

“Anti-Democracy” Just Means “Something the Regime Doesn’t Like.”

“Democracy” is the new “revolutionary.”

In the old Marxist regimes, anything that displeased the ruling communist regime was said to be contrary to “the revolution.” For example, in the Soviet Union, national leaders spoke regularly of how the nation was in the process of “a revolutionary transformation” toward a future idealized communist society. Many years after the actual revolution and coup d’état in Russia in following the collapse of Tsarist Russia, the word “revolution” had [“positive connotations and was considered a source of legitimacy in official ideology.”](#)

Revolutionary became a synonym with “a thing we like,” and it’s no surprise that a [1952 Soviet legal manual](#) lists “counterrevolutionary” activities as among the “political crimes ... deemed generally dangerous crimes against the order of the state.” Moreover, in the early 1950s, when Mao Zedong launched new efforts to consolidate communist power, he called the effort a “campaign to suppress counterrevolutionaries.” Other regimes adopted similar practices as well. Castro’s Cuba frequently launched investigations and campaigns against “antirevolutionary” dissidents and Ethiopia’s Marxist governments in the 1970s [described domestic opponents](#) as guilty of “anti-revolutionary crimes.”

Anything that was deemed “counterrevolutionary” or “antirevolutionary” was assumed to be an awful thing that was a threat to the reliably vague notion of progress toward the fulfillment of the alleged revolution. The vagueness of the term was, of course, an advantage from the point of view of the regime. Consequently, to be a counterrevolutionary

required nothing more than to be guilty of thoughtcrime by subscribing to heterodox views in regards to the current ruling party.

Thus, to be a counterrevolutionary was simply to be opposed to the regime, regardless of one's actual ideological views. This is why communist Emma Goldman (a bona fide revolutionary) could be [denounced](#) as "anti-revolutionary" for expressing doubts about the virtues of the Soviet regime. One's support for actual revolution was irrelevant, and "antirevolutionary" could simply be defined or redefined as whatever the regime found objectionable at any given time.

In the year 2022, we find the word "democracy" serving a similar role in political discourse. President Biden has delivered two major [speeches](#) this year on how "democracy" will supposedly be abolished if Biden's opponents win. Last week, former president Barack Obama solemnly intoned that if Republicans win in Arizona, "[democracy as we know it may not survive](#)." Indeed, this has become something of a mantra among leftwing politicians and their media allies. One writer at *Salon* chastised voters for daring to let their votes be influenced by economic concerns when "[democracy is under threat](#)." One *New York Times* headline [bemoaned](#) the apparent reality that voters don't seem interested in "saving democracy" when it's all so supposedly clear that "democracy is in peril."

So why are so many voters ready to allegedly "[trade democracy for cheap gas](#)"? The answer probably lies in the fact that most voters can see what is obvious: the only thing actually in peril is the Left's *version* of democracy, which is an anything-goes-including-rampant-voter-fraud model for voting in US elections. Moreover, the Left wants a federal takeover of elections which in the United States have always been at least moderately decentralized. Instead, the "prodemocracy" camp wants federally enforced election regulations prohibiting limitations on voting for aliens, dead people, and frauds. If

the Left does poorly in this election, that's a lot less likely to happen.

Any attempt to limit fraud—such as requiring identification for voters is denounced as “antidemocratic.” Indeed, nothing better shows this than the Left's complaints about the fact that some law enforcement officers have monitored polling places. As one Georgetown University bureaucrat [put it](#), allowing law enforcement personnel to guard ballot boxes might “intimidate” some people, and sends the message that voter fraud actually occurs. This, she tells us, is “abhorrent.” But at the core of this complaint is simply an aversion to the idea that the presence of police might scare some people off from ballot stuffing and other forms of fraud.

Ironically, by this way of thinking, to be “prodemocracy” is to not care whether or not the voting process is fraudulent. Thus, just like the term “revolutionary” under the old communist regimes, the terms “democratic” and “democracy” in the US today cease to have any meaning and really just mean “what our side likes.”

After all, most reasonable people would conclude that democratic institutions exist whenever there are regular elections and generally universal suffrage for citizens. This is clearly the case in every state of the Union. Moreover, the overwhelming majority of countries that the Left calls “democracies”—[France, Germany, Iceland](#), etc—have voter identification requirements, checks against double voting, and similar means of preventing fraud. In the United States, the Left calls all this “antidemocratic.”

The actual details of what it means to be prodemocratic or antidemocratic don't actually matter when it comes to political discourse. The word “democratic” is an emotionally loaded term, and essentially code for “politically legitimate.” All that really matters is to call one's allies “democratic” and to denounce the other side as “undemocratic.”

In America today, to be labeled “democratic” means one has the approval of the ruling regime. Those who are labeled “undemocratic” are those who, like the “counterrevolutionaries” of old, have been deemed—rightly or wrongly—threats to the status quo.

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