Twitter Thread by AG



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I am seriously worried about the future of our Republic. The reason I worry is because our system is seriously at risk as a direct result of the quality of our elected officials. They are completely unable/unwilling to do what is right at any point.

To explain:

In Federalist 10, James Madison wrote about the problem of factions and how they destroy governments and societies. In that essay, he specifically explained we are set up as a Republic to fight against factionalism, which runs rampant in a direct democracy.

When a group/faction gets together and pursues a particular objective (even if it is bad and undermines society), then it is hard for anyone to fight against it in a direct democracy. They have the votes so they can force everyone else to go down their preferred path.

Madison noted that you can fight against such factionalism by addressing the causes (denying all liberty to people or having everyone agree) or addressing the effects. It is obviously bad to deny people freedom (see China) and it is against human nature for everyone to just agree

So a direct Democracy is useless in fighting against ignorant or misinformed masses so founders instead looked for way to limit the effects of such factions. They did that by dispersing power and trusting elected officials to behave responsibly.

It is in the last part that the check against factionalism has fallen apart. Idea was these officials "wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country, and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations"

> The effect of the first difference is, on the one hand, to refine and enlarge the public views, by passing them through the medium of a chosen body of citizens, whose wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country, and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations. Under such a regulation, it may well happen that the public voice, pronounced by the representatives of the people, will be more consonant to the public good than if pronounced by the people themselves, convened for the purpose. On the other hand, the effect may be inverted. Men of factious tempers, of local prejudices, or of sinister designs, may, by intrigue, by corruption, or by other means, first obtain the suffrages, and then betray the interests, of the people. The question resulting is, whether small or extensive republics are more favorable to the election of proper guardians of the public weal; and it is clearly decided in favor of the latter by two obvious considerations:

Madison allowed for the possibility that "Men of factious tempers, of local prejudices, or of sinister designs, may, by intrigue, by corruption, or by other means, first obtain the suffrages, and then betray the interests, of the people."

That's why the second check exists.

That's exactly what we have now. Our elected officials now consistently pander to whatever populist passions are developed by the faction they represent without regard for what is good for the country or what is true.

That's why you have Democrats pretending abolishing ICE or defunding the police are sane position, why you have Republicans willing to undermine essential institutions or try to bribe voters with larger checks. Why you have both parties pandering to false conspiracies.

The hope is that the dispersal of power among states and various factions is still enough to check increasingly dangerous populist factions on both sides, but it's clear politicians are just unwilling to do what is right if it could hurt them with their own partisan factions.

And I'm not talking about what I think is right, but what they themselves know is right. You think Dems don't know that CBP facilities are necessary when they yell about "kids in cages" or Reps don't know that Trump's anti-Democratic efforts are wrong or deserve condemnation?

But they are too worried about the next primary, fundraising for the next election, upsetting the base etc. to tell the truth (at least publicly). The result is there is they get trapped and increase pressure on others to pursue actions they know are wrong.