IN SEARCH OF THE COMPETENT CITIZEN

A RESEARCH PROPOSAL

by Ned Crosby

April 5, 1976

Is the ordinary man incompetent? No judgment is more decisive for one's political philosophy. It was perhaps the single most important difference in judgment between Plato and Aristotle. If you believe, as I do, that on the whole the ordinary man is more competent than anyone else to decide when and how much he shall intervene on decisions he feels are important to him, then you will surely opt for political equality and democracy.

Robert A. Dahl (1970, p. 35)

SYNOPSIS

The competency of the average citizen is of great importance for democratic theory. The less competent the citizen, the more power must be given to elites. Yet in recent years there have been no good empirical studies on how competent the average citizen is capable of being. Political scientists have shown beyond doubt that within the current political system the average citizen is not a very competent voter. But no one has taken the time to see how competent citizens might be under circumstances designed to promote their competency. In this article a proposal is made regarding how such studies might be done and why the results should be significant for democratic reform.

Introduction

The time is clearly ripe for some basic research on democracy. The faith of Americans in their government has obviously been shaken by Watergate and Vietnam. Even such a stolid journal as U.S. News and World Report has run a cover story asking whether democracy can survive (March 8, 1976). In the same week James Reston (New York Times, Mar. 14, 1976, Section IV) claimed that in Washington there is "an intuitive feeling that something is deeply wrong here and probably won't be corrected by the old cast of characters or the old ideological arguments of either party."

Much thinking about democratic reform concentrates on structural changes. What should be changed in Congress and the Presidency or in the parties and the primaries? But there is a different and perhaps more

fundamental aspect of democracy which should be researched. If democracy is a government of the people (or is a government where the people control their leaders), then one of the most important questions to be asked is how competent the citizens are to perform this task. The less competent they are, the more reliance must be placed upon elites of one form or another.

A whole series of studies in the 1950s and 60s (principally Berelson et al, 1954 and Campbell et al , 1960; see citations in Kessel, 1972) showed what a poor grasp the average citizen has on the issues and problems our nation faces. Although some more recent works (Boyd, 1972; Pomper, 1972) claim that the voter is more aware than the earlier works implied, nevertheless this is still a far cry from the hopes held by traditional democratic theorists. Thus many political scientists turned to what Bachrach (1967) labeled the theory of democratic elitism. This holds that the requirements of democratic theory are met quite nicely in our on-going democracies even though we basically have elite rule and mass passivity.

This theory seemed quite acceptable up until the mid-1960s. By the 1970's there were many scholars who not only doubted the wisdom of the elites which controlled America but also doubted that the movements of the 60s would solve our problems. One of the best books expressing these views is Robert A. Dahl's <u>After the Revolution</u>? (1970). He lists three basic reasons for any person to accept the authority of the State: personal choice, competence, and economy.

The criterion of personal choice is a compelling one as a starting point to answer the question of why I should accept anyone's authority over me: I accept that authority so long as they choose as I would, were the decision up to me. Dahl notes that this criterion leads to despotism or anarchy unless it is coupled with the decision to give everyone in society an equal say in exercising their personal choice. This leads then to the need for some form of majority rule to prevent stalemate, together with mutual guarantees that certain basic rights are beyond the reach of any majority to intrude upon.

But the criteria of competence and economy place further limits on the criterion of personal choice. For it is clear that in some cases I am not competent to make a choice. Most people are quite willing to surrender personal choice to medical doctors and pilots. Also, there will be many situations in which I do not want to take the time to participate in a decision even when I am competent to do so. Modern society has become so complex and so large that it is impossible for one person to participate in all social decisions, no less everyone in every choice.

The two major ways to meet the c riterion of economy in a democratic society are to have citizens vote for representatives or to choose leaders by lot from among the citizens. The latter has been seldom tried, ancient Athens being the major example of its use. One reason for preferring elected representatives is that they are presumed to be specialists and therefore more competent than the average citizen. But in fact, the representative approach is clearly more acceptable to elites in society

because they feel that they can influence or perhaps even control representatives in a way that might be difficult with citizens selected at random.

