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AMERICAN POPULISM IN THE CONTEXT OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE: HISTORY AND MODERNITY

An important feature of populist political forces in the United States is the desire for widespread use of direct democracy mechanisms, such as referendums, local and national elections, direct elections, etc. It was mentioned above that the People's (Populist) Party already included relevant requirements in its program (in particular, the introduction of direct elections of senators, which was later implemented). In the political tradition of the United States, the roots of the plebiscitary, as opposed to representative, vision of democracy go back to the very founding of this country.

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Keywords: populism, democracy system, democracy values, political process, political leaders, election campaign.

Американський популізм у контексті політичного дискурсу: історія та сучасність

Важливою рисою популістських політичних сил у США є прагнення до широкого використання механізмів прямої демократії, таких як референдуми, місцеві та національні вибори, прямі вибори тощо. Заснування Народної (популістської) партії у США вже включала відповідні вимоги до своєї програми (зокрема, запровадження прямих виборів сенаторів, що згодом було реалізовано), а також включення економічних та соціальних питань, які потребували негайних і дуже часто простих рішень, що сторювали, ще більшу проблематику для суспільства. Але незважаючи на певні кейси, можна прийти до висновку, що популістські слогани є своєрідним атрибутом у демократичній культурі і знову є актуальними у сьогодишній політиці. Адже у політичній традиції США коріння плебісцитарного, на про-

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тивагу представницькому, бачення демократії сягає часів заснування цієї країни і є вдалим ілюстративним кейсом для нашого українського суспільства.

Ключові слова: популізм, система демократії, цінності демократії, політичний процес, політичні лідери, виборча кампанія.

The emergence of American populism has an important mission in political discourse. It includes a number of important stages, political parties, and charismatic leaders who were on the political Olympus of American politics.

The presidential campaign of 1896 was critically important for the Populist Party. For the first time, a populist candidate, J. Weaver, ran for president in 1892, receiving about 1 million (approximately 10% of the total) votes. At its convention in 1896, the Democratic Party, seeking to expand its electoral support and win the upcoming presidential election, adopted a new program that had a number of provisions in common with the populist platform. It included the introduction of a progressive income tax, the abolition of banknotes issued by private banks, government control over compliance with anti-trust laws, and supervision of railroad companies.

Like the populists, the democrats condemned the use of troops against strikers and the system of court orders. The majority of delegates supported the idea of introducing «free silver» (this led to a split at the convention, which was left by supporters of the gold standard). The Democratic presidential candidate was 36-year-old W. J. Bryan, who in a vivid speech delivered at the convention denounced «rapacious monopolies» and called for preventing humanity from being «crucified on a golden cross.» His phrase quickly became extremely popular and was quoted many times in the press. At the same time, W. Bryan, in what we consider to be a quite populist manner emphasized the importance of the «countryside» and farmers for the whole of America, to some extent contrasting predominantly rural regions and cities.

The purpose of the article is to illustrate the experience of American populism from the perspective of the creation of political parties and active election campaigns.

The following scholars have dealt with this issue: D. Kennedy, D. J. Goldberg, J. L. Gaddis, J. Hunter, L. Edwards, T. A. Sayle.

Material's presentation. Realizing that it was impossible to win the presidential election on their own, some populists (primarily the leader-

ship) came up with the idea of supporting V. Biden. At this, the Democrats nominated as their vice-presidential candidate A. Sewell, a banker and owner of a railroad company, who is considered by most populists to be an odious and unacceptable figure. In the People's Party, a tense confrontation began between those who called for support for W. Bryan (and Democrats demanded mandatory support for A. Sewell's candidacy) and opponents of such a decision. G. Kuropyatnyk points to the confidential coordination of the actions of the leadership of the People's Party and W. Bryan, their joint attempt to make the issue of «free silver» a key one in the election campaign. A similar opinion was expressed by the American researcher of populism L. Goodwin, who wrote about the «shadow movement» hidden behind the theme of the «silver dollar». H.D. Lloyd, an activist of the People's Party and a labor activist, compared the place of «free silver» in the 1896 presidential campaign to a cuckoo that threw out other «political eggs» from a carefully constructed «populist nest.»

