



Bipartisanship

Julius L. Simon - February 6, 2024

Imagine that you are standing in your kitchen deciding what to make for breakfast. You take into consideration factors such as nutrition, ease of preparation and what sounds good to you. You decide to make yourself a bowl of cereal. You made the decision yourself and even though it may not have been the most healthy breakfast, it works for you and you made your own decision.

Now imagine that you and your spouse are standing in the kitchen deciding what to eat for breakfast. You want cereal, but they want pancakes. There are several ways to solve this issue, but a solution is not a difficult one to reach (for most people).

Now imagine you are standing in your kitchen with your spouse and three children, all five of you want something different for breakfast. The issue becomes a bit more complicated in this case, but still millions of humans have been solving this issue for generations. In this situation, everyone can take care of their own breakfast wants and needs, or if one or more choices require compromise the decision can be discussed and an agreement can be reached. It is possible that someone may end up not having what they want most, but everyone is still fed and content.

We are going to continue to expand this premise and thought experiment to an absurd degree to prove a point. Now I want you to imagine that you hear a knock on the door, and you are informed by your neighbor of a new law recently passed that grants the right of neighbors to have a say in what you want to eat for breakfast. Your family has already decided on pancakes, and you are already making them. Your neighbor declares pancakes to be too unhealthy and demands your breakfast be changed to yogurt. You hate yogurt so you offer the solution of pancakes and a side of yogurt for those who want it. The compromise is agreed to and although the price of breakfast in resources has increased, everyone has their desired meal.

Later that day another law passed, creating a neighborhood breakfast mandate. The choice for the neighborhood's breakfast is left up to a democratic vote and everyone in the neighborhood, young and old, has an equal vote. Through hours of deliberation, the neighborhood has narrowed the choices to the two options presented with the most votes: scrambled eggs and bacon or a veggie shake. In this scenario, it does not matter which choice wins in the end, everyone who wants something

different is now left with not only the breakfast they do not want, but their objections are no longer considered because “hey you got a vote”.

Following the same logic as this admittedly absurd example, now I would like you to imagine that you are a person with blue eyes. You live in a small county in the United States. Legislation has just been presented to the local legislature which, if passed, criminalizes having blue eyes, carrying a maximum penalty of death by guillotine. Seeing the obvious imminent threat you take action and petition the legislature to scrap the bill. After being put to a vote, the bill passes by a handful of votes and you are decapitated (democratically) later that day. The response to the inevitable public outcry to this bill is “you voted for your representatives, democracy did its job”.

To illustrate a second point, imagine that the fight by the legislature was more realistic. A minority of representatives on each side of the isle refuse to change their stances, and are a firm yes or no. The rest of them are human and can be persuaded. Through hours of deliberation and proposed alterations to the bill, a compromise is reached. The legislation proudly declares that a “bipartisan agreement has been reached, and we are so proud of how democracy prevailed today”. The finalized bill now requires all blue eyed people to register with the government, and a death quota of fifty percent of blue eyed people to be executed is enacted. In return for this agreement, the “defenders” of blue eyed people made several concessions in addition to the quota including earmarks for public parks, and a tax increase on people without blue eyes. In return, the anti blue eyes side agrees to the limit of fifty percent. The town then fulfills the execution quota. As a blue eyed person, as the blade hangs over your head, the response to your objections is “this was a bipartisan democratic decision, the people have spoken”.lic opinion. Compromise is often necessary, and serves as a logical solution to many issues, but bipartisan resolutions in government often result in a worse outcome for the very majority democracy allegedly serves, than if the government had made no resolution in the first place. If a bipartisan national bill were passed, democratically mandating the breakfast for the people, we would end up eating no breakfast and funding more wars.