Therefore a selection between a representative democracy and a democracy by lot depends on two factors: how competent are the citizens and how likely are the representatives to serve the people as a whole rather than special interests? There is now a fairly widespread skepticism among both intellectuals and the general public about the ability or interest of elected representatives to serve the interests of all. Dahl (1970, p. 149) goes so far as to suggest that citizens be selected at random and be installed as advisory councils to every elected official in America. But Dahl is unwilling to have committees of citizens actually make decisions. "For one of the most depressing yet well-substantiated results of innumerable scientific surveys is to document how very thin and fragmented in content are the political views of the average citizen, or, for that matter, the average voter" (1970, p. 151).

It is interesting that at this point Dahl falls back on the accepted views of political science rather than applying his own criteria to the situation. When one looks at the present political system it is clearly not designed to promote citizen competence. It would take hundreds of hours to evaluate any candidate properly on all of the issues relevant to his or her election. When one's personal choice (vote) has relatively small impact, then the principle of economy dictates that it is irrational to spend that much time on the choice. Candidates know this and realize that they are more likely to be elected if they can extend vague promises

to all than if they adopt specific stands on issues. This makes it even harder for the idealistic voter who still persists in being well informed. The result is a system which reinforces citizen incompetence.

The question of citizen competence in the present political system has been answered clearly: the average citizen is incompetent to make intelligent choices on political issues. But if we want to study how competent the citizen is capable of being, then we should seek a different setting. One obvious approach is to follow the lead of Congress and set up committees, each of which deals with a particular area. How competent can the citizen be if asked to make a decision on one issue when he or she is placed in a committee and given adequate time to study the problem?

We must be careful, however, not to over-simplify the problem. It would be tempting to have one person play the role of teacher and present the pros and cons of the issue for the randomly selected members of the committee. If the teacher were skilled enough, after several months we might conclude that everyone was competent to make the decision. But this presents severe dangers that the information will be presented in a biased way. In any real political setting it is likely that whoever controlled the teacher (or the committee staff) would control the whole political system. The power of a district attorney over a grand jury is well known.

The only way to avoid this problem is to allow advocacy presentation. But this presents another problem: how many advocates should be allowed to present their case? If we were guided by the dictates of

free speech alone and allowed all interested parties to speak, the result might be so confusing that average citizens would be no more competent in that setting than they are in the current one. This problem can be avoided by limiting the advocates to the principal political parties. In the U.S. this could be taken to mean that there would be two positions advocated on any issue. In the final section of this paper we shall briefly discuss a new form of democracy in which four alternatives are presented to citizen committees.

Thus the central question of this paper can be stated as follows: How competent can citizens be if they serve on a committee where two to four policy choices on a single issues are discussed in depth?

Some readers may object to this question. What good does it do to study citizen competence in hypothetical situations which are unlikely to arise? If one rejects conclusions about citizen competence which derive from the voter studies, then why not study some of the citizen groups which grew up in the late 60s (see for example Crenson , 1974)? There are three answers to this. First, even the citizen groups which were formed to work "outside the system" still must operate in the same political system as voters. Therefore if citizens in these groups turn out not to be very competent, this could be the result of the same factors which make the voters incompetent.

This leads to the second reason. The citizen committee, where there is a carefully structured presentation of evidence from two to four advocates, is one of the settings most likely to promote citizen competence.

Even if it turns out to be a setting which cannot be adopted in current political reforms, it is useful to have an ideal of citizen competence by which to judge other political systems.

But we may not have to fall back on this justification for research. The third reason for doing research on citizen committees is that this may lead to useful reforms. Many states are already experimenting with citizen committees along the lines suggested by Dahl. If citizen committees turn out to work well, they might also be used to reform our electoral system. Every presidential election there are numerous articles political commentators bemoaning the small attention given in the campaign to key issues.