In July 1896, the Populist convention supported the candidacy of W. Bryan, but at the same time approved Thomas Watson, a congressman from Georgia and a respected party activist, as the party's vice presidential candidate. A sharp conflict unfolded within the party, threatening to destroy it. The presidential campaign itself was extremely tense. Supporters of the Republican candidate, W. McKinley, sought to portray W. Bryan as a demagogue, a leader of ochlocracy, almost a socialist, and «free silver» as a measure that would threaten the country with economic collapse.

On Election Day, in some states, the names of W. Bryan and T. Watson appeared on the ballots, and in others - W. Bryan and A. Sewell. In the end, W. Bryan lost the election, receiving 6 million 492 thousand votes against 7 million 100 thousand for W. McKinley. T. Watson lost with a very low result, receiving only 27 votes in the electoral college. (For the sake of objectivity, we should take into account the specifics of the two-stage electoral system used in the US presidential election, in which the ratio of votes in the electoral college does not correspond to the exact ratio of votes cast by the electors for a particular candidate). In general, the election result was determined by many factors, including the fact that the Republican Party's campaign spending was many times higher than that of their opponents.

Election-related intra-party conflict and defeat V. Bryan's defeat marked the beginning of the People's Party's rapid decline. The new boom experienced by the U.S. economy at that time reduced the overall level of dis-

satisfaction with the existing order, in particular, strengthened the position of supporters of the gold standard. The tactic of «merging,» i.e., joint actions and coalitions with one or the other of the old parties, Democrats or Republicans, also sometimes led to a weakening of the populists' positions. Some activists of the People's Party left the party, joining other radical movements, such as the socialist or women's movements, or supporting reformers from traditional parties.

In the South, the Democratic Party, emphasizing the racist concept of «white supremacy,» launched a «furious» (as defined by D. Creech) counterattack, resorting to violence, abuse of power, and even murder. In those southern states where most of the Populist Party's electorate was African American, the tactic of «merging» with the Democrats turned their sympathies away from the Populists. In North Carolina, the introduction of a «literacy test» in 1900, only passing which gave the right to vote, was a severe blow to this group of voters.

128 — In the 1900 presidential election, the candidate of the People's Party (W. Baker; I. Donnelly ran for vice president) received only 0.4 percent of the vote. After this failure, the party was dissolved. Its activities resumed in 1904.

The Populist candidate, T. Watson, ran for president during the 1904 and 1908 campaigns. After that, the Populist Party was finally disbanded.

The Populist Party was formed on the basis of numerous farmers' unions, which united a large number of small and medium-sized landowners, primarily in the southern and western states, and to a lesser extent in the northern states. Established to protect the interests of farmers, farmers' alliances soon proved to be an influential force in political life in agricultural regions of the United States.

An important factor in the organization and formulation of the Populist Party's program was the antitrust movement, in particular the movement of «nationalizers.» Feminist activists also contributed to the party's activities. In the South, the origins of populist ideology and activities can be traced back to the traditional system of beliefs (worldview) of some local community leaders of some evangelical denominations. The Populist Party's program was significantly influenced by the trade union movement that defended workers' rights. In general, we can speak of the Populist Party as the organizational core or a more or less organized «common vector» of a number of heterogeneous reform movements that gained influence in the United States in the late nineteenth century.

The program of the People's Party combined the demands of socialist (or, more precisely, in the spirit of the principles of state capitalism) reforms (nationalization of monopolies, improvement of labor legislation, etc.

The populists' campaign rhetoric was characterized by «conspiracy» and, in some cases, Anglophobic and anti-Semitic motives. However, anti-Semitism did not influence the formation of the People's Party's program. In our view, the American populists (supporters and activists of the Populist Party) of the late nineteenth century have a number of things in common with populist parties and movements of the twentieth century. One of them is the tendency to oppose the «people» (as the working majority) to the elite, the «elite» that conspires to deceive and exploit the «people.» A negative attitude toward «outsiders» - newly arrived immigrants to the United States - can also be considered populist. The excessive importance that the People's Party began to attach to one of the provisions of its program (the introduction of the so-called «silver dollar») at some point also seems to have the features of a populist «simple solutions» methodology. Modern populists are also close to the demands of expanding the elements of direct democracy in the overall mechanism of political decision-making (although they are certainly not decisive for populism in themselves). In general, in our opinion, the Populist Party acted as a radical reformist organization, the «political vanguard» of a broad reform movement, which often resorted to populist rhetoric and argumentation. Its relatively rapid decline and eventual liquidation was caused by a combination of political and socioeconomic factors. At the same time, in the twentieth century, some of the populists' demands were eventually realized.

