

Beneath the Status Quo of American Politics

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Abstract

The word “democracy” originated from ancient Greek, signifying “the power of the people,” or where all individuals actively share equal status. As the Greeks were the first to implement democracy, they envisioned the government as a direct democracy- a concept where the population collectively governed the nation. Over the course of many centuries, the Greek definition became a source of inspiration for several variations of democracy. For instance, the United States of America identifies itself as a democracy, typically via elected representatives. Yet, an influential issue arises as the United States operates under a capitalist system which values economic growth, but often leads to inequality. This complex debate raises many questions regarding whether democracy coexists with capitalism. Although on paper, the American government retains adequate ideals of democracy, many citizens are dissatisfied with the status quo as their rights are progressively becoming more deprived and the frontrunners for presidential elections are not the right people to lead this country. Americans eternally strive for more freedom. Nonetheless, the cost of the current economic system will contribute to the nation’s democratic decline.

Beneath the Status Quo of American Politics

The government of the United States is balanced with a representative democracy of freedom, allowing citizens to elect representatives on their behalf. At least, that is what the country classifies itself to be. The Congress is divided into three branches to achieve equilibrium within the government, and American citizens have the right to vote for the nation's regulations. However, centuries later, the country seemed to have lost its grasp of democracy, as several issues have surfaced, but it may only be the tip of the iceberg. The federal democratic republic of freedom may not be what Americans had dreamed of, as the people no longer govern it. This leads many to theorize about the status quo in America.

The first theory is what America's representative democracy is categorized into, the traditional democratic theory. This theory is where the power of influences lies within the hands of the people, much like how the ancient Greeks had executed their civilization. Nevertheless, this form of governance is only a fantasy, as many Americans do not have the rights a democratic society requires. These laws exclude not just wealthy Caucasian males but the common people as well.

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If it is not democratic, many argue for other theories, such as pluralism or hyperpluralism. Pluralism is the idea that power is distributed amongst various groups and

interests instead of individuals. In order to have a voice regarding the American government, being part of a party is essential. Hyperpluralism, on the other hand, is a more extreme version. When a government has an excessive number of influential groups, the consequences will challenge the functionality of a government, ultimately resulting in dissatisfaction among the majority of citizens.

The elite class theory of the American government is the closest to what America looks like under the iceberg. This theory occurs when the government is neither run by the people nor the party because; rather, it is powered by money. The country's power is engrossed into the upper elite class, causing a crucial distribution of power against the ninety-nine percent- the people. To run presidential elections, candidates need their campaigns funded because the U.S. is also run by its partner, capitalism. Thus, the factors over the past few centuries have led to the status quo of the United States, falling under the elite class theory, which is our ostensible democracy.

America's True Identity

“I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

— Modern Pledge of Allegiance, 1954

The Pledge of Allegiance is the first of many steps American children were taught to recite daily to set loyalty to the nation. Pledging allegiance to a flag has become a prolonged issue that may represent a double standard; when people hear that North Korea forces children to swear allegiance to their leader or Iran pledging their loyalty to the ayatollah, Americans tend to give uncanny thoughts (Brant, 2019). Nevertheless, America also does so despite being known for being a free country.

With this in mind, how much does the pledge tie true to its country? Before diving into a thorough examination to understand our government, we must begin with the institutional approach, its traditional background. The United States has long been considered a proud democracy that has become widely propagated-- a nation of the people. Many high school approved government textbooks, like Magruder's American Government by Shea, describe how the country's supreme authority lies within the hands of its people and that the government can only exercise through and with the people's consent. The American government's form of democracy is an elected representative- where citizens vote for their laws and elected officials- and the majority vote wins the decision. The embodiment of this democracy, however, is very one-sided. It leads people to view their modern society structurally to where they claim America is distancing further away from its ideal government into more of an oligarchy.

