



TIME
INVESTORS

SOCRATES WARNED DEMOCRACY WAS DANGEROUS BECAUSE CROWDS CHOOSE COMFORT OVER TRUTH. THEN DEMOCRACY SENTENCED HIM TO DEATH. HERE'S WHAT HE SAW COMING:



SOCRATES BELIEVED DEMOCRACY HAD A FATAL FLAW BUILT INTO ITS FOUNDATION. IT TREATS EVERY OPINION AS EQUAL - THE EXPERT AND THE IGNORANT GET THE SAME VOTE. HE ARGUED THAT AN UNINFORMED CITIZEN HOLDING THE SAME POWER AS A STATESMAN IS A RECIPE FOR DISASTER. POPULARITY WINS. TRUTH LOSES.



HE USED A SIMPLE, BRUTAL ANALOGY. IF YOU'RE SICK, YOU DON'T HOLD A VOTE ON YOUR TREATMENT. YOU FIND A DOCTOR AND ASK HIM. LETTING CROWDS DECIDE COMPLEX POLITICAL QUESTIONS IS JUST AS ABSURD - SKILLED ORATORS REPLACE SKILLED THINKERS, AND FEELINGS REPLACE FACTS.



HE WARNED THAT CHARISMATIC FRAUDS WOULD ALWAYS OUTPERFORM HONEST EXPERTS IN A POPULARITY CONTEST. INCOMPETENT PEOPLE MAKE BAD DECISIONS - AND IN DEMOCRACY, THEY MAKE THOSE DECISIONS FOR EVERYONE. THE SYSTEM HANDS POWER TO THE LOUDEST VOICE, NOT THE SHARPEST MIND.



DEMOCRACY REWARDS PERFORMANCE, NOT WISDOM. SOCRATES WATCHED TALENTED SPEAKERS MANIPULATE ENTIRE CROWDS USING FEAR, EGO, AND COMFORT. THEY PROMISED SIMPLE ANSWERS TO COMPLICATED PROBLEMS. THE CROWD APPLAUDED LOUDEST FOR WHOEVER MADE THEM FEEL BEST, NOT WHOEVER TOLD THE TRUTH.



THE FINAL IRONY SEALED HIS ARGUMENT IN HISTORY. SOCRATES - WHO DEDICATED HIS LIFE TO TRUTH AND CRITICAL THINKING - WAS SENTENCED TO DEATH BY DEMOCRATIC VOTE. THE SAME SYSTEM HE CRITICIZED PROVED HIS POINT BY EXECUTING HIM. THE CROWD CHOSE COMFORT OVER A MAN WHO MADE THEM QUESTION THEMSELVES.