The collapse of the People's (Populist) Party (which, after all, was only to a certain extent populist) did not put an end to the phenomenon of populism in the US political space. In the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, populist movements and populist politicians repeatedly became an effective factor in the country's social and political life.

The political legacy of the Populist Party was actualized, at least in part, in the 1920s in the activities of the movement known as the Progressive Movement (sometimes defined as a separate Progressive Party). A number of common demands united several organizations and groups of political activists under the banner of «progressivism.» One of them, operating since 1919 and known as the Committee of 48, was created by members of Theodore Roosevelt's former Progressive Party. Its program included the

nationalization of transport, natural resources, prohibition of land speculation, equality of citizens regardless of gender and race, ensuring freedom of speech, press, assembly, etc. «The Progressives, whose organs were the Nation and New Republic magazines, advocated the nationalization of the coal and oil industries, In addition, they demanded reform of the country's representative system: making the government accountable to Congress, giving citizens the right to recall congressmen and members of local representative bodies. Progressives also advocated the abolition of universal military service. One of the popular leaders of the Progressive movement was Robert M. La Follette (1855 - 1925), a senator (he belonged to the Republican Party) in 1906 - 1925, and governor of Wisconsin in 1901 - 1905, known for his reformist views and strong opposition to monopolies.

130 — In 1922, a significant number of progressives were united by the Confederation of Progressive Political Action (CPA), which was established in Chicago and included, among others, several trade unions, the Farmers and Workers Party, socialists, and others. In 1924, the CPAP supported R. La Follette as a presidential candidate.

His program contained a number of social, even socialist, demands (nationalization of railways and hydroelectric power plants, increase in income and inheritance taxes, strengthening of protection of women's and children's labor, state support for farmers, etc.) At the same time, he, like most progressives, advocated direct elections of the president and vice president, resolving issues of war and peace through a referendum, and limiting the powers of the Supreme Court. The candidacy of the Senator from Wisconsin was supported by the influential American Federation of Labor and a number of farmers' organizations.

Responding to accusations of «socialism,» La Follette's supporters argued that the measures they proposed could save the country from violence and class warfare. During the vote in November 1924 P. La Follette received 4.8 million (16.5%) votes, the Democratic candidate Davis J. - 8.4 million, and the winner, the Republican C. Coolidge - 15.7 million votes. The failure of the presidential election led to the rapid decline of the progressive movement. The economic boom that the United States experienced in the mid-1920s also contributed to this.

In general, the Progressive movement of the 1920s can be qualified as a left-wing reform movement. Its social program was, in fact, a renewal of the social demands of the Populist Party of the 1890s. At the same time, the Progressives' calls for direct democracy give grounds to place them in the

broader context of the American populist tradition. The populists are also linked to it by an isolationist bias in their attitude to the country's foreign policy, i.e., the desire to distance America as much as possible from foreign conflicts that do not directly affect its interests, and to some extent by the movement's organizational vagueness.

An example of a bright and successful populist politician is the famous American politician of the Great Depression period - Senator (1930-1935) and Governor (1928-1932) of Louisiana, Huey Pierce Long. The future politician was born into a large farmer's family in the town of Winfield, which in the 1890s was one of the «citadels» of the People's Party in the American South. His views were shaped by the desire for a more just society with better opportunities for the poor, a society characteristic of the social circles on which the Populist Party once relied. Having managed to obtain a law degree, Long became a lawyer, and in his younger years he turned to political activity. He first (and unsuccessfully) ran for governor of Louisiana in 1924, and in 1928 managed to win the election, running as a Democratic candidate. (Note that the real struggle for the governorship in Louisiana at that time was within the ranks of the Democrats themselves, as the Republican candidate had virtually no chance of success). In 1930, H. Long also won the election to the U.S. Senate, but took his seat in the upper house of the U.S. parliament only after the end of his gubernatorial term.