One might improve this situation by forming citizen committees on a few of the major campaign issues. The committees would study the positions of the different candidates on the issue in question and select the policy they like the best by majority vote. Their choice would be announced to the electorate a week or two before the vote. If the media paid attention to this and if the general public liked the idea, it might be a good way to improve the discussion of issues during political campaigns.

Thus the research proposed in this paper is an odd mixture of practical and theoretical. It is theoretical in that it aims at examining a very basic concept in political theory under circumstances not found in the current world of politics. As such, it is research designed to be relevant to the future. This makes it similar to the research on elites proposed by Heinz Eulau in his presidential address to the American

Political Science Association (1973). But the research to be proposed emphasizes measures developed in situations which are closer to a real life situation than most work done by social psychologists. This will become apparent in the next section.

On Competence

The investigation of citizen competence presents some very interesting methodological problems. Competence must be defined in light of both political-moral theory and theories of social-psychology. The former are necessary because we are not interested in competence as found in current social settings, but rather competence as related to how citizens might perform in special settings. Furthermore, the performance we are looking for is related to what we believe is necessary to promote good government. On the other hand, the search for competence must be done on the empirical level. If we hope to make valid statements about citizen competence, we must define this in such a way as to achieve intersubjective verifiability about our observations.

On the level of concept formation we are faced with many problems similar to those faced by psychologists who are interested in measuring the results of psychotherapy. In the most general sense they are asking whether psychotherapy promotes psychological health. That term is not a concept derived either from simple observation or from empirical theory, but is made up in part from ideas about what patterns of behavior are desirable. Of course psychologists do not like to talk that way,

so they generally evaluate psychotherapy in terms of personality change or of even more specific behavior patterns (for an excellent review, see Meltzoff and Kornreich, 1970).

Therefore we find among those evaluating psychotherapy a running battle between what William James (1907) referred to as the tough-minded and the tender-minded or D. O. Hebb (1951) called the right and left wings of psychology. The tender-minded are constantly seeking concepts which reflect the purposive side of human nature and portray it in all its complexity, while the tough-minded seek concepts which reflect the directly observable and do so in the most parsimonious way.

This paper is being written from a tender-minded perspective, but with respect for the rigor of the tough-minded. Although the hope is to find a measure of citizen competence which will do justice to the intuitions of traditional democratic theorists, in fact we may have to settle for considerably less in order to achieve reliable measures. But we should expect there to be a constant tug between the two perspectives. Since psychologists have been debating for over twenty years how one best measures the results of psychotherapy, it would be a foolish hope for political scientists to assume it is possible to find a single satisfactory measure of citizen competence.

When we speak of competence in the realm of public affairs, we generally mean that a person has the ability to select the proper means to certain ends. This is very close to what is meant by being reasonable. For example, Max Black (1972) notes that a person will be acting reasonably

to the extent that he tries to form a clear view of the end to be achieved and its probable value to him, assembles the best information about available means, their probable efficacy and the price of failure, and in light of all this chooses the course of action most strongly recommended by good reasons. The problem with this is that reasons may be viewed as good even when one is not able to show that they meet the criteria of deductive logic or even the criteria of something like a Baysian model of decision making.

Surely the tough-minded would prefer to view citizen competence in less vague terms. One approach would be simply to test the ability of citizens to learn a certain amount of factual information in a given amount of time. The ability to reason could then be ascertained, using some test of logic (see for example Schoner, Rose, and Hoyt, 1974; Leakey and Wagman, 1974; or Fontaine, 1975). Finally, one could use some variation of Rokeach's dogmatism scale to measure whether or not the person was open minded (e.g.: Baird, 1974).

The problem we run into here is two different approaches to rationality. The "good reasons" approach, which is referred to as tender-minded, stems from the later Wittgenstein or ordinary language approach in philosophy. Much of this work has been in the realm of moral philosophy where such authors as Baier (1958), Hare (1952, 1963), and Toulmin (1950) have emphasized the offering of reasons as a key element in moral thinking. This approach has made little impact on American psychologists in spite of R. S. Peters' (1958) interesting book on motivation.