While it is true that citizens may use their voice to express themselves through a ballot box, only some have the right to vote. Congress removed a tremendous amount of limitations for the people over the years and The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights (n.d.) found that "there was a recognition that our country could not legitimately claim to be a representative democracy when it banned huge segments of the population from participating." According to the Pew Research Center, about two-thirds (66.6%) of Americans voted in the 2020 presidential election; many of the population falls under the "middle" or "working" class Americans. The United States does not view Election Day as a federal holiday. However, it is a national holiday in many countries, including Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Costa Rica, and Mexico. General elections are held during the weekend for voters to maximize their participation. Yet, the United States rates for voter turnout is low; America's Election Day always falls on a Tuesday, a weekday when many citizens may not afford the luxury of being

able to take time off from work, which leaves the working to middle classes fewer opportunities to vote (Hwang, 2022). Depending on the state (36 states), voters must undergo an identification process to vote. This makes it difficult for people of color, senior citizens, or low-income individuals since they may struggle with limited information, transportation troubles, or financial barriers. Also, current and former felons could lose their voting rights or even face an additional waiting period than working citizens (Rodriguez, 2020). These obstacles then lead back to square one, where the old and wealthy Caucasians rule the majority of votes.

These “powerful” citizens may play a massive role in how money affects elections. Many argue that America runs on pluralism, in this case, the belief that two or more parties with different ideologies of democracy control the government. This debate is more likely to resonate with Americans since the United States tends to be run by two main parties: the Democrats (Liberals) and the Republicans (Conservatives). Nevertheless, above all parties lies a separate structure known as capitalism.

Capitalism is essentially deteriorating American democracy. The Oxford English Dictionary, one of the most worldwide dictionaries of the English language, defines capitalism as “an economic system based on wage labour in which the means of production is controlled by private or corporate interests for the purpose of profit, with prices determined largely by competition in a free market” (Oxford et al., n.d.). This prime interpretation highlights that capitalism is a profit competition in the free market or economic inequality, and it was only in recent years that capitalism is slowly creeping as a predominant system along with democracy. While democracy and capitalism seem to coexist globally, the majority of Americans claim that the coexistence does not apply to the United States of America. Street (2006) quoted the following:

Democracy and capitalism have very different beliefs about the proper distribution of power. One believes in a completely equal distribution of political power, 'one man [sic] one vote,' while the other believes that it is the duty of the economically fit to drive the unfit out of business and into extinction. 'Survival of the fittest' and inequalities in purchasing power are what capitalist efficiency is all about. Individual profit comes first, and firms become efficient to be rich. To put it in its starkest form, capitalism is perfectly compatible with slavery. Democracy is not. (p. 1)

Lester Thurow's explanation describes how the different ideologies about democracy and capitalism affect the Constitution's power distribution. In societies that contain democracy and capitalism, many argue that maintaining political equality against economic inequality, which capitalism tends to produce, is near impossible (Amico, 2020). Even former President Trump stated on CNN Digital, the multinational news channel, that "it's not just the political system that's rigged, it's the whole economy" (Long, 2016). If equality, liberty, and a meaningful democracy cannot function with the status quo through political and economic arrangements, America will soon begin disintegrating (Alperovitz, 2006, p. 1).

A 2019 survey from the Pew Research Center concluded that over two-thirds of 6,878 American respondents are dissatisfied with how democracy is functioning due to capitalism. Yet, political and economic inequality continues to rise despite the people being displeased with their democracy:

It has long been entrenched in American voters' minds that the two main parties, Democrats and Republicans, constantly compete against each other. Even with their supposedly polar opposite ideologies, the data of Americans overall (as shown on pg. 8) has come to terms