The state of Louisiana in the late 1920s was a backward agrarian state, with a high illiteracy rate, one of the poorest in the entire United States. About 27% of the population was African American, and racial discrimination and conflict, «Lynch courts» were one of the most prominent features of Louisiana life. At the same time, the state was also engaged in large-scale oil production and refining. H. Long used the power of the governor to pass a number of important social measures through the Legislature (state legislature). His efforts led to the launch of a large-scale program to build transport infrastructure - modern roads, bridges, airports, etc. - in Louisiana, which made Louisiana's roads one of the best in America. The governor ensured that children in public schools were provided with free textbooks and organized evening courses to teach illiterate adult poor people to read and write. His measures to improve the health care system, including massive free vaccinations, contributed to a sharp decline in mortality. The politician also helped organize medical care for prisoners in prisons.

The implementation of H. Long's programs required a significant increase in state budget expenditures and the imposition of new taxes. His actions provoked resistance from the wealthy and conservative part of local society, the «old» establishment of Louisiana Democrats. In 1929, the introduction of a 5% tax on refined oil led to an unsuccessful attempt to remove the governor through impeachment. The Standard Oil Company, a famous oil giant with which the governor was in conflict, took an active role behind the scenes. H. Long was accused of abuse of power, bribery, and even blasphemy. Indeed, he largely achieved his goals by methods that grossly violated, if not procedural and legal norms, then at least certain informal «rules of the game» that existed in the American political environment.

132 — The governor «pushed» the necessary decisions through the legislature, exerting brutal pressure on his political opponents. There was a case when Long forced legislators to pass 46 laws within 48 minutes. He dismissed their relatives from positions dependent on him, and the persons appointed by him had to give part of their salaries to a special governor's fund, which H. Long personally managed.

The governor of Louisiana resorted to various methods of pressure on the press that was not in favor of him. He carried out a series of reorganizations of the state's executive branch, concentrating it in his own hands as much as possible, including the creation of a special police service (whose agents did not wear uniforms) subordinated to the governor personally. As a result of the struggle with the mayor of New Orleans, the governor virtually nullified the independence of the self-government bodies of the main city of Louisiana. It was also about the use of power in certain business interests. H. Long was among the founders of a company that leased oil-bearing lands owned by the state and subleased them to large companies. All this gave grounds for Long's critics to speak of him as a «dictator» of Louisiana, who almost destroyed the democratic principles of government in the state.

Having moved to the Senate, H. Long retained control over his home state, in particular through his man as governor. In early 1934, he unveiled a plan of radical reforms (on the radio) that were supposed to bring the US economy out of the depression and make American society more just. Long's program was called «Share Our Wealth,» which can be translated as «Let's Share Our Wealth» or «Share of Our Wealth.» It stipulated that the state should provide each family with an income of at least 5 thousand

dollars a year, sufficiently comfortable housing, household appliances, and personal transportation. All persons over the age of 60 were to receive a pension of \$60 per month. H. Long demanded the introduction of universal education, the construction of publicly funded educational and health facilities, and state purchases of agricultural products from farmers.

A little earlier, in 1933, H. Long proposed to limit the maximum amount of private property to 100 million dollars (later - 50 million dollars, i.e. about 6 billion in the equivalent of today's US currency), to set the maximum inheritance at 5 million dollars, and to impose a 100% tax on income exceeding 1 million dollars per year. The funds thus obtained were supposed to ensure the implementation of H. Long's grandiose plan.

Of course, the Senate did not support the plans of the Louisiana governor. In general, the upper house of the US Parliament rejected all his legislative proposals. During Mr. Long's speeches in the Senate, many other lawmakers often even left the room. Political opponents tried to avoid direct discussions with him. Critics accused H. Long of demagoguery, of promoting «communism,» but he himself considered Christian values and the Declaration of Independence to be the primary source of his views, arguing that the implementation of his plan was the only way to save America from the Communists. Initially, Long supported President Roosevelt's New Deal, but soon became its critic, calling for his own radical program.

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Societies supporting H. Long's plan were organized throughout the United States, with a network of 27,000 local organizations and about 7.5 million people. In August 1935, H. Long announced his intention to run for president. After his death, the book «My First Day in the White House» was published, which described his actions after his probable election to the office. However, on September 8, 1935, in the Louisiana Senate building, Long was fatally wounded by a relative of the judge, his longtime opponent, who was threatened with losing his job by a new law that Long had helped pass that day. The attacker was shot dead on the spot by the senator's bodyguards; on September 10, Long died in the hospital.

