The Dismantling of American Democracy: From the War on Terror to Donald Trump

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States marked a watershed moment in American history. In the wake of the attacks, the Bush administration launched the War on Terror, a sweeping campaign against terrorism that has had a profound impact on American democracy.



Subtle Tools: The Dismantling of American Democracy from the War on Terror to Donald Trump by Karen J. Greenberg

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The War on Terror has led to the expansion of executive power, the erosion of civil liberties, and the decline of public trust in government. These trends have continued under the Trump administration, which has further eroded American democratic norms.

The Expansion of Executive Power

The War on Terror has led to a significant expansion of executive power.

The Bush administration claimed the authority to detain suspected terrorists without charge or trial, to eavesdrop on American citizens without a

warrant, and to use torture against detainees. These powers were later codified into law by Congress, giving the president broad authority to wage war on terror.

The Trump administration has further expanded executive power. Trump has issued executive orders that ban travel from several Muslim-majority countries, impose tariffs on imported goods, and withdraw the United States from the Paris climate agreement. He has also threatened to use military force against protesters and to pardon himself from any crimes he may have committed.

The expansion of executive power has eroded the system of checks and balances that is essential to a healthy democracy. The president is now able to act with impunity, without fear of being held accountable by Congress or the courts.

The Erosion of Civil Liberties

The War on Terror has also led to the erosion of civil liberties. The Patriot Act, which was passed in the wake of the September 11 attacks, gives the government broad authority to spy on American citizens without a warrant. The government has also used the War on Terror as a pretext to detain and deport immigrants, even those who have not been charged with any crime.

The Trump administration has continued the erosion of civil liberties. Trump has banned transgender people from serving in the military, separated families at the border, and cracked down on dissent. He has also proposed creating a registry of Muslims in the United States.

The erosion of civil liberties has made Americans less free and less safe. The government now has the power to monitor our every move, and to detain us without charge or trial. This has created a climate of fear and distrust that is harmful to our democracy.

The Decline of Public Trust in Government

The War on Terror and the Trump administration have eroded public trust in government. Americans are increasingly distrustful of the government's ability to protect them from terrorism and to uphold their civil liberties. This distrust is justified, given the government's record of lying to the public about the War on Terror and abusing its power.

The decline of public trust in government is a serious threat to democracy. When people lose faith in the government, they are less likely to participate in the political process and to hold their leaders accountable. This can lead to a vicious cycle of distrust and decline that can ultimately destroy democracy.

The War on Terror and the Trump administration have eroded American democracy in a number of ways. The expansion of executive power, the erosion of civil liberties, and the decline of public trust in government are all serious threats to our democracy. If we are to preserve our democracy, we must rebuild trust in government, restore our civil liberties, and limit the power of the executive branch.

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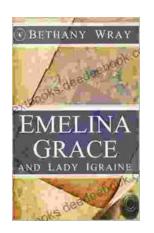
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