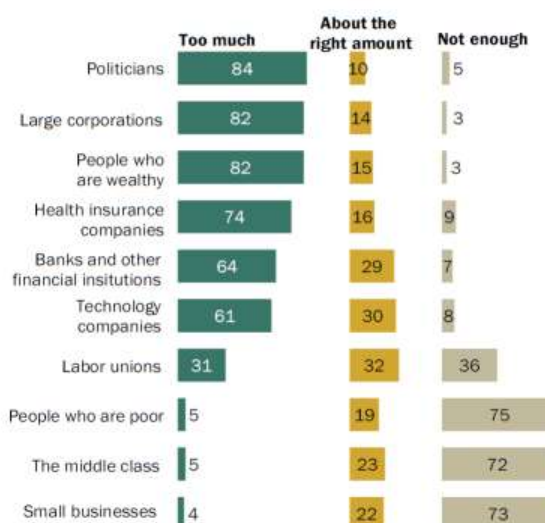
with which certain groups, such as politicians, large corporations, and the wealthy, hold too much power in today's government (Igielnik, 2020).

To expand how capitalism affects elections, ongoing research from Alexander Fourinaies found that the campaigns' spending amount is increasing so consistently that it has become normalized. The inflation of campaigns indicates that fewer people tend to run for office, and those left are independently wealthy (Koerth, 2018). These wealthy remainders spend substantial amounts on advertisements to influence more voters. Compared to the other candidates who spend far less, their message is often less likely to reach the people. Fundamentally, these wealthy candidates will run the American government if they continue to "buy" elections (Smith, 2006, p. 2).

Although the United States labels itself as a democracy, elections are no longer competitive due to the domination of the Democrats and the Republicans, the authoritarian-capitalist parties that usually tend to be the richest. This then leads the people, the ninety-nine percent, to wonder if their country is currently an oligarchy: a system of government where a small number of rich, white elites rule the one percent of America's population. The wealthy are said to have always been a qualifying factor for the presidency, according to many Americans, especially former President Trump. In 2013, Trump told ABC News, another news channel, that one of the main reasons he

About eight-in-ten or more in U.S. say politicians, big corporations and the wealthy have too much power and influence in today's economy

% saying each of the following groups has ___ power and influence in today's economy



Note: Share of respondents who didn't offer an answer not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Sept. 16-29, 2019.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

planned to run for the 2016 presidential election was because he had amassed a net worth of more than ten billion dollars, thus making him “qualify” as President (Weeks, 2013). Also, Gilens and Page found data of well over 1,800 different policies from 1981-2002, resulting in wealthy, well-connected elites steering control over the American government’s direction notwithstanding the majority of citizens’ will:

The central point that emerges from our research is that economic elites and organized groups representing business interests have substantial independent impacts on U.S. government policy, Gilens and Page write, while mass-based interest groups and average citizens have little or no independent influence (Street, 2014).

In the United States of America, democracy can never genuinely thrive within a corporate capitalist system because the government focuses more on monopolizing power to benefit its interests, regardless of whether the broader population may be at risk. The government pays many important corporations, such as Google, the international search engine, to give information about the people. In the mid-1900s, for instance, the government created the National Security Agency (NSA) to protect against any terror or dangers to the American empire. Former Director of the NSA, Binney, exposes that is not precisely the case. Seventy percent of the NSA’s annual budget goes to companies and contracts; the NSA spends ten and a half billion dollars to mass surveillance the citizens. Binney’s interview with Martin stated that most Congressmen would protect the program at all costs because in money, there is power (Empire Files, 2019). Another example during the time NSA was founded, many doctors, hospitals, drug companies, and other businesses proclaimed that cigarettes were beneficial and healthy. Yet, some of these assumptions convinced average citizens to buy more products, indicating more profit for these powerful businesses, especially to morticians (Boyer, 2006, p.

10). If the free market values business over the health or privacy of citizens, the nation could not consider itself a democracy.

In terms of the central question of whether or not America is a democracy, it is not. If the United States is a democracy just like traditional textbooks and documents claim to be, the people would have all twenty-seven amendments protected. Nonetheless, the Supreme Court (by majority 7 out of 9) violated the Fourteenth Amendment, the constitutional right where no state shall deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law (National Archives, 2020). It inspired many aspects of citizenship, such as *Brown v. Board of Education* (racial discrimination), *Bush v. Gore* (election recounts), *Reed v. Reed* (gender discrimination), and especially *Roe v. Wade* (reproductive rights).