Undoubtedly, H. Long did a lot for the poor people of Louisiana, which was qualitatively different from his predecessors, who tried not to affect the interests of the upper classes of the state. It was essentially a redistribution of income and property in the interests of the poorer segments of the population, carried out by the authorities. Having the support of the majority of voters, H. Long acted with authoritarian, often unlawful methods,

and by the standards of American democracy, he became almost a dictator of Louisiana, concentrating all the levers of power in his hands. Accidental or not, his death cut short his considerable all-American ambitions.

Hugh Long's «political portrait» combines several features that make it possible to characterize him as a populist politician. The most noticeable is his bright charismatic traits, accentuated leadership qualities, which made him a real leader in the eyes of his supporters in Louisiana. In the struggle for voter support, the politician used mass actions, large-scale rallies and meetings, campaign bus tours, etc. on a large scale. He made many speeches on the radio, a very influential medium at the time, with the largest single audience reach, which, in our opinion, is consistent with the possibilities of political personalization of modern TV. One of Long's supporters gave him the nickname «Kingfish» in honor of a character in a popular fantasy radio program (a sea lord), which obviously impressed Long.

134 — In his speeches, he appealed to the feelings and interests of «ordinary people,» positioning himself as a defender of the «people» against the «elite.» H. Long borrowed a famous phrase from W. J. Bryan, whom he treated with great reverence: «Every man is a king, but no one wears a crown,» which became one of his image political slogans. H. Long's criticism of both major parties (although he formally belonged to the Democratic camp) was in the spirit of American populism. Another characteristic feature of populism is the formation of a relatively poorly structured but large-scale movement aimed at supporting the leader and completely dependent on him.

While implementing socio-economic measures that are traditionally classified as «leftist,» the governor of Louisiana rejected socialist ideals and programs in their entirety, appealing to a «Christian» understanding of social justice. There was no question of abandoning the principles of the market economy and private property. H. Long is sometimes characterized as a «right-wing populist.» However, it seems that he was not characterized by the main feature of right-wing populists - xenophobia (in its various forms - racism, anti-Semitism, etc.). In terms of foreign policy, H. Long was a consistent isolationist.

Some of his contemporaries perceived Long as a politician who could become a kind of American fascist leader, like Mussolini in Italy. We believe that the American political scientist A. Schlesinger Jr.'s assessment of his activities is quite balanced and reasonable. He compared J. Long's Loui-

siana «regime» to the Latin American populist dictatorships of J. Perón or J. Vargas. Relying on the support of the «grassroots» (although not only), J. Long was able to «move» the local oligarchy, to carry out a certain modernization of the generally backward state. In our opinion, H. Long's authoritarian methods were characterized by one of the key characteristics of populist politics from the theoretical point of view - the opposition of the majoritarian component of democracy to its procedural and normative basis.

In fact, he openly expressed this himself, arguing that «a perfect democracy can look almost like a dictatorship». An ambitious politician, a «leader» who successfully used populist rhetoric and campaigning methods, Long was not, as it seems, just a manipulator, nor was he a puppet of tycoons. However, the price of real socio-economic achievements was gross violations of the rights of political opponents, abuse of power, sometimes with a mercenary component, pressure on the media, and, in general, deformation of the system of checks and balances in the Louisiana power system. At the same time, on an all-American scale, H. Long could not or did not have time to become a real danger to the political establishment. «President F. Roosevelt's New Deal generally contributed to the political marginalization of radical forces.

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In the political history of the United States, the 1960s were marked by the emergence of another bright charismatic politician whose activities had distinct populist features. Like H. Long, George Wallace (1919-1998) came from the South. He was elected four times as governor of Alabama, one of the states in which the white majority had been pursuing a policy of racial discrimination and segregation for decades, depriving African Americans of the right to vote and other civil rights. For many years, the political activity and image of G. Wallace, a native of an ancient Alabama family, raised in the cultural and political traditions deeply rooted in the South, was built on an open struggle against racial desegregation. The latter in Alabama was largely carried out through the efforts of the federal government. Today in the United States, such a position would obviously be outside the realm of legitimate politics.

