Political Challenges to Liberalism

Chapter 10

*Specific outcome 3.3*: *Explore the extent to which governments should reflect the will of the people.*

The Will of the People

* According to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ principles, the ordinary individual citizen (and the aggregated opinions of citizens, referred to as the ‘\_\_\_\_\_ of the people’) is central to the shape & workings of government.
* Question is....

Are ordinary human beings \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of making wise judgements in matters concerning their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and other’s well-being?

* The ideal...
* Ideally, the governing system, its institutions, actions and legal structures, are designed with the **individual citizen’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** in mind.
* That is of course, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and the actual practice, even within democratic governments, often **falls far \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** of this ideal.

David Kilgour

* First elected to the House of Commons in 1979 as a PC in an Edmonton riding.
* Refused to support the introduction of the \_\_\_\_ in 1990, he was expelled from the PC party.
* Became a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* 2005, he \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_the floor (resigned from the Liberal Party) because he opposed several Liberal policies.
* Became an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Opposed these party policies because of his own \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and the unpopularity of those policies in his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* He viewed his first duty was to represent the will of his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_rather than the will of the party.
* Tradition of **Party \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** is key to Canadian politics. All party members vote with the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* In our parliamentary system, **party \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** prevails and each MP votes with his or her party.
* Occasionally, MPs take a stand and refuse to endorse a policy with which their constituents disagree
* This often means either the MP is **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ out** of the party, or they **leave \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**(both happened to Kilgour.

***Chapter Issue: To What extent should governments reflect the will of the people?***

* + Democracy
    - How do governments attempt to follow the will of the people?
  + Dictatorship
    - How, & to what extent, are governments actions that ignore the will of the people justified?

Does Government Serve the People or Lead the People?

Democratic Systems of Government

* “The will of the people...is the only \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_foundation of any \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and to protect its free expression should be our first object.”
  + - -Thomas Jefferson, 1801
* ‘What I want is to get done what the people \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to have done, and the question for me is how to find that out exactly.’

-Abraham Lincoln 1809-65

(16th president of the USA)

Think, Pair Share (answer these individually, then compare with a partner, then share with class)

* How can a government determine what the will of the people is?
* Do you believe that Canada, where a party often forms the government even though it receives less than 50 per cent of the votes, is governed according to the will of the people?
* Is governance by the will of the people even a desirable or realistic goal?
* Are there circumstances in which a government should act contrary to public opinion?
* Is public opinion informed opinion?
* Read the quotes on page 336...

Suggests democracy is difficult to put into practice, but most would agree with Churchill’s quote:

“*Democracy is the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ form of government, except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time”.*

**Read the following quotes on democracy:**

* "The public have an insatiable curiosity to know everything. Except what is worth knowing. Journalism, conscious of this, and having tradesman-like habits, supplies their demands." Oscar Wilde
* "Under democracy one party always devotes its chief energies to trying to prove that the other party is unfit to rule - and both commonly succeed, and are right." H. L. Mencken
* "It is dangerous for a national candidate to say things that people might remember." Eugene McCarthy
* "A government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth."  Abraham Lincoln
* "These are the people we elected and if we are not satisfied we should get new candidates. It is in our hands. It is our country. It is a very simplistic view that politicians are to blame for everything."  Robert Stanfield, former Conservative Leader and Premier of Nova Scotia
* “A democracy is nothing more than mob rule, where fifty-one percent of the people may take away the rights of
* "Don't vote, it only encourages them." Anonymous
* "If pigs could vote, the man with the slop bucket would be elected swineherd every time, no matter how much slaughtering he did on the side."  Orson Scott Card, Novelist
* "Democracy is a form of government that substitutes election by the incompetent many for appointment by the corrupt few." George Bernard Shaw
* "Democracy is the recurrent suspicion that more than half of the people are right more than half of the time." E. B. White
* "Democracy is the theory that the common people know what they want and deserve to get it good and hard." H. L. Mencken
* "Loyalty to a petrified opinion never yet broke a chain or freed a human soul."  Mark Twain

Which one do you agree with the most? Why?

Which one do you agree with the least? Why?

How do Governments attempt to follow the will of the people?

* “As citizens of this democracy, you are the rulers, and the ruled, the lawgivers and the law-abiding, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”.

-Adlai Stevenson (US politician) 1952

**Democracy – form of government in which power is ultimately vested in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

Two Forms of Democracy

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**– the people participate in deciding issues directly. Operates on the belief that every citizen’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is important & necessary for the orderly and efficient operation of society.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** – through elected officials who represent them and make laws in their interests.

The Will of the people (think, share)

* Is it sufficient for governments to win the support of voters during periodic elections or should they rely on public opinion polls to guide day-to-day and issue-by-issue decisions?
* How much influence should the general population have on government policies?