The "models" approach, which is referred to as tough minded, is clearly in the positivist or behaviorist tradition. It defines reason in terms of some rigorous model either of deductive thinking or of some mathematical variant of utility theory (for an interesting application of the latter to voting behavior, see Shapiro, 1969). The advantage of this approach is that it is clear whether or not a person's decisions adhere to the model. The problem is that these models are very difficult to apply to the complex discussions normally found in political decision making. They work much better when applied to psychological lab settings using college students as subjects or to voter choices where the voters are not well informed.

What this means is that the good reasons approach comes closer to what is ordinarily meant by competence than does the models approach. The latter can only judge rationality, assuming that the factual information and the estimates of probabilities are correct. Models do not provide a good tool, if they provide any at all, for judging whether a person has learned enough valid information to make a judgment. The good reasons approach takes into account the open mindedness of the person and the amount of valid information he or she knows as well as whether he or she has drawn the proper conclusions from these facts in light of the values the person holds. It is possible to use different tests to add these aspects to the models approach, but it is not at all clear that this will give us what we want.

Thus we face the standard dilemma in choosing between the two

approaches: Should we adopt the "good reasons" approach and run the risk of never achieving intersubjective verifiability, or should we adopt the "models" approach and run the risk of never getting it to apply to the real world? Some recent articles indicate that social psychologists are becoming more aware of the importance of doing studies in the real world. Batson (1975) notes that Festinger's original theories about cognitive dissonance hold up better when one tests them in a realistic setting. Yinon (1974) discovered much less of a "risky shift" in a real as opposed to a lab setting (for a good review of risky shift literature see Kahan, 1975). Fontaine (1975) shows that people tend to be more logical in simulated as opposed to real situations, while Haan (1975) explores the differences in moral reasoning between real and hypothetical situations.

One way to make the choice between the tender-minded and tough-minded approaches is to devote a good amount of time to concept formation. This should be done following the general guidelines of construct validation (Cronbach and Meehl, 1955), rather than the guidelines of concurrent or predictive validity. In doing this we should initially be guided by the less mathematical views of construct validity (e.g. Peak, 1953, or Loevinger, 1957) and only later turn to such methods as Campbell and Fiske's (1959) multitrait-multimethod matrix. We should do this on subjects who are not simply college students and do it in a setting which approximates the way we envision a citizen committee actually being run.

For example, we could randomly select fifty individuals and present to them two different solutions to some current issue of importance.

The presentation should be made by two (teams of) advocates, if possible using two bills currently before Congress. After each participant has attended ten to twenty sessions on the problem (each session lasting at least an hour), then we could try three different methods to evaluate their competence. Our aim here is not to test an hypothesis, but simply to see if we can find a reliable and valid measure of competence.

The simplest approach would be to have the two advocates make up a written test of critical facts which should be remembered if a person is to make a competent choice between the two programs. This could be validated by an intratest comparison of items and could be tested for reliability by seeing if the test ranked the participants in basically the same order in a test-retest situation.

A more complex measure of competence would be to examine the reasons which people offer for adopting one or the other program. This too could be a written test made up by the two advocates. Not only could we ask a person to list the reasons for their choice, but we could ask them to list the reasons which were offered for the other program. We might also ask them to list some situations under which they would change their minds, even if this means assuming that certain facts are different from the way in which they were presented. I have not been able to find out how Kohlberg (1969) makes his evaluations of moral reasoning (other than the guide published by Porter, 1972), but if this approach is reliable, then an analogous method might be used to rank the participants on the competence with which they made their choice. One would expect the

rankings of competence made in this second way to be less reliable than the factual test of the first approach.

The third method would consist of having some professionals in the area of public policy interview each participant and make a judgment on their competence. These professionals should not be familiar with the information sessions of the project. They should be brought in at the end to make their judgments and offer reasons for their conclusions. Reliability could be checked by comparing the rankings of the different judges. It is expected that this approach would have the lowest reliability of the three.