However, in the 1950s and 1960s, racist sentiments and ideas were a powerful and, to some extent, still legal factor in social and political life in the southern states. A well-known episode in the political biography of G. Wallace, who was already governor, was his «standing» in 1963 in front of the entrance to the University of Alabama to prevent two black students

from entering. At the same time, their access to education was to be ensured by representatives of the federal authorities and, if necessary, units of the National Guard, who had a corresponding order from the president.

It is also worth mentioning that the result of strikes and riots to overcome discrimination in 1964-68 was the adoption of the main civil rights regulations in the United States. This is a great democratic shift in civil rights and freedoms for all US citizens. Later, other countries adopted this positive experience.

In 1964, 1972, and 1976, in the so-called «primaries,» D. Wallace unsuccessfully fought to become the Democratic Party's candidate for the presidential election. In 1968, he ran for president on the ticket he created himself. Wallace's election program included a large-scale increase in social welfare programs, including health insurance. He harshly criticized greedy corporations and big business that avoided paying taxes. In the South, the independent presidential candidate attracted the sympathy of many voters by his opposition to racial desegregation.

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D. Wallace's sharp, apt statements (for example, the remark that «hippies» do not know only two four-letter words - «work» and «soap» (in English, respectively, «work» and «soap»), or the phrase about «hypocrites in limousines» addressed to members of the Supreme Court) became popular and were often quoted in the media.

Obviously, the opposition of «people» and «politicians» who ignore the interests and views of «ordinary people» in his election rhetoric can be called a populist technology. «Our movement is a people's movement, and we don't care whether leading politicians support our movement or not. I think that if politicians interfere with us, the common man in the street will crush them - this textile worker, this metalworker, this hairdresser, this beautician, this policeman on duty, this small businessman,» said D. Wallace.

In our opinion, in these verbal constructions, the meaning of the term «people» in the dimension of social stratification can be defined as denoting the lower middle class, plus, possibly, the working part of the lower income strata of society (adjusted for the candidate's well-known racist position). They were the main recipients of D. Wallace's election speeches and his potential voters.

The old isolationist tradition was embodied in D. Wallace's position (we are talking about the 1968 presidential campaign) on foreign policy issues, and above all, the most acute one - the Vietnam War. The candidate from

the American Independent Party stated that if the war could not be won in 90 days, American troops should be immediately withdrawn from this distant country. In his view, financial aid to other countries was a waste of American taxpayer money.

As a result of the voting in 1968, D. Wallace received 13.6% of the vote and 46 votes in the Electoral College (301 electors voted for the winner, R. Nixon, which is much more than the required number). Presumably, D. Wallace's real calculation was to divide the electoral college in such a way that the potential winner would ask the independent candidate for the votes of «his» electors. In the end, the victory of the Republican candidate P. Nixon left D. Wallace as an influential political player.

During the 1972 presidential campaign, D. Wallace again fought for the right to run for the Democratic Party. At the same time, he was seriously wounded in an assassination attempt, lost the ability to walk, and for the rest of his life he moved in a wheelchair, suffering from constant pain. The last time the politician took part in the Democratic Party primaries was in 1976, when he eventually gave up the fight and supported the candidacy of Jimmy Carter.

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In the late 1970s, the governor of Alabama recognized his struggle against racial desegregation as a mistake, publicly expressed regret for it, and appointed African Americans to official positions in his state.

We agree with the common definition of D. Wallace as a right-wing populist. If the definition of «right-wing» is primarily determined by his racist (or, in a somewhat milder formulation, segregationist) views, partly also by his conservative accents and appeals to Christian values, then the basis for defining D. Wallace as a populist is a combination of several features of his «political portrait.» These include the rhetoric of opposition between «common people» and party elites, criticism of big business, the strongly leadership character of his election campaigns, and the isolationist vision of foreign policy principles traditional for American populists.

