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Sommario/riassunto	Americans live in a liberal democracy. Yet, although democracy is widely touted today, liberalism is scorned by both the right and the left. The United States stands poised between its liberal democratic tradition and the illiberal alternatives of liberalism's critics. In an engaging and informative discussion, McGowan offers a ringing endorsement of American liberalism's basic principles, values, and commitments. He explains that the liberalism of the founders distributed power widely in order to limit the power any one entity could exercise over others. Their aim was to provide for all an ef