If all three approaches have a fairly high reliability and correlate well with each other, then we are well on our way towards developing a valid and reliable measure of citizen competence. If all three correlated well with an I.Q. test or with some test of reasoning or cognitive complexity, we could then assume that citizen competence is simply an aspect of intelligence. A high enough correlation would probably mean that there would not even be any interest in exploring individual differences in citizen competence.

The more likely result, however, is that the three measures will not correspond. Although there are many ways this might happen, the most likely difficulty will be that the measure of factual knowledge is quite reliable and does not correlate with the judgments of professionals, which tend not to correlate well with each other. In this case a real effort should be made to see if the judgments of professionals can be made

to correlate more highly with each other. For it can be argued that common sense or ordinary language is very important in determining what is meant by citizen competence.

This is different from the definition of many psychological constructs. In defining a construct like schizophrenia we may well want to be guided by what Cronbach and Meehl refer to as the "nomological network." Schizophrenia is not a lay term; its attributes must be selected through a constant testing and revision so that one gets a set of indices which cohere and which fit well with psychological laws. But the notion of citizen competence is a lay term. Its setting is not a nomological network of psychological constructs and laws. Instead it is used in a policy context and has fairly obvious normative connotations.

This means that if the judgments of professionals do not correlate well with each other, we cannot follow the usual strategies of psychology. We cannot simply throw the data out as useless, nor can we throw all the data together and submit it to factor analysis to see what the weightings are. Instead, we must try to find out why the judgments of professionals do not correspond and what can be done about it. For example, we may discover that the lack of agreement arises from the value assumptions of the professionals. An advocate of plan A might view anyone who accepts plan B as incompetent. Or he may understand plan A so well that he views all non-experts as incompetent and therefore is unable to differentiate between the capabilities of average citizens.

But even if the professionals are able to reach a fair amount of

agreement on who is competent, they may still not find their judgments valid. They may point out that the setting is too unrealistic in that the normal irrational influences of the real world are not allowed to operate. They might, for example, want two experts with opposing views to get together and draw up three programs. Each expert would draw up a program which represents their own solution to the problem. Then they would collaborate in drawing up a third program which they both agree would not work. They should construct it, however, so that its faults are not obvious.

One could then hire three people to advocate the programs to a citizens' committee. By putting the presentations onto film we could vary the non-rational influences. How likely are citizens to select the unworkable program if it is presented by someone who is physically very attractive, while the other two are presented by unattractive people? What happens if the advocate of the unworkable program uses all sorts of emotional appeals while the other two make a very factual case? If we keep the advocates the same, do we find that there is an optimal length of time for the presentations under which the citizens are least likely to select the unworkable alternative?

Even if we have the funds to perform such tests, we still may run into problems relating to the very nature of social-psychological testing. For example, we may find that in order to get at intuitive notions of competence, we must do so many tests that many citizens refuse to participate. In this case we run into the Heisenberg situation where the measurement

itself influences the outcome. Conversely, what about the well-known Westinghouse effect, where the test situation leads people to try much harder than they would in real life? Can we put twenty hours of presentation on film and still hold the people's interest as we might be able to do with a live presentation? Many more questions along these lines will surely emerge.

It must be remembered that these studies are proposed merely to clarify the definition of competence and to devise objective ways to recognize it. Yet in the process we are building studies which can also be seen as testing hypotheses about what promotes and what hinders citizen competence. The normal result of such a situation is that some researchers will be drawing conclusions about how competent citizens are under different circumstances while other researchers will be insisting that we don't yet have a clear idea of what competence is.