There are several factors that led to the growth of right-wing populist sentiments in the United States in the 1960s and resulted in the support of

Д. Wallace. One of them was the acute racial crisis caused by the mass migration of African Americans to cities (especially in the South), the destruction of barriers to racial segregation, including in the housing sector, and often too radical methods of blacks' struggle for their rights. Another is the deterioration of the economic situation of certain social groups that have faced a «crisis of ... attitudes toward personal enrichment.» A po-

tential supporter of populism among voters was characterized by dissatisfaction with the state apparatus, the bureaucracy, which, in his opinion, receives too little from corporations, gives too much to poor «idlers», and places the main burden of taxes on the «average» working American. It is also worth mentioning here the long tradition of protest against the federal government (Washington) and Wall Street, firmly rooted in the states of the Deep South, the mainstay of Wallace's movement.

An example of the effective use of populist technologies of political struggle is the presidency of Ronald Reagan (1981 - 1988). Quite radical economic measures known as «Reaganomics» led to the acceleration of economic development in the United States, and at the same time were accompanied by a sharp shift to the right in the country's domestic policy.

138 — C. Rizzo defines the changes in America in the early 1980s as the «Reagan Revolution». In his opinion, President Reagan had the characteristics of a populist politician - a charismatic, bright speaker who knew how to evoke a lively emotional reaction and appeal to the masses. According to this researcher, R. Reagan was able to channel strong anti-government sentiments, dissatisfaction with the establishment, into the existing political institutions, which allowed him to implement decisive and at the same time painful reforms for many citizens.

At the same time, the Republican president responded to the demand for «law and order» that had grown in American society amid a surge in crime in the 1970s, and at the same time to a return to conservative, «traditional» social values. Soviet researchers also pointed to Reagan's successful use of populist sentiments among some voters.

And today, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, populism remains a relevant phenomenon in US political life. Several political organizations and movements that were active in the 1990s and early 2000s can be characterized as populist.

One of them is the American Populist Renaissance (APR) movement. Declaring personal freedom and private property as its main values, the APR advocates the reduction of government powers and the need for widespread introduction of direct democracy mechanisms. At the national level, the APR proposes that presidential elections should be held by direct vote, and that possible constitutional amendments should be approved only by referendum. The party's supporters advocate decentralization of power, which should include increased legislative powers for the states. In particular, the states should have the right to repeal federal laws (except for

the Constitution and budgetary norms) through local referendums. It is also proposed that each state should be given a real opportunity to peacefully secede from the United States and become an independent state by holding a referendum.

Similarly, local governments should be given the right to repeal state laws through the direct will of their residents, as well as the right to secede from the state. The APA criticizes U.S. foreign policy from a generally isolationist position. In their view, according to the letter of the Constitution, only Congress has the right to make foreign policy decisions. Instead, the United States has repeatedly waged wars, for example, in Korea and Vietnam,

Iraq-without a declaration of war by the parliament. «The populists propose to complicate the decision-making procedure for the US participation in international agreements. The latter would first have to be put to a referendum, and only then would the Congress make the decision. The «American Populist Revival» also demands a reduction in the US military presence outside the country, and the use of US troops abroad only in emergency cases. In addition, the organization believes it is necessary to strive to reduce the country's dependence on energy imports, developing alternative energy instead.

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The term «populist» is used in the name of another modern American party, the Populist Party of America (PPA). Criticizing both the «left» and the «right» for defending censorship, prohibitions, and regulation, the PPA sees the Declaration of Independence as the primary source of its ideology, the values that, in their opinion, inspired the founders of the United States. The party calls for decentralization, the expansion of direct democracy, and the development of «localized democracy,» which is understood as greater accountability of officials to voters.

The PPA considers the problem of modern American society to be excessive awareness of the authorities about the private life of citizens, due to the widespread use of identification documents, surveillance cameras, and other technical means of control. The Populist Party of America emphasizes the importance of protecting personal freedom and advocates for the expansion of states' rights.

For the Libertarian Party, the main object of criticism is an excessively «big» government (government bureaucracy), which is very expensive for voters, overly regulates the lives of citizens, and is ultimately inefficient and dangerous for society. In foreign policy, «libertarians» advocate the princi-

ple of mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

A common feature of the parties named here is calls for decentralization of power, increased rights of states in their relations with the federal government, expansion of direct democracy mechanisms, and reduction of bureaucratic interference in people's lives. In general, they position their system of views as based on the original ideals of American democracy, emphasizing the values of personal freedom and direct democracy. In the American political lexicon, this combination is crucial for the use of the definition of «populism,» which generally does not have a distinctly negative connotation. At the same time, both the APA and the PPA have some populist features, in our common understanding, such as criticism of the entire political elite, emphasis on «lost» «true» values, certain conspiratorial notes, etc.

