It Begins: Scholar Calls For Technocracy To Replace American Government

The media will now blitzkrieg Parag Khanna’s new book being released on January 10, *Technocracy in America*. I have warned for many years that this day was coming, and now it is being sprung upon us. Rise up now America, and reject Technocracy before it gains traction. □ TN Editor

If we could start from scratch, how would we design the U.S. government? Would we preserve the electoral college, the 18th-century creation that is so controversial today? Would we keep the Senate or the Supreme Court?

According to Parag Khanna, an author known for pushing boundaries, the answer is no. In a new book, “*Technocracy in America: Rise of the Info-State*,” Khanna takes on the task of radically redesigning the U.S. government for the 21st century.
It’s an apt time to undertake such a project. Trust in U.S. institutions has fallen to an all-time low, with 65 percent of Americans saying they are dissatisfied with their government, according to Gallup.

Khanna considers systems from around the world, from Switzerland to China, to suggest an ideal form of government that would reflect the will of the people, as well as the wisdom of experts and data. Khanna argues that the United States needs to evolve into what he calls an “info state,” in which experts use data to guide the country toward long-term goals — otherwise the country will be surpassed by countries that do.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

**In many ways, the 2016 election represented a backlash against elites and experts. How do you reconcile that with your vision that technocrats should be leading the government?**

What I derisively call ‘Martha’s Vineyard millionaires’ are not technocrats. Just because you’re an elite or expert, it doesn’t mean you’re a technocrat. A technocrat is a meritocratic, utilitarian civil service personnel.

In a country like Singapore, the civil service runs the entire country. You could decapitate the regime, and not even replace it for five years, and the country would run fine. You can do that in Switzerland, and maybe in Germany, but you can’t do that in America, because we have very few utilitarian-minded civil service elites who transcend administrations and have a lot of influence.

Why is it that Donald Trump has to appoint 4,000 federal appointees? It’s because, clearly, members of the civil service don’t occupy those 4,000 top jobs. In a technocracy, they would occupy 3,999 of them. So the U.S. is not a technocracy, it is an elitist clique that is rotating in and out of power.

So yes, there is an anti-elitist backlash, and I’m totally in support of it. Occupy Wall Street, the Arab Spring, Brexit and Trump all fall into this pattern. The last 10 years have given us year after year, revolution after revolution, of anti-elitist backlash. I think that’s a wonderful thing,
because we’re holding people’s feet to the fire. But we’re not replacing them with the kind of regime the public deserves. That’s only going to be done if we replace elitism with technocracy.

By the way, just because Barack Obama is a law professor, it also doesn’t mean he’s a technocrat. You need to know how to run something to be a technocrat. Having a bunch of smart people around who happen to be Martha’s Vineyard millionaires does not make you a technocracy. We are so far from it, it’s pathetic.

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