

Quadrant II - Notes

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Merits and Demerits of Democracy

- Democracy word made from two words- demo and kratos. Demo means people and kratos means power. Therefore, supreme power lies with the people.

So the word democracy means people's power and government in which the power is vested into the hands of people is known as democratic government.

The famous thinkers like Rousseau, John Locke, Barker, Laski etc are the main supporters of democracy and they presented the different forms of it.

- According to Lord Bryce, democracy is that form of government in which ruling power of the state is vested not in particular class or classes but in the members of the community as a whole.

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According to Prof. Selley, democracy is a government in which everyone has a share.

Merits of Democracy

1. The participation of the individual members in the government facilitates to enlist their sympathy and co-operation to the success of the government.
2. It is an effective form to educate the public about political, economic and social affairs.
3. It is helpful to promote patriotism among the people and prevents the occurrence of violent revolutions.
4. It helps to make progress and development and enables changes to take place in a peaceful manner.
5. It ensures the people freedom of speech, conscience, assembly and action.
6. It guarantees liberty and equality, which are necessary for human development.
7. In a democracy, the rights and interests of every section of the people in a democratic state are adequately safeguarded. It can command the resources of all, because it stands for the benefit of all.
8. It broadens the vision of all, neutralizing the inherent selfish tendencies of the human mind.
9. It offers huge personal privilege to every citizen of the land and stands against any suppression of thought, speech or association.
10. The greatest virtue of democracy is that it stands for the unfettered development of the human spirit and free expression of the human mind

Demerits of Democracy

1. It sometimes leads to establish the majority view over the minority view.
2. Party leaders and political office holders in government control the citizens and the members of the party.
3. It does not encourage individuals to give their opinions.
4. It is a very expensive form of government because elections have to be conducted periodically to the various office.
5. It is difficult to prevent corruption and malpractices.
6. It is also known as government by amateurs and lead to domination of masses.
7. The decision-making process is slow in democracy as it involves long debates and deliberations in the Parliament.
8. Self-discipline, good conscience, and intellect are pre-requisites for every citizen to have a successful democratic society.
9. Self-interest is the most common and a majority of the people is unwilling to subordinate it to the general will of the community.
10. Democracy has been characterized by these critics as mobocracy, it produces quantity rather than quality. This rule of the majority has at times proved to be the most incompetent and worthless.

Conclusion

The world has been experimenting with so many systems of government, but no other system could satisfy the basic needs of the people. So, democracy has been accepted as the best

form of government where a man can really enjoy equality of opportunity, liberty, and freedom.