However, in 2022, the Supreme Court overturned *Roe*, the federal constitutional right for women to abort. Many of those who are pro-abortion left believe this is the apparent start of a troubled “democracy,” as twenty-one out of the fifty states (as of current) are banning, restricting, and even arresting citizens for an abortion attempt without regard to their situation. (Tracking Abortions..., 2023). Although anti-abortion movements are not anything new, many in the right-wing are pro-life, where the life of an unborn child is more valued than the mother’s. The Fourteenth Amendment was commonly interpreted as a protection of privacy, even though it was not included word-for-word in the Constitution. The majority of the Supreme Court, who are Conservatives, used this opportunity not to consider abortion as a constitutional right. Essentially, the recent decision limiting women’s rights that the Supreme Court made led many Democrats (the newer generation of Americans) to question if America indeed runs as a democratic governance.

For generations, reciting the Pledge of Allegiance has played a significant part in the American tradition of promising loyalty to the United States. Yet, the words from the national pledge contradict itself as America is not truly a democracy. Democracy was initially constructed to be where all individuals share equal rights, and the promise is not wrong with that. Nevertheless, in America, one that runs a representative democracy, it is inaccurate to describe the country as ruled by the people. In contrast to other nations, the United States has a notably low voter turnout due to a significant portion of the population being unable to vote; the majority of the people, which is the hard-working citizens, face many barriers to exercising their voting right, including how Election Day is a workday, felonies, or issues with identification processes. It becomes meaningless if people do not have time to participate in America's major events.

The clash of the election matter gave gold spoons more economic and political power. From the moment the United States interwove democracy with capitalism, democracy would have met its dying fate due to the challenge of maintaining both forces. Whether people approach this topic institutionally or structurally, Americans are currently completing the decline of their democracy with the ascendance of capitalism. Under capitalism that encourages profit-making and self-benefit, the wealthy class and governmental administrators can justify their abuse of power in society. This includes the NSA incident and the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, which took back women's reproductive rights. Issues regarding abuse of authority led many to wonder if the citizens of America can even view themselves as a nation when the government views them as a marketplace. Hence, democracy and capitalism can never coexist without one power's fall.

The 2024 Presidential Election: Continuity or Change?

In November 2020, the fifty-ninth presidential election featured the main candidates: former president Donald Trump (Republican) and former vice president Joe Biden (Democrat). For so long, the United States of America has long operated within a multi-party system, birthing over fifty political parties. Despite the variety, the Republican party and the Democratic party seemingly stand out as the most influential. Symbolized as red and blue, the two major parties are often perceived as polar opposites. Traditional interpretations characterize Democrats for liberals who favor progressive tax for financing the government in order to seek greater freedom, while Republicans are more conservatives who support lower taxes and follow more traditional values (Britannica, 2022). That is the status quo politically and economically, or so many Americans had thought.

There is nothing which I dread so much as a division of the republic into two great parties, each arranged under its leader, and concerting measures in opposition to each other. This, in my humble apprehension, is to be dreaded as the greatest political evil under our Constitution (National Archives, 1780).

