republican Party establishment figures.

To take the current example of non-democratic practices, America's president is actually elected by the Electoral College and not by the people directly. This is why it may happen that the loser of the popular vote wins the presidency. As one of America's 'founding fathers', Alexander Hamilton, tried to explain:

Talents for low intrigue, and the little arts of popularity, may alone suffice to elevate a man to the first honors in a single State; but it will require other talents, and a different kind of merit, to establish him in the esteem and confidence of the whole Union, or of so considerable a portion of it as would be necessary to make him a successful candidate for the distinguished office of President of the United States [Federalist No. 68]

Indeed, the West maintains many safeguards - political, legal, institutional and cultural - against democratic rule at home even while hypocritically accusing non-Western governments of failing to be sufficiently democratic. Muslims in particular were coerced by malevolent Western propaganda to turn away from the divinely-ordained system of Khilafah or to search desperately within Islamic texts for so-called democratic legitimacy. Valid shari'i practices such as the taking of *shurah* or the election of the Khalifah were presented as evidence of democracy even though such measures have nothing to do with the essence of democracy, which is that man makes and lives by his own law, whereas Islam calls on man to live according to the law revealed by his Creator. It is time for Muslims to put a stop to all this.

All sane people know that government cannot be run according to the wishes and whims of the masses. The problem, of course, for the disbelievers is that rejecting rule of the majority leads to following rule of the minority or rule of the individual. But Muslims do not face this dilemma. We have in our noble religion the opportunity to realise a system of government that elevates us above man-made law altogether. The establishment of the righteous Khilafah State on the method of Prophethood will fully rescue man from being enslaved to his fellow man and liberate him to follow the straight and noble path, the path of the worship of his Creator alone. With Allah's permission, the re-establishment of this state draws near.

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
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