Principles of Liberalism in Direct Democracies

* Seems practical with small numbers of people. It requires everyone to get together in one space to discuss issues, then make decisions on the majority vote.
* Ancient )\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* – the world’s first democracy – direct democracy with 5000-6000 people.

Three instruments of Direct Democracy used in Liberal Democracies...

1. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** – used to create legislation in the USA. A citizen’s group draws up a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. If the petition is signed by a certain number of citizens, it can force a public \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on an issue.

e.g. Proposition 6: to get tougher sentencing for

gang-related violence.

Proposition 10: to provide rebates to citizens

who buy cars that use alternative fuels.

1. **Referendums or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**– all citizens may vote on whether to accept or reject a proposed piece of legislation. Refer the vote to the citizens (referendum = binding)

e.g. Canadian Referendum- 1992 – proposed changes to the Charlottetown Accord (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_).

3. **Recall Election** - a majority of voters may choose to remove an elected official or government from power. In Canada, \_\_\_\_\_ is the only province that allows recalls (1995). Petition – Speaker announces the recall – a bi-election is held. In the USA, Arnold Schwarzenegger was elected in 2003 in the state’s first ever recall election.

Liberalism through Representative Democracy

* **Representative Democracy** – citizens \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ governing officials to make decisions on their behalf.
* Most modern liberal democracies, because of their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_and complexity use representative democracy.

**Features of a Representative Democracy (pg 339)**

* Complete the diagram....

Canadian Parliamentary Democracy

* Many variations of representative democracies.
* Canada – uses **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ government –** the branch of gov’t that proposes laws (exec – PM & cabinet) is dependent on the direct or indirect support of elected members of the legislative branch (a majority of mp’s in the H of C)

Calling an election...

* If the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, which officially represents the will of the people, does not approve of important laws proposed by the executive branch (spending, taxation, budget), then the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ branch may be forced to resign or call an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Accountability...

* Responsible government is about **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**: the PM and cabinet ministers need to be accountable not only to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, but also to their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and Canadians as a whole.
* If they are suspected of not carrying out the will of the people, a motion of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ may be proposed in the House of Commons. If it passes, the gov’t must \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or submit an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

e.g. Harper comes to power after vote of non-confidence against then PM Paul Martin.

Single-member Constituency

* Operates on the basis of **representation by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**
* **Electoral districts**, ideally 100,000 people, are created across Canada into what are called **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** or **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**
* Each constituency sends a single rep. to

the House of Commons in the federal Parliament in Ottawa which is known as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_constituency.

First-past-the-post...

* Candidate who pass a certain point in the race with the highest number of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_in each of their ridings win.
* At present their are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Members of Parliament.

Bicameral

* Canada has a bicameral (\_\_\_\_\_\_chamber) government system.

1. Senate – \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ house. 105-member Senate is based on representation by region rather than on rep. by pop. Senators are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by PM – until age 75. Any piece of legislation that passes out of the H of C must also be passed by the Senate. Often suggest \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
2. House of Commons – lower house.

**The United States’ Republican Democracy and Sweden’s Proportional Representation ( summative assessment)**

* **Task:** Create **3** diagrams in your notes that outlines the **American** system of government and **Sweden’s** Proportional Representation system, and **Canada’s** Parliamentary gov’t. Use pages 341-45 in your text or the internet to assist you.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Canada’s Parliamentary Democracy | USA’s Republican Democracy | Sweden’s Proportional Representation |
|  |  |  |

Write a few paragraphs considering the strengths and weaknesses of the three systems as if you were tasked with choosing specific elements of the three systems with the objective of setting up a more perfect system of government.

Challenges to the Will of the People...

* Often, citizens’ are not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the area of politics.
* *“Any democracy must pay explicit attention to the development of young peoples’ civic skills, habits and attitudes. We human beings do not instinctively develop the skills necessary for democracy. We are not automatically capable of working together with others on common problems. We do not naturally understand alternative perspectives. Unless we are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to care about other people, we are unlikely to show concern from anyone beyond our immediate circle of family and friends. Citizens are made, not born...” -* Peter Levine, October 14, 2005
* Voter Turnout...
* Evidence suggests that people are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to execute even the minimal expectation of democracy by not exercising their right to vote (indifference).
* Voter turnout...
* If power \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with the people, what do you do when the people choose \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to exercise that power?
* How does low voter turnout \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or endanger a democratic process?

Mandatory Voting???

* **Should voting be compulsory in Canada?**
* Read pages 348-349 in your textbook and complete the Questions for Reflection on page 349.
* Discuss as a class your responses.

1)

2)

3)

Elite Theories of Democracy

* Some people claim that the needs of a society are best served when one \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_group of people, deemed to be better \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_than other citizens, is given the task of making decisions for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Thomas Hobbes, argued because a single vote has little \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in a very large group of decision makers, individuals have little or no sense of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for their decisions, and thus are less likely to make rational well informed decisions.
* This obviously poses a dilemma (elite group vs. Educating citizens – neglect other societal duties?)
* Lobbying by Interest Groups...
* Is an attempt to influence the direction of governmental policy by groups that represent a particular \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_or perspective.
* Spend time and raise \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to influence public policy.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."  Margaret Mead

* Can the will of the people be overridden by the will of a group of well-organized,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and influential people?