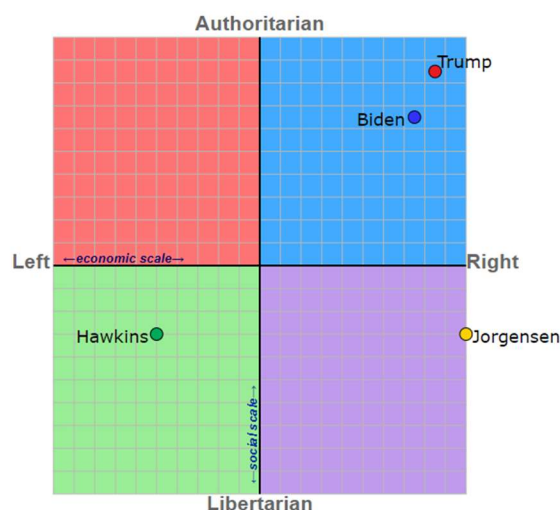
America's second president, John Adams, wrote a letter in 1780 regarding the establishment of presidential elections. Through the years, the progression of the American government seems to manifest Adams's fear into the reality of our so-called democracy. Yet, fifty-two other parties called the third party, have equally contributed ideas and policies that have impacted the American government (Nwazota, 2021). Voting, however, has always revolved around the dominance of the two rival political parties. If third parties have had such a major influence on the United States policies over the span of two hundred years, how come they never win elections?

Politically, the government is not a multi-party but a two-party system. The status quo has both major parties preventing third parties from running for office via the electoral system, using plurality rules or “winner-takes-all” (Why third parties fail..., 2021). The winner-take-all system makes citizens hesitant to vote for third parties, as it is believed that voting for these candidates will go in vain because they have such a low probability of winning (Rieck, 2018). Forbes, an American business magazine, posted that 83% of Americans in the Wall Street Journal are concerned with our two-party system and want more choices than what Republicans and Democrats have to offer (Why third parties can't..., 2010).

Some Americans believe that the government does not run either system, seeing as it runs a single ruling party. Many believe the one-party system consists of two large feuding factions that eternally “re-balance” power into a labeled “representative democracy” by forcing competition. This belief implies the United States will never likely vote its way out of the one-party system until America itself ends (Knapp, 2022). Meanwhile, the issue does not lie with just the authorization of Democrats and Republicans. Many candidates of the two parties have long histories of public engagement, dating back to their school years; “They enjoy the political process and take advantage of every civic opportunity available to them... They attend city council meetings, serve on school boards, intern with legislators, run and win in hometown elections.” With this experience, Republicans and Democratic candidates already have the essential experience. In terms of a typical third-party candidate, they give the opposite impression. Regardless of highly educated people, these candidates tend to lack any political experience. In fact, most seem to hate or show no interest in government or public service until they suddenly seek high positions in office, for example, the presidency (Rieck, 2018).

Yet, that is not the only difference. If we look back on America's 2020 presidential election using the political compass, a website used to determine a person's ideologies onto a precise scatter plot, the placement of the third parties compared to the significant two parties is very much pronounced (as shown on the right). Most candidates of different parties often upshot in different quadrants on the compass, concurrently Biden and Trump landed next to each other. Hawkins (third party) lies in the third quadrant of libertarian communism, while Trump and Biden both lie diagonally in the opposite directions: in the first quadrant. This indicates America's political standpoint is an authoritarian capitalist (Political Compass, 2020), revealing the status quo both Democrats and Republicans tend to proceed.

The US Presidential Election 2020: Last Lap Reflections



Going back to *America's True Identity*, others may address that capitalism plays a significant role in third parties' failure to win presidential elections. With both parties leaning to the upper left (authoritarian capitalist) of the political compass, these two parties have been widely accepted to be the political status quo of America, which is interesting since they ended up near each other although they appear so different to the public. Trump told ABC News on Good Morning America that:

That's one of the nice things. I mean, part of the beauty of me is that I'm very rich. So if I need \$600 million, I can put \$600 million myself. That's a huge advantage. I must tell

you, that's a huge advantage over the other candidates (Donald Trump would spend...,2011).

In order to campaign or any other activities required for election triumphs, parties and politicians must have quite a lot of money (Shea, 2023, p. 607)- but that is just the status quo with economics because of the capitalist society America obeys in. According to the Washington Post and Forbes, Trump's net worth is approximately nine billion (Bump, 2023), while Biden's is ten million (The net worth of every..., n.d.). Biden and Trump are much similar than what they convince the public, they both rack up enormous wealth to fund for corporate campaign spending (Gunn, 2022). Money alone solemnly is one of the major reasons for third parties' downfall, as they just do not possess enough, nor care for personal fortune to be seen by voters or Congress (Bush, 2016).

