

● Alexis De Tocqueville

1805-1859

French philosopher and author

- most famous book

● Democracy In America

- written/published after travels around USA

from 1831-1833

- saw "equality" practiced in USA based on

● inalienable rights

from birth rather

than equality engineered
by the state

- noted this had never
been achieved anywhere
or anytime

- saw no permanence of
class, social or economic

- noted this was due
to free enterprise and
freedom of property
rights

- saw that pursuit and
acquisition of property

help maintain a civil

- society

- noted revolutions and civil wars threatened private property

- saw that therefore democratic-republics were generally peaceful nation and maintained defensive militaries only

- noted that if another nation wanted to defeat a dem-repub it would have to do so

quickly and early

- noted dem-repub citizens would eventually give great effort and passion to war in order to get back to peace

- saw idea of giving power to each American state, as designed by Founding Fathers, as an excellent way to counter possible growth of too much power in federal govt.

Importance

- - ADT feared and warned against "soft tyranny" (gradual imposition of more laws/rules/regulation because of governments desire to grow)
- - ADT warned democratic citizens not to vote for "soft tyranny" based on recommendations of a few "elites"
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- ADT is popular w/
people who believe in
"American Exceptionalism"
or...

- the US is "qualitatively
different" from other
nations

- the US can help spread
liberty/democracy/freedom
around the world

- the US republic has not
"repeated" the history of
other nations from history
that couldn't hold onto

their republics

- -it is not a notion that US is "quantitatively better" or has a superior culture to other nations