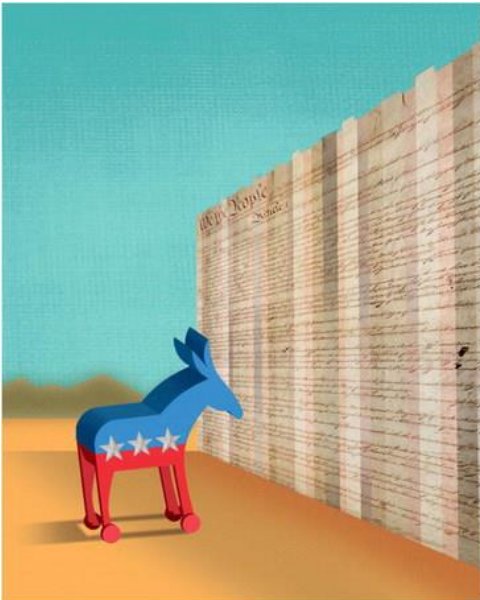




Democrats are waging war against tradition and the Constitution

When Democrats destroy long-standing rules for short-term advantage, they may regret it

Washington Times, By Victor Davis Hanson, August 13, 2020

Several of the 2020 Democratic primary candidates favored the abolishment of the Electoral College. Or, as once-confident candidate Elizabeth Warren put it, “I plan to be the last American president to be elected by the Electoral College.”

Furor over the Electoral College among the left arose from the 2000 and 2016 elections. Al Gore and Hillary Clinton, respectively, won the popular votes. But, like three earlier presidents, they lost the Electoral College voting — and with it the presidency.

The Founding Fathers saw a purpose in the Electoral College. It ensured that small, rural states would retain importance in national elections.

The Electoral College lessened the chance of voting fraud affecting the outcome of a national vote by compartmentalizing the outcome among the various states. It usually turns the presidential election into a contest between two major parties that alone have the resources to campaign nationwide.

The college is antithetical to the parliamentary systems of Europe. There, a multiplicity of small extremist parties form and break coalitions to select heads of state, often without transparency.

Yet, to change the U.S. Constitution is hard — and by intent.

Historically, an amendment has required a two-thirds vote of both houses of Congress and an additional ratification by three-fourths of the states through votes of their legislatures.

There is a chance that some states could render void the Electoral College without formally amending the Constitution.

To circumvent the Constitution, Democrats have pushed “The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact,” an agreement among a group of states that would force state electors to vote in accordance with the national popular vote and ignore their own state tallies. Already, 15 states totaling 73% of the 270 electoral votes necessary to win the presidency have joined.

Liberal academics have an array of proposed constitutional changes. Why do two Wyoming senators each represent about 290,000 voters while each California senator represents 20 million?

Forget that the founders established a constitutional republic, not a radical democracy, in order to check and balance popular and often volatile public opinion. One way was by creating an upper-house Senate that would slow down the pulse of the more populist House of Representatives.

Nevertheless, there is an ongoing effort to dream up ways to create more, and apparently liberal, senators — to change the rules rather than the hearts and minds of the voters.

In his recent eulogy at John Lewis' funeral, Barack Obama proposed giving statehood to liberal Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico. That would instantly give Democrats four additional senators.

Others want senators allotted by population. That was the argument in a recent Atlantic article titled "The Path to Give California 12 Senators, and Vermont Just One," There is nothing in the Constitution that specifies the exact size and makeup of the U.S. Supreme Court. It only offers guidance on how justices are appointed and confirmed, and that there will be a chief justice. But since 1869, the Supreme Court has been fixed at eight associate justices and one chief justice.

Democratic primary candidates Pete Buttigieg, Kamala Harris, Beto O'Rourke and Elizabeth Warren said they would consider ending that 151-year tradition and "pack" the court with additional justices in the fashion of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's failed 1937 effort. The left is apparently afraid of a second Donald Trump presidential term that might allow him four or five Supreme Court picks over eight years in office. The effect of such appointments could be mitigated by expanding the court to 12 or more justices, along with altering the rules for selecting them. In his eulogy for Lewis, Mr. Obama also called for an end to the Senate filibuster. He claimed it was a racist relic from the Jim Crow era used to stymie needed social change. Given recent polling, Mr. Obama now apparently believes Mr. Trump will lose the election, and Congress with it. But he also seems to fear that fundamental progressive transformation could be checked by a filibuster-happy Republican Senate minority. Democrats were perfectly happy with the filibuster — or the mere threat of the filibuster — from 2017 to 2019, when the Democratic Senate minority blocked much of the Trump agenda.

Efforts to change time-honored rules for short-term gain are becoming more common.

Sanctuary cities nullify federal immigration law to empower illegal immigration. The non-enforcement of laws against rioting and looting has become common in big cities. The First Amendment is inert on college campuses.

The left should beware. Politics are volatile and often change. When Democrats destroy long-standing rules for short-term advantage, they may regret it when they too are in need of sober traditions and the U.S. Constitution.

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