Even if third-party candidates like Hawkins or Jorgensen hypothetically win elections, the transformation of the status quo will vary, as the power of Congress still most likely lay in the hands of Republican and Democratic members. The Congress is dominated by rich and powerful elites, hence oligarchy (US is an oligarchy..., 2014) or business as usual. The 2020 election results says it all (shown below) (2020 presidential results, n.d.); Congress holds plenty of power, as it writes and debates the laws of America. When a candidate of any party runs for president and wins the popular votes, for instance the 2016 election of Trump versus Clinton, all it takes to win the presidency is for 270 votes from the electoral college to favor the candidate. In the picture results above, the electoral votes (votes by Congress) favor the Democratic and Republican party more than third party, with Biden beating Trump 306-232 (Ignielnik et al,




2021) and zero for Jorgensen. The data alone says a lot of Congress' power third parties ever managed to win a place in office.

Will 2024 be the status-quo election?

After analyzing the rising differences between the Democratic, Republican, and third parties, the presidential election of 2024 is expected to continue with the same outcome of the two parties hovering

over the country. The national broadcasting company, NBC News,

2020 Election Results

	Candidate	Party	Electoral Votes	Popular Votes
✓	 Joseph R. Biden	Democratic	306	81,268,867
	 Donald J. Trump (I)	Republican	232	74,216,747
	 Jo Jorgensen	Libertarian	0	1,865,720

portrayed the 2024 presidential election to be equivalent as “the status-quo election,” owing to the fact that neither frontrunner has offered real change since the last two elections (Murray et al., 2023). Nevertheless, many citizens are unhappy with the party leaders from the 2020 presidential election, especially when the same politicians, Trump and Biden, announced their rerun for 2024 (Who is running for president..., 2023). Four in ten Americans believe that the country has become financially worse since Biden became president, but who would want a president who has been “thrice-indicted, twice-impeached, and once-defeated” for president? (Lowry, 2023); “Political fallout includes poor performance ratings for Biden and a tight hypothetical Biden/Trump rematch next year” (Langer, 2023).

Under closer observation, “Trump is weaker than he was in 2020, but so is Biden. Trump may not be capable of picking up any additional votes over and above 2020, but Biden certainly could lose some” (Lowry, 2023). Since Biden became president, “70% of voters, including 51% of Democrats, don’t want another Biden candidacy, with about half of that group citing his age as a major reason” (Zitner et al., 2023). Just a few months ago, incumbent Biden had just turned

eighty-one, recognized as the oldest president of the United States. Yet were he to be re-elected, he would become 86 by the end of his second term in office.

Though there's no evidence Biden has suffered substantial cognitive decline, his physical movement and verbal dexterity both appear diminished, and he has kept a considerably lower profile than most presidents. As he attempts to turn his age into an asset as 2024 approaches, his advisers are taking special measures, like using note-card reminders and shorter sets of stairs, to try to ward off fierce conservative attacks and skepticism from the broader public (Hart, 2023).

If the status quo continues in this route, it is likely that "in 2024, it may be very bad news for a president who is 80 years old and not getting any younger, or physically stronger, or mentally sharper" (Goldberg, 2023). Apart from Biden having a high chance of an ill-timed fall or other health circumstances occurring during his potential second term, many adults also believe that the government is meeting its decline. However, voters, especially Democrats, simultaneously accept that Biden is likely to become a frontrunner along with Trump (Zitner et al., 2023).

The United States of America claims to run its government as a multi-party system. Upon contemplation, it does not seem so. The two parties have always been regarded as polar opposites, whether economically or politically. Nevertheless, the Democrats and Republicans have dominated the election and government since the mid-nineteenth century. This led many Americans to assume that the government does not run a multi-party system but a two-party system because of the little power third parties has against the two.

