Twitter Thread by Jed Shugerman



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The Hawley-Cruz faction & most House GOP are now "Bleeding Kansas" Republicans:

I've been thinking about Kansas 1854-59 for a while.
Let's be clear about what happens when political parties reject elections and democracy:
Violence & bloodshed.
Thread.

> The die is cast for the Republican Party. It will be destroyed on January 6th in much the same way the Whig party was destroyed by the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854. The act unraveled the Missouri compromise and allowed for the westward expansion of slavery. 1/
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> — Steve Schmidt (@SteveSchmidtSES) January 3, 2021

2/ The Compromise of 1850 & the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 undid the Missouri Compromise (see map), leaving the question of slave state/free state to voters in the territories, leading to local violence, disputed elections, & ultimately the Civil War.
https://t.co/q4focsfqlO

3/ The Kansas-Nebraska Act opened what would become Kansas, Nebraska, the Dakotas, Wyoming, and Montana to a territory-by-territory vote on slavery vs. freedom.

Pro-slavery Missourians moved west into Kansas to vote for the westward expansion of slavery.
https://t.co/Q3I8aVC9kt

4/ Soon after 1854, Kansas became a local preview and a microcosm of the coming Civil War. Violence, intimidation & murder preceded these slave v. free local elections, mostly from the pro-slavery side, and pro-slavery forces used fraud to win.

5/ Missouri organized pro-slavery "Border Ruffians" to cross into Kansas, use violence and vote illegally. One estimate is that they added 5,000 illegal votes to the pro-slavery side to swing the elections. Congress investigated and found massive vote fraud.

6/ This 1860 book records massive voters fraud.

For example, in the 1854 Kansas election, one district had 161 voters. 30 were legal residents. 131 were no legal residents.

Unlike today, there was voter fraud, and it destroyed the legitimacy of elections.

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elections has been controlled, not by the actual settlers, but by citizens of Missouri; and, as a consequence, every officer in the Territory, from constables to legislators, except those appointed by the President, owe their positions to non-resident voters. None have been elected by the settlers; and your Committee have been unable to find that any political power whatever, however unimportant, has been exercised by the people of the Territory.

In October, A. D. 1854, Governor A. H. Reeder and the other officers appointed by the President arrived in the Territory. Settlers from all parts of the country were moving in in great numbers, making their claims and building their cabins. About the same time, and before any election was or could be held in the Territory, a secret political society was formed in the State of Missouri. It was known by different names, such as "Social Band," "Friends' Society," "Blue Lodge," "The Sons of the South." Its members were bound together by secret oaths, and they had passwords, signs, and grips, by which they were known to each other. Penalties were imposed for violating the rules and secrets of the Order. Written minutes were kept of the proceedings of the Lodges, and the different Lodges were connected together by an effective organization. It embraced great numbers of the citizens of Missouri, and was extended into other Slave States and into the Territory. Its avowed purpose was not only to extend Slavery into Kansas, but also into other territory of the United States; and to form a union of all the friends of that institution. Its plan of operating was to organize and send men to vote at the elections in the Territory, to collect money to pay their expenses, and, if necessary, to protect them in voting. It also proposed to induce Pro-Slavery men to emigrate into the Territory, to aid and sustain them while there, and to elect none to office but those friendly to their views. This dangerous society was controlled by men who avowed their purpose to extend Slavery into the Territory at all hazards, and was altogether the most effective instrument in organizing the subsequent armed invasions and forays. In its Lodges in Missouri, the affairs of Kansas were discussed, the force necessary to control the election was divided into bands, and leaders selected; means were collected, and signs and badges were agreed upon. While the great body of the actual settlers of the Territory were relying upon the rights secured to them by the organic law, and had formed no organization or combination whatever, this conspiracy against their rights was gathering strength in Missouri, and would have been sufficient at their first election to have overpowered them, if they had been united to a man.

