

THE AMERICAN DEEP STATE: WALL STREET, BIG OIL, AND THE ATTACK ON U.S. DEMOCRACY (WAR AND PEACE LIBRARY)



Ninel GANEA

The traditional political analysis, the one which divides the parties on an imaginary axis from left to the right and explains most democratic phenomena by reference to the dynamic of the sociological and political parties, is outdated for a long time. The insufficiency of this approach can be frequently noticed in the analysis of certain events, which lose almost entirely any reference to reality. The vetust character of the usual political theory regarding parties does not originate from an inherent downfall, but from the constant degradation of the public life, which led to the situation in which the democratic mechanisms became more and more irrelevant and marginal. Their place was occupied by more or less transparent entities, corporations, transnational organizations, NGOs, information services, etc. Located beyond the public control, they transformed in the last 50-60 years in the main actors of policy, having a much more important impact in the institutional, economic and social design than the historical parties. Their overwhelming role in the architecture of the polis is unfortunately rarely mentioned and only in the last few years we could assist to a series of editorial appearances, coming from a generation of political scientists unsatisfied regarding the precarious character of

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the theories and the authoritarian drift towards which the occidental societies are heading.

In this context, one of the most important authors is Peter Dale Scott, former Canadian diplomat, currently a professor at the University in Berkeley. His book, *The American Deep State: Wall Street, Big Oil and the Attack on U.S. Democracy* details not only the manner in which we can understand the policy dissolution, understood as a settlement of the conflicts based on votes and public control, but also the ascension of another state type: the profound state.

According to Scott, the profound state is the state which operates based on legal procedures of decision and enforcement, but which, however, most of the times, tries to avoid the letter and the spirit of the democratic laws, especially through the transfer of competences to non-democratic institutions.

The concept was used for the last time with reference to Turkey, where the democratic process was constantly obstructed and embezzled by a multiparty clan consisting of structures of the information services, army and prosecution, supported by the United States of America. The Turkish political reality is particular, but the explanatory model offered by the profound state concept proved to be so efficacious, and, so, more and more political researchers, and here also Peter Dale Scott can be included, began to use with remarkable results.

American Deep State underlines the transformation of the American democratic society under the more and more accentuated pressure and power of the profound state. Even if it is difficult to include in a complete list all elements of the American profound state, a few persons must be enumerated: bankers from Wall Street, lawyer offices, oil companies, information services, etc. This difficulty to present with accuracy an occult system is underlined by Peter Dale Scott: “compared to the state, the

profound state is not a structure, but a system, as difficult to define, but the same real and strong as a meteorological system". The observation is supported by the contrast made by the author between the system proposed by Samuel Huntington for whom the power is strong when it remains in the dark, and when it is exposed to the light, it begins to evaporate, and the democratic system of the opening and persuasion, preferred by an ideologist, like Hannah Arendt.

To the theoretical elements, inherent to such type of approach, it can also be added the non-negligible reflection of the invidious labels and also the conspiracy theory. And not only for this purpose, American Deep State supplies examples more or less recent, documented, especially from public sources, which look perfect, in the opinion of this author, the ever-present character of the profound state in USA and a certain continuity in the government, no matter the result of the public elections.

"When, in 1961, Eisenhower warned regarding the military – industrial complex, it was still a minority character in our political economy. Today it finances and controls both parties, and, also, finances the threats against both right groups, dominating at the same time the international policy", Scott writes.

According to the author, this formidable ascension of the profound state, took place especially because of the financial control exercised by the companies on Wall Street which were able to offer generous amounts to support certain policies or convenient politicians. Another important element was represented by the appearance of profound phenomena which changed almost irremediable the public scenery. And here, Scott refers to the assassination of the president Kennedy, the illegal entry into the Watergate offices and September 11. The Canadian political scientist refuses facile explanations, generously offered by the

mainstream media. In his opinion, all these events were performed, at least partially, by persons outside and inside the government, they increased the power of the repressive mentality and built a new stage in the transformation of America “into a social system rather dominated from above than governed from below”.

A relevant example for the manner in which this transformation occurred, is represented by the program Continuity in Governing (COG) or Judgment Day. Initially, this project was imagined as a planning solution in case of beheading of the USA government after a nuclear attack. The usual attributes of the executive and congress were going to be transferred to a committee of bureaucrats and technocrats who should have provided the management of the country. But, as it is proven by Scott, all these powers developed through the program COG were multiplied and, more than that, their restriction based on a possible atomic attack was suspended. Following an abuse typical to the profound state, the program enters into force inclusively in case of terrorist attacks and, generally, for any emergency related to national safety. “Any event, including a natural disaster, a military attack, a technological emergency or another emergency which damages or severely threatens the national safety of the United States” was activating, starting with 1988, the COG program.

“In this way, a legitimate program since the age of Eisenhower, for the planning of extraordinary emergency measures in the case of an America devastated by a nuclear attack, was now transferred to confer upon the White House secret powers for anything that the administration considered as being an emergency”, the Canadian professor wrote.

From this point of view, September 11 represented an important landmark, because it introduced supervisions without mandate, detentions without mandate, including the restraining, without precedent, of habeas corpus, and the restraining of the

laws posse comitatus which forbade the use of the soldiers in the enforcement of the internal policies of USA.

Following the attack against World Trade Center, the profound state began to take control over the society, in a manner which, before, was unimaginable and unacceptable. The Congress had at its disposal one week to pass the Patriot Act even if it consisted of 340 pages and all signs showed that this document was previously prepared. The senators who opposed were intimidated. Even if the Congress has the obligation to re-evaluate an emergency situation, within no more than six months from its occurrence, since 2001 until now, the Congress convoked no meeting to establish if this emergency state must be removed.

The war against terrorism, a permanent war and with no chance to be won, started instantaneously. Its disastrous results can be noticed in the increase of the number of terrorists and attacks, in the destabilization of certain entire regions and in the presence of an internal security system, which purpose was to control opposition towards the militarist policies. The Canadian political scientist is not afraid to document, in a solid manner, the doubtful relations between various Arab terrorists and the American security services, which suggests, in his opinion, a complicity, at least by silence, of the profound state in the terrorist attacks. His conclusion is implacable: "This deep dimension of the profound state, beyond its institutional manifestation in our parallel government, could be seen as a greater threat against the preservation of the USA democracy than the foreign terrorism".

In spite of this sad verdict, Peter Dale Scott does not plunge into pessimism, but identifies concrete solutions through which the profound state can be substantially reduced. The progressive reduction of the military and informational budgets, the return to settlement strategies for the terrorist issue, based on police and

civil information, and not lastly, the removal of the emergency state, annually renewed by the American presidents.

It is no wonder that, through such policies, Peter Dale Scott, with a left economical orientation, became a faithful client of the libertarian publications. As a matter of fact, in the epilogue of the book, the author pleads for a non-violent movement which should integrate the pacifist current from left to the right. An idealist proposal, but hard to accomplish.