It will therefore be many years before a consensus develops on how competence should be defined. Only then will we be able to see whether or not the tender-minded approach advocated here was fruitful. It may turn out that there are so many covert normative aspects to the common sense notion of competence that no reliability between professional observers could be achieved. We may have to fall back on measures like those mentioned in the "second approach" on p. 12, or indeed rely upon nothing more complex than a simple test of facts. But if one starts with the assumption that only the tough-minded approach will be reliable, it is very hard to expand studies in the tender-minded direction. There

are so many graduate students and young faculty eager to publish simple studies based on college freshmen that the pressures to retain reliable, if trivial, measures grow very great. Therefore it is better to start with measures which try to approximate common sense and give up only when these fail, than to work in the other direction.

This research tactic is especially important when one is dealing with a concept which relates to politics. Those who fund research in politics are not used to funding studies in psychological lab settings. Although many psychologists will find this discussion of competence too tender-minded, most politicians are likely to find it much too academic. The importance of this lies not only in getting the research funded, but also in getting the results of the research used. This point will become clearer in the next section. *

How Competent is the Average Citizen?

Once we get a valid and reliable way to estimate a person's competence to make judgments in the area of public affairs, we can then try to design studies to get at the key question. It must be remembered, however, that these studies are only comparative: we can compare the competence of average citizens in one area to their competence in another or compare average citizens to elected officials. But these studies cannot answer such questions as: Is the average citizen competent enough or is there some minimum level of competence necessary for a certain

* In this section inadequate attention was given to how the models approach should be worked into the process of construct validation. This will be corrected in the next revision.

task? These questions are value questions. Their answer will depend upon what other decision mechanisms are available and what values one wants to promote.

For example, a socialist might so dislike the influence of the upper classes in the current political system that he might be willing to tolerate a great deal of incompetence if more weight is given to the opinions of average citizens. Conversely, a professor of public affairs may hold such high standards of decision making that he will view not only average citizens as incompetent, but also most current governmental officials. But both of these individuals should be able to use the data from our studies in order to make their case.

This points up the need for finding a measure of competence which is fairly close to common sense notions. If we develop a measure which appears trivial or too distant from common sense, it may never be used by political reformers. For if they cannot understand how it is relevant to their value concerns, they will ignore it. Also a tough-minded definition may be ignored by social-psychologists as well, since the idea of competence probably does not easily fit into current theories of social psychology.

Assuming, however, that we can find a measure of competence which is seen as relevant by political reformers, there are at least four studies which could be done:

1. Compare the competence of citizens in the current political system with citizens who function in a citizen committee as described in the

first section. There is little doubt that citizens serving on such a committee will be considerably more competent on that one issue than the average citizen. The only reason for doing this is that if their competence does not improve very much, then maybe the idea of the committee is not as good as originally hoped. Conversely, if their competence improves a great deal, then this should add impetus to the desire for political reforms.

2. Compare the competence of average citizens to the competence of government officials. The best test along these lines is probably impossible. Virtually no government official, elected or appointed, would be willing to risk the chance that he was not as competent as the average citizen. But retired officials might be willing to participate. They would be put through the same citizen committee procedures as the other citizens and the measures of competence would be applied to the whole group by testers unaware of anyone's background. Then the officials would also be asked to evaluate the information supplied them in the committee, comparing it to the quality of information they were accustomed to while in government. It is possible that even if the average citizen is less competent than the average official, this difference can be overcome if the format of the citizens' committee is superior to the format used in government.

3. Is the average citizen more competent to judge issues or the character of representatives? Edmund Burke held the theory that a representative should be a trustee for the people, voting his or her own

conscience rather than according to the wishes of the electorate. Is it possible that average citizens are more competent to judge the character of their representatives than to make decisions on particular issues? It may not be valid to use our measure of competence to evaluate judgments on character since the measure will be validated only on judgments about issues. If it is valid, however, this would be a very interesting study to perform. Obviously if citizens are more competent to judge character as opposed to issues, then the type of reform one advocates will be quite different from what it would be if the reverse were true.

4. Study conditions which promote competence. Studies of this sort would be similar to many studies currently being done in social-psychology. What is the optimal size group to promote competent decisions? Is there a high correlation between competence and being an opinion leader? What is the optimal length of time to study an issue? To what degree does competence decline as the number of alternative plans presented increases? The variety of studies here is almost endless.