Your Committee had great difficulty in eliciting the proof of the details in regard to this secret society. One witness, member of the legislative council, refused to answer questions in reference to it. Another declined to answer fully, because to do so would result to his injury. Others could or would only answer as to the general purposes of the Society, but sufficient is disclosed in the testimony to show the influence it had in controlling the elections in the Territory.

The first election was for a Delegate to Congress. It was appointed for the 29th of November, 1854. The Governor divided the Territory into seventeen Election-Districts; appointed Judges and prescribed proper rules for the election. In the Ist, IIId, VIIIth, IXth, Xth, XIIth, XIIIth, and XVIIth Districts there appears to have been but little if any fraudulent voting.

The election in the IId District was held at the village of Douglas, nearly fifty miles from the Missouri line. On the day before the election, large companies of men came into the district in wagons and on horseback, and declared that they were from the State of Missouri, and were going to Douglas to vote. On the morning of the election, they gathered around the house where the election was to be held. Two of the judges appointed by the Governor did not appear, and other judges were elected by the crowd. All then voted. In order to make a pretense of right to vote, some persons of the company kept a pretended register of squatter claims, on which any one could enter his name and then assert he had a claim in the Territory. A citizen of the district who was himself a candidate for Delegate to Congress, was told by one of the strangers, that he would be abused and probably killed if he challenged a vote. He was seized by the collar, called a d—d Abolitionist, and was compelled to seek protection in the room with the judges. About the time the polls were closed, these strangers mounted their horses and got into their wagons and cried out:

"All aboard for Westport and Kansas City." A number were recognized as residents of Missouri, and among them was Samuel H. Woodson, a leading lawyer of Independence. Of those whose names are on the poll-books, 35 were resident settlers and 226 were not.

The election in the IVth District was held at Dr. Chapman's, over 40 miles from the Missouri State line. It was a thinly-settled region, containing but 47 voters in February, 1855, when the census was taken. On the day before the election, from 100 to 150 citizens of Cass and Jackson Counties, Mo., came into this district, declaring their purpose to vote, and that they were bound to make Kansas a Slave State, if they did it at the point of the sword. Persons of the party on the way drove each a stake in the ground and called it a claim—and in one case several names were put on one stake. The party of strangers camped all night near where the election was to be held, and in the morning were at the election-polls and voted. One of their party got drunk, and, to get rid of Dr. Chapman, a judge of the election, they sent for him to come and see a sick man, and in his absence filled his place with another judge, who was not sworn. They did not deny nor conceal that they were residents of Missouri, and many of them were recognized as such by others. They declared that they were bound to make Kansas a Slave State. They insisted upon their right to vote in the Territory if they were in it one hour. After the election, they again returned to their homes in Missouri, camping over night on the way.

We find upon the poll-books 161 names; of these not over 30 resided in the Territory; 131 were non-residents.

But few settlers attended the election in the Vth District, the district being large and the settlement scattered. 82 votes were cast; of these between 20 and 30 were settlers, and the residue were citizens of Missouri. They passed into the Territory by way of the Santa Fe road and by the residence of Dr. Westfall, who then lived on the western line of Missouri. Some little excitement arose at the polls as to the legality of their voting, but they did vote for General Whitfield, and said they intended to make Kansas a Slave State, and that they had claims in the Territory. Judge Teazle, judge of the court in Jackson County, Missouri, was present, but did not vote. He said he did not intend to vote, but came to see that others voted. After the election, the Missourians returned the way they came.

The election in the VIth District was held at Fort Scott, in the southeast part of the Territory, and near the Missouri line. A party of about one hundred men, from Cass and the counties in Missouri south of it, went into the Territory, travelling about 45 miles, most of them with their wagons and tents, and camping out. They appeared at the place of election. Some attempts were made to swear them, but two of the judges were prevailed upon not to do so, and none were sworn, and as many as chose voted. There were but few resident voters at the polls. The settlement was sparse—about 25 actual settlers voted out of 105 votes cast, leaving 80 illegal votes. After the voting was over, the Missourians went to their wagons and commenced leaving for home.

