Twitter Thread by John Hayward

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Excellent analysis! One of our biggest problems is that people think "democracy," all by itself, is a sufficient check on power. I frankly don't understand how anyone can still believe that, but of course they probably won't be taught otherwise in school.

> I wrote about how Mike Lee is right about "democracy" https://t.co/1dKUae4TUe
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> — David Harsanyi (@davidharsanyi) October 9, 2020

The disturbing flip side of thinking democracy is a magic talisman against tyranny is the belief that democracy sanctifies power - the essence of majoritarianism. "They can't be dictators if we can vote them out of office!" is one of the most dangerous ideas in the world.

The restraints placed on power are MORE important than the process of choosing who gets to wield it. You would be more free under a tightly restrained hereditary monarch than in a "democracy" with totalitarian centralized power.

The human race learned, fairly recently, that elected government is the approach most likely to maximize liberty and human rights, but where on Earth did we get the notion that it's perfect and sufficient all by itself? The world is full of tyrannies that hold elections.

"Democracy" would be the worst of all worlds - tyranny by mob rule, with the oppressors claiming their every fancy was fully and completely sanctified because they won a vote, and why should we let a stubborn minority thwart The Will of the People?

One of the things "democracy" fetishists don't understand - or don't want YOU to understand - is that you don't amass majoritarian power by convincing a majority of the people to agree with you. It's FAR easier to gain power by suppressing those who disagree.

The childlike view of "democracy" is some great lively national conversation where we all decide what we're going to do together. The Democrat Party actually used that as an insipid slogan during the Obama years - "government is just a name for the things we do together."

The reality is aggressive, power-hungry groups intimidating and oppressing the opposition to get what they want. They loudly insist those who disagree with them have no moral standing to participate in "democracy." The number of ideas that can be voted on grows ever smaller.

Getting 51% of the people in a huge nation to agree with you is a sucker's game. Preventing 51% from banding together to stop you is MUCH easier. It's funny how in theory everything is on the table in an unrestrained majoritarian democracy, but in practice nothing really is.

You know who really has the whip hand under "democracy?" Power brokers who can drop packages of bloc votes on the table. Give me what I want, and I'll deliver X votes. Those blocs must be kept disciplined and obedient by teaching them to feel entitled and hate everyone else.

And of course, the more centralized power becomes, the less important the concerns of individual people will be. One vote among tens or hundreds of millions gives you no "control" over "democracy," especially not compared to power brokers with bloc votes and big city machines.

What you need to be free, really free, is a tightly restrained central government, constitutional rights it cannot transgress against no matter how morally superior politicians might feel or how badly special interests desire it, power devolved to local representatives.

It's still not a perfect setup - there will always be tension between freedom and the desire for more government intervention - but the best thing about constitutionally limited, decentralized government is that you really can organize and make a difference in local government...

... and if that doesn't work, you can fairly easily move to a city or state that respects the freedoms you value and supports ideas you believe in. Americans were given the best deal anyone ever got by our founders, and we let it slip away. We were foolish to let it go.

"Democracy" and majoritarianism are appealing to people who want to be ruled, hunger to rule over others, or have been convinced that freedom is scary. Easier to accept totalitarianism when you can tell yourself it was sanctified by "democracy."

The worst illusion is the foolish belief that we can always vote the totalitarianism away if we don't like it. Sorry, folks, but the core belief of "progressivism" is that nobody ever gets to vote again once government power is imposed, no matter how badly it fails.

Look at how the Democrats have used Obamacare to enslave voters. It was sold with lies, it failed so spectacularly that even the Dems agreed it's a disaster during their debates... but there's no going back, ever. You're not even allowed to talk about returning to freedom.

All too often, "democracy" boils down to one man, one vote, one time... and the voters don't really know what they're voting for. True freedom lies not in the opportunity to say "yes," but in the power to say "no." /end