

*Editorial***American politics in the present arena****Steinert-Threlkeld, Zachary\***

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Accepted 17 May, 2021

**EDITORIAL**

The U.S. is a representative democracy. Citizens select nominees to national, state, and local government; those individuals create the laws that govern U.S. society. However nothing in United States law needs it, in practice, the political system is over-taken by political parties. With rare exceptions, elections are decided between the two vital parties: Democrats and Republicans. Although citizens vote for selected candidates, most candidates are elected with one party or another. In fact, for that reason, much of U.S. politics blows down to party politics.

The United States is also a diverse world, and citizens' competing interests are reflected back in politics. People may have variety voting criteria depending on their family backgrounds, the types of jobs they have, their race or age, if they have children, and so on. To realize the electoral process, we must understand how different interests come into play.

Individual people are not the only players in U.S. politics. Although individual citizens are the only single who can elect votes for voters, special interest groups and lobbyists may compress elections and law-making with money and other resources. At times, this influence has increased so memorably that some have called into question whether the U.S. is truly a democracy of the people or something more like an oligarchy of special interest groups. The media also play a crucial role in politics by influencing public sentiment and acting as an information purifier.

**SCOPE**

The type of electoral system is an important factor in distinguishing the type of party political system. In other countries with a simple plurality voting system there can be as few as two parties elected in any given jurisdiction. In some other countries that have a proportional representation voting system, as exists all over Europe, or a preferential voting system, such as in Australia or Ireland, three or more parties are often elected to parliament in similar proportions, allowing more access to public office. In a nonpartisan system, no official political parties exist, sometimes due to legal restrictions on political parties. In nonpartisan elections, each representative is eligible for office on his or her own merits. In nonpartisan legislatures, no formal party commitments within the legislature are same.

In two-party systems, such as in Jamaica and Ghana, the two political parties overtake to such an extent that electoral success under the banner of any other party is virtually impossible. Multi-party systems are systems in which more than two parties are represented and elected to public office. Australia, Canada, Pakistan, India, Ireland, the United Kingdom, and Norway are examples of countries with two strong main parties, along with smaller or "third" parties that have also obtained representation. The smaller parties may form part of a coalition government together with one of the highest parties, or act independently.

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