The most shameless fraud practiced upon the rights of the settlers at this election was in the VIIth District. It is a remote settlement, about 75 miles from the Missouri line, and contained in February, A.D. 1855, three months afterward, when the census was taken, but 58 voters, and yet the poll-books show that 604 votes were cast. The election was held at the house of Frey McGee, at a place called "110." But few of the actual settlers were present at the polls. A witness who formerly resided in Jackson County, Missouri, and was well acquainted with the citizens of that county, says that he saw a great many wagons and tents at the place of election, and many individuals he knew from Jackson County. He was in their tents, and conversed with some of them, and they told him they had come with the intention of voting. He went to the polls intending to vote for Flenniken, and his ticket being of a different color from the rest, his vote was challenged by Frey McGee, who had been appointed one of the judges, but did not serve. Lemuel Ralstone, a citizen of Missouri, was acting in his place. The witness then challenged the vote of a young man by the name of Nolan, whom he knew to reside in Jackson County. Finally, the thing was hushed up, as the witness had a good many friends there from that county, and it might lead to a fight if he challenged any more votes. Both voted, and he then went down to their camp. He there saw many of his old acquaintances, whom he knew had voted at the election in August previous in Missouri, and who still resided in that State. By a careful comparison of the poll-lists with the census-rolls, we find but 12 names on the poll-book who were voters when the census was taken three months afterward, and we are satisfied that not more than 20 legal votes could have been polled at that election. The only residents who are known to have voted are named by the witness, and are 13 in number—thus leaving 584 illegal votes cast in a remote district, where the settlers within many miles were acquainted with each other.

The total number of white inhabitants in the XIth District, in the month of February, A.D. 1855, including

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The violence escalated in 1856, with pro-slavery mobs raiding Lawrence, Kansas to shut down an anti-slavery paper, killing one.
John Brown rise up as an anti-slavery violence in revenge, killing 5 in the Pottawatomie massacre, then leading 2 more armed battles that summer.

Congress found that the 1855 pro-slavery legislature seated in Pawnee/Lecompton was a fraud.
In 1855, anti-slavery forces seated their own govt at Topeka and drafted a free-state Topeka Constitution, vs the pro-slavery Lecompton Constitution.

Kansas had 2 rival governments.

9/ The pro-slavery president (New Hampshire Dem) Franklin Pierce sided w/ the pro-slavery Kansas govt.

Kansas was a turning point in the rise of the Republican Party, as it was clear that the US couldnt resolve "half slave/half free" in western expansion via local elections.

10/ Like today, national racist politicians like Pierce ignored election rules and the clear facts/evidence and the principle of democracy to brutally pick the side that they preferred as a matter of partisanship and naked power.
And the result was increasing violence and murder.

11/ By the time the massacres ended in 1859, 56 people had died in Bleeding Kansas...
Because partisan racist politicians ignored the legally investigated evidence, rejected democracy and denied free & fair elections in favor of lies and slavery.

12/ The irony of calling today's GOP "Bleeding Kansas Republicans" is that Bleeding Kansas helped the Republican Party rise to power on the right side of history.

@HawleyMO @tedcruz and their anti-democratic axis are tearing apart their party and risking the republic...

13/ Hawley, Cruz, @SenRonJohnson @SteveDaines @CynthiaMLummis @RogerMarshallMD @BillHagertyTN @TTuberville @SenatorLankford @MarshaBlackburn @SenatorBraun are the descendants of the pro-slavery forces of the 1850s who rejected democracy & led to widespread domestic violence.

14/ We have already witnessed white supremacist murderers in Charlottesville, Pittsburgh, El Paso, Wisconsin, & elsewhere... and rising.
On Christmas, a man believing right-wing-adjacent conspiracy theories detonated a massive truck bomb in Nashville.
Worse is now foreseeable.

15/ No one can prove that acts of domestic terror were caused (or will be caused) by these bad-faith attacks on democracy & fair elections.
But history tells us that such attacks foreseeably lead to domestic terror.
No crime can be charged, but blood may be on their hands.