

An answer to a Local religious question

ARE HOUSES OF WORSHIP DEMOCRATIC OR NOT.

Houses of worship are supposed to be democratic but are not; they are democratic in theory but not in fact. Let us see why this is so.

Public opinion is formed and moulded by a handful, a small group who are progressive in thought and action. While the average individual who constitutes the masses or the larger group is absorbed in his own personal affairs with little or no time on his hands or thoughts for things pertaining to public or neighborly concern, one or more progressive natures, having the material means, the time and the ability to plan, devise and execute an idea or reform are busily engaged in preparing the minds of the masses for the acceptance of that particular idea or reform.

If the idea is understood and intelligently explained to them and is not a radical departure from their accustomed standard or in any way disturbing their peace of mind and physical comfort, the idea will be accepted. By this action this self-appointed few become the accepted leaders of a large group or a movement. They have demonstrated their ability to influence the minds of the masses to their way of thinking providing they have been sincere. Such a man or leader cannot be ~~said~~ said to have a vote alike with the rest of the people or masses. His vote on a question or policy is not just merely one vote cast. It is more potent and is said to have greater quality to the extent that he influences other votes. A vote is then a voice and may not have anything to do in the settling of a question except when it has quality. A vote of a great quality may then become equal to any number of votes of less quality.

Take for example our own government. The House of Representatives and the members of the senate are elected by the people. The House outnumbers the Senate by about five to one and yet the power of the House is no greater than that of the Senate. Qualitatively speaking, the Senate is a more influential body in comparison with the House. The House may have five voices to the senates one, but the Senates one voice or vote is greater in quality and necessarily in influence. And why?. Because the Senator has demonstrated greater ability to serve his constituents than the Congressman; is respected to a much greater extent, and is a greater leader in the point of influence he wields.

So it is with any organization, secular or religious. The vote of the average member constitutes a voice; the right to express an opinion but in so far as having a vital influence in shaping a policy or settling a question it must have quality and this quality is measured by the degree of esteem which the mass or group give to that particular voice or vote.

When a question is voted upon or to state it more literally; when a question is voiced, those voices which did not carry the necessary influence can be said to have had no vital bearing on the question or policy. Their voices have been of no avail and may just as well consider themselves to have had no voice at all except so far as to express an opinion. They have lacked quality and therefore leadership.

Since the promulgation of any idea, reform or policy is dependent upon leadership and since leadership depends entirely upon the degree of influence with which an individual or small group of individuals can bring the masses to their own way of thinking and accepting a certain idea, reform or policy, it therefore holds true that government lies vested in a leader or group of leaders who have the ability and means to mould public opinion as they see fit for the benefit of the people in a progressive measure holding ever in mind the goal of Ultimate and Absolute Truth.

But some will argue; Does not this illustrate representative government,?. Do not these leaders hold their position by the sanction of the people, the masses and public opinion and do they not follow the will of the people ?.

Leaders do not follow public opinion; they form public opinion by the weight of their influence. It is true that they represent the people but not in the sense that they can be dictated to as to what to do and what not to do. Everything in this world, of a material or spiritual nature; every movement or object of which we partake of its beneficence has been conceived by a single mind, to which a small group of adherents have been won and then had grown to be accepted by the masses. God conceived the Universe; Moses conceived the laws and the commandments; Dr.Schechter conceived the Conservative-orthodox movement and so on to infinity. Thus we see that ideas, movements, policies etc., are not democratic as far as the will of the masses are concerned. This involves something nobler something higher as quality which may be called Aristocratic in the pure meaning of the word because the power of conceiving things is not common to all.

And when the things are accepted by the people and masses, they come to enjoy the benefits thereof and all the rights and privileges thereto and so we have Democracy in the pure meaning of the word.

This form of society or government reason would call Aristocratic-Democracy; the combination of the two elements which have striven for individual supremacy in the past from the beginning of mankind and which are tending to coordinate as mankind progresses to a sense of reason justice and faith an inevitable tendency.

This is the form of government which we find existing in the National government; in our secular as well as religious organizations and from which we cannot afford to depart without creating chaos and reverting back to experiences of the dark ages of mankind.

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