140 — More or less radical isolationism in the vision of foreign policy principles is in line with the spirit of the American populist tradition. At the same time, they seem to be alien to xenophobia, the opposition of «friends» and «foes,» and the ability of successful populists to use the media to influence the minds of ordinary voters. These parties generally remain political marginals, unable to compete with the two main political rivals.

Notable populist features are inherent in the «tea party movement» that has been relevant in the social and political space of the United States over the past few years. Its name refers to the famous event from the history of the American War of Independence – the Boston Tea Party in December 1773, when a group of American colonists, protesting against the imposition of duties on tea imports by the British authorities, seized ships with a batch of this drink and threw the cargo into the sea. These events were of great importance for the outbreak of the rebellion in Britain's American colonies, and are a very famous episode in the US historical narrative.

It is believed that the preconditions for the emergence of the «tea party movement» were created by the adoption of government programs that provided for additional huge expenditures from the federal budget. The first of them is the program of state aid to banks and mortgage agencies that went bankrupt during the 2008 crisis (totaling about 700 billion dollars), approved in October 2008 by the Bush administration. In February 2009, the Obama administration approved a new plan of «injections» into the economy worth 787 billion dollars, which also included tax increases for wealthy citizens. It was this plan that directly led to the emergence of a new protest movement. In the same month, CNBS anchor Rick Santelli

in a live report in Chicago called on dissatisfied citizens to come out to the «Chicago Tea Party» to demonstrate against the government's plans. In particular, he sharply criticized the authorities' intention to allocate \$75 billion for mortgage debtors.

An important feature of populist political forces in the United States is the desire for widespread use of direct democracy mechanisms, such as referendums, local and national elections, direct elections, etc. It was mentioned above that the People's (Populist) Party already included relevant requirements in its program (in particular, the introduction of direct elections of senators, which was later implemented). In the political tradition of the United States, the roots of the plebiscitary, as opposed to representative, vision of democracy go back to the very founding of this country.

Conclusions. Summarizing the above, we can identify the following features of populism in the political history and contemporary socio-political space of the United States. One of them is that almost all populist movements emerged and operated, positioning themselves as an alternative, if not to both major parties, then at least to their top leaders. At the same time, in some crisis moments in the country's life, the leaders of both the Republican and Democratic parties themselves have been quite successful in using populist methods to win the support of citizens.

Another characteristic feature of populist movements in the United States is the appeal to the ideology and values of plebiscitary democracy, which is interpreted as the «lost» heritage of the country's «founding fathers,» especially T. Jefferson. Its generally legitimate status in the political discourse of the United States is one of the reasons why the term «populism» does not have a generally recognized negative connotation in this country. The demand for the widespread use of direct democracy is one of those that has been repeated by American populists at different times.

A prominent component of American populism is the criticism of liberal ideology and the alleged liberal «conspiracy» that exists in the system of public opinion formation («mediaocracy»). The anti-liberal, or right-wing, wing of populist forces in the United States also has racist accents, now hidden and in the past openly expressed. This part of populists traditionally appeals to religious and conservative values.

Finally, an important part of the populist tradition in the United States is an isolationist approach to defining foreign policy strategy, the desire to reduce the country's participation in international agreements and alliances, and its intervention in conflicts outside the United States.

In terms of socio-economic demands, political forces in the United States, which are more or less populist in nature, have been and are very different, at certain points advocating opposing approaches. We are talking both about calls for socialist measures (nationalization of certain sectors of the economy, expansion of the social protection system, etc.) and criticism of excessive state influence on economic activity. In the general social dimension, populist movements usually emerged as a form of protest by a certain part of the middle class, especially those groups whose socio-economic situation was changing for the worse, losing its usual stability and clear positive prospects.

In our opinion, populist movements today have no prospects of seriously changing the existing political system. Nevertheless, they are an important form of political activity of the broader American society, a significant factor of influence on the establishment of the two main parties, and the formation of the US domestic and foreign policy.

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