Ethics and the Common Good

* Does the will of the people necessarily indicate the right course of action?
* **Tyranny of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ –**  (John Stuart Mill) used this

term to describe one of the potential problems in a democracy. The will of the majority may be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on minorities to the detriment of other liberal principles.

Same Sex Marriage

* In 2005, for example, when the government of Canada introduced legislation into Parliament to recognize same-sex marriages, some Canadians wanted a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_to be held on the issue so they could express their opinions.
* Didn’t happen...Justice Minister Irvin Cotler stated that if a referendum had been held to decide whether women were entitled to vote in the early 20th century, women would likely never have been \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Favoring the extension of rights over the will of the people? Was this right???
* Other Canadian Examples...
* Abolition of **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_punishment** in Canada (1976) after 109 years and 710 executions. 60% of Canadians favoured keeping it, while Parliament holding a vote, voted to abolish it. (131 – 124 MPs in favour of abolishing).
* Currently in Canada, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ offenders are being tried as minors in the criminal justice system. (heinous crimes)
* Quebec expressing concern over accommodating other cultural practices within Quebec.
* Practicality versus Popular Opinion
* Sometimes governments make \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_decisions because they believe they are necessary for the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ good. E.g. Replacing the one dollar bill with a coin (saving of $250 million in the next 20 years)

Consensus Decision Making

* A group of individuals share ideas, solutions, and concerns to find a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to a problem that all members of the group can accept.
* Gov’t of Nunavut and the Northwest Territories are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ governments. In Nunavut, there are no political parties, which \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ MP’s to vote on how they think is best.

Authoritarianism

* How, and to what extent, are government actions that ignore the will of the people justified?
* “*We embody the will of the people because we have the best interests of the people at heart”*

Authoritarianism...

* Describes a form of government that vests authority in an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ group that may or may not rule in the interest of the people.
* Authoritarian political systems take many forms, including **oligarchies** (Putin’s Russian Federation), **Military dictatorships** (Myanmar, formerly Burma) and **one-party states** (Cuba) and **Monarchies** (Saudi Arabia).

Oligarchies...

* A form of government in which political power rests with a small elite segment of society.
* Often controlled by politically powerful \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who pass on their influence to their children. (Russia)
* ‘Iron Law of Oligarchy’

**Some scholars believe that any political system eventually becomes an oligarchy.**

*“came to the conclusion that the formal organization of bureaucracies inevitably leads to oligarchy...under which organizations originally idealistic and democratic eventually come to be dominated by a small, self-serving group of people who achieved positions of power and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. This can occur in large organizations because it becomes physically impossible for everyone to get together every time a decision has to be made. Consequently, a small group is given the responsibility of making decisions.”*

*-Robert Michaels, from The Iron Law of Oligarchy*

Are some Modern Democracies Oligarchic?

* Eg – USA. Actual differences between rivals is small. The oligarchic elite impose strict limits on what constitutes an acceptable and respectable political position.
* Is it any coincidence that the names \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have prevailed in four recent US election campaigns?

One-Party States

* A type of system where only one party forms the government and no other parties are permitted to run \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Often communist states, yet call themselves republics, socialist republics, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_republics to show they somehow represent the will of the people.
* Provide unity, strength.

Military Dictatorships

* Often known as a military \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, where political power resides with the military leadership.
* Often come to power through a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* E.g. Musharraf – Pakistan – forced out of power in 2007 (internal dissension b/n pro-Islamic and pro-democratic factions)

Techniques of Authoritarian Governments

* **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** –what the country could be if led by...
* **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** –
* **Controlled \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** – citizens belief they are contributing to the country (rallies)
* **Directing Public \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** – society is provided an enemy on which they can safely unleash their frustrations. (Hitler – anti-semitism)
* **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** – quick terror to rid society of dissidents

Strengths & Weaknesses of Authoritarianism

* Strengths
* Seem to accomplish many of the country’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Visions painted by dictator often address the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the people and often result in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ consequences (build roads).
* Weaknesses
* Horrible acts of human rights \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Often \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(Ferdinand Marcos -Philippines 1965-1986)
* Often sacrificed individual \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_for the perceived needs of the country
* Often l\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ change is not done peacefully.
* Popular support disappears, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_often occurs.
* **Are there circumstances in which an authoritarian regime can be seen as an expression of the will of the people?**

Portrait of a Dictator (summative assessment)

* **Choose a 20th Century dictator on the handout provided and complete a one page description (publisher) of his:**

1. **Rise to power,**
2. **What he accomplished in power,**
3. **His fall from power.**

* **Indicate the dictator’s perspective on the concept of the will of the people.**