Competence and Reforms of Democracy

The types of reform which will be suggested by the above studies are obviously hard to predict. Until one knows how competent the citizens can be and in what areas, it is not possible to say what reforms should be made. It should be noted, however, that even if the average citizen turns

out to be as incompetent as implied by the voter studies, this is still interesting. This may stimulate a great deal of research on elites as the best way to improve our government.

Nevertheless, it is worthwhile to speculate on the types of reforms which might be made if the research shows that citizens are much more competent in special settings than they are in the public as a whole. There is little sense in doing research if there are no reforms which are likely to follow from it. The possible reforms vary from quite modest to rather grandiose:

1. State and local governments are starting to use citizen committees to deal with specific problems. In Minnesota it is a legal requirement that a citizen committee be formed to deal with the location of major power lines. In Minneapolis citizen committees (formed by neighborhood representation rather than random selection) are presently being used to advise the City Council on how to allocate $16 million of federal money. Research on levels of citizen competence and the conditions under which they can be most competent obviously is relevant to improving the performance of such groups.
2. Planning for the future. Many states have projects intended to familiarize the citizens with choices which must be faced in the future (e.g. Iowa 2000, Minnesota Commission on the Future). Presently these serve more to inform the people than to get them to select programs. But if citizens can function in a competent way in committees, this may be a way to get these projects to give more specific guidance for the future.

3. Improving the present electoral system. If we find that citizens in a committee are considerably more competent than citizens at large, then we can use this to improve elections as noted above on p. 7. If citizens do best on issues, then we can form a few committees to study key issues in a major election. If citizens do best in judging character, then a special committee could be set up on this. The results of the committee's decision would be announced a week or two before the vote. This reform is unlikely to succeed immediately. But if the studies on citizen competence show a clear improvement when citizens act in committees and if the committees can be run in an unbiased way, the press and the general public may grow to respect this process. If this happens, the reform could have a considerable impact.

4. Many scholars have argued for some time now that our country will not survive without a great deal more planning by the government. Yet it appears that planning is incompatible with our current pluralist form of government. This could mean that at some point in the future, if our problems are not being solved, we run the risk of dictatorship as some "man on a white horse" steps in to save us all. One way to forestall this is to design new forms of democracy which are compatible with planning. If the citizen committee is successful, it could play a central role in such a government. (For an example of this kind of government, the reader should request System Four: A New Form of Democracy from the Center for New Democratic Processes.)

Thus the study of citizen competence is relevant to political reform, from very modest changes to completely new forms of democracy. Such research presents a challenge to the academic community, since it requires cooperation between political scientists and social psychologists as well as cooperation within each discipline between the tender- and the tough-minded. Research of this sort will surely be difficult to organize and expensive to perform. But it also offers the academic community the chance to make a major contribution to the solution of our current problems. It is much more relevant than a great deal of research now being done in the academic community, yet deals with a question which can be properly answered only by using the rigour and skills of academia.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bachrach, Peter, 1967: The Theory of Democratic Elitism (Boston: Little, Brown and Co.)

Baier, Kurt, 1958: The Moral Point of View (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press)

Baird, John S., 1974: "An Updated Rokeach Opinionation Scale" in Psych. Reports, v. 34, pp. 1321-2

Batson, C. Daniel, 1975: "Rational Processing or Rationalization?" in Jnl. Prsnlty. and Soc. Psych., v. 32, pp. 176-184

Berelson, B. R., P. F. Lazarsfeld, and W. N. McPhee, 1954: Voting (Chicago: University of Chicago Press)

Black, Max, 1972: "Reasonableness" in R. F. Dearden, Hirst, and Peters (eds.) Education and the Development of Reason (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul)

Boyd, Richard W., 1972: "Popular Control of Public Policy" in Amer. Pol. Sci. Rev., v. 66, pp. 429-449

Campbell, Angus, P. E. Converse, W. E. Miller, and D. E. Stokes, