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“Aristocracy or Democracy”

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The American system of democracy is flawed. It is a system designed by a group of rich and revered people who have always been in power, and demand that they stay there. The concept of democracy implies that there is an equal opportunity for all, which could be no further from the truth. This is easily represented in the novel, *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding. A group of boys, trapped on an abandoned island, struggle to decide on leadership. "I ought to be chief," said Jack with simple arrogance, "because I'm chapter chorister and head boy. I can sing C sharp." (1.229-231) This boy has no real leadership qualities applicable to the island, and yet holds significant influence over others because of his power elsewhere. This is applicable to our modern politics. People will be able to represent our country because they became powerful in other areas of life: using money, reputation and resources to get there. It provides a serious problem for Americans who wish to break into the political arena, and pits those with no influence versus those who can buy it. The future of our country lies in the hands of the people who have the largest social and financial sway. Is this truly the democracy that America intended to create?

Our representatives, officials and presidents are seemingly voter chosen and approved. It is true we vote, but the only reason that the public is aware of these candidates is obscene amounts of money and bribery spent on their campaign. The limit for a presidential candidate in an election is \$103,701,600. That includes the most important, and most exclusive help, the lobbyists. A lobbyist's job is to use their money, social influence and power to create a 'perfect' candidate for the people to vote on. As a result, the lower class candidates who want to make a change will never see the light of day, drowned out by the oppressive financial gains of the upper class. Even worse, the greater the donation, the more likely they are to receive a government contract. The lower level elections provide the illusion of democracy, but even the candidates there are being boosted by these 'donations'.

A democracy is meant to provide for the people, and the general wellbeing of our country. How can we preach our values to other countries if these values don't exist? Even in office, when representatives should be listening to the people, they are putting themselves first. In 2006, ex-congressman Randy Cunningham was arrested for taking 2.4 million dollars in bribes to approve multiple government contracts. He put his personal needs above the duty he held as an elected official to represent the people and their voted interests. American democracy has turned corrupt, inhabited by people who choose to forward this plague, and use that success to benefit themselves instead of their country. The United States cannot put forth the banner of democracy if we are unable to uphold it.

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