Yet, they are pretty alike. On the political compass, most politicians of various parties are supposed to spread out throughout the compass. In the presidential election of 2020, Hawkins

and Jorgensen, who ran in third parties, flawlessly proved the outcome. However, Biden and Trump (the frontrunners) landed next to each other simultaneously. With this result, Americans believe that the government does not run a two-party system anymore but a one-party system, as the Democratic and Republican parties are essentially piling money to buy their elections.

The frontrunners of 2020, Donald Trump and Joe Biden, had announced rerunning in the 2024 presidential election, making many distraught. For a politician, Trump and Biden have one of the most horrendous reputations. Trump is a joke, a mess; he has been accused of severe crimes thrice and impeached twice. Nonetheless, Trump has a higher percentage of winning than Biden. Whatever flaw citizens see in incumbent Biden affects Trump's turnout rates positively. For instance, Biden's age is the main priority; he is well past the oldest president to run. Although he has not shown signs of cognitive impairments, Americans are not ready to bet on his health. However, even if Trump had won another four years of presidency, the country would not change as much as Biden's term.

The reality of America's government is that no matter who wins for president, it will always result in the domination of the Democratic and Republican parties. That is the status quo America tends to follow. Politically, the Democratic and Republican parties will always dominate the government regardless of who runs for president. If a third party succeeds in taking the president's role, the status quo may vary, but in most cases, it will remain the same; the Democratic and Republican parties will still dominate the Congress, continuing to usurp the third party. Economically, the status quo will remain the same because of capitalism. The frontrunners of 2020 and presumably 2024 have secured an enormous net worth, with Trump being a billionaire and Biden a millionaire. There is always competition for wealth, which is the status

quo; Trump even stated that he would do it if he needed to buy his campaigns (Donald Trump would spend..., 2011).

By all means, if Trump, and this is very likely, had won his second term in the 2024 election, the status quo for America would remain the same because business as usual never paused (Knapp, 2023).

Conclusion

On the tip of the iceberg, The United States of America is presented as a representative democracy. Every four years, the nation holds its traditional election to choose a leader to speak on their behalf. However, after centuries of repetition, a more profound reality lies beneath the surface, revealing that America does not truly operate as a democracy. A representative democracy does not last, as the politicians representing our country will succumb to greed, seizing the political and economic power the ordinary people once owned. That is the elite class theory, defining America's status quo.

Ancient Greeks employed a direct democracy where every individual had a right to vote, but that is not necessarily the case for the United States. Many in the population, including people of color, senior citizens, felons, or low-income individuals, struggle to exercise their voting rights for America's future due to obstacles imposed by Congress, such as information, transportation issues, or financial barriers. Even if wealthy Caucasian males, the elite class, were the remainder, the principles of America cannot consider itself to be equal, yet it still does.

Ever since our nation has partnered with capitalism, America will continue to dig its grave. The governance is not operated by the people or various political parties because America is too immersed in wealth, hence the domination of the elite class. The stark reality of the United States is that Congress perceives its people as a free marketplace, not as the majority who used to

have power. Presidents such as Trump and Biden have acknowledged this issue, yet still add fuel to the flame because they, too, only focus on the country's economy when the wails of the public are benignly ignored. No matter what kind of government we have or want, the status quo will forever be unchangeable until America has reached its ending fate.

Ever since our nation has partnered with capitalism, America will continue to dig its grave. The people of various political parties do not run the governance because America is too immersed in wealth, hence the elite class. The stark reality of the United States is that Congress only sees its people as a free marketplace, not as the majority who once held power. Presidents such as Trump and Biden have acknowledged this issue yet continue to add fuel to the flame by focusing solely on the country's economy when the wails of the public are being ignored. No matter what kind of government we have or want, the status quo will forever be unchangeable until America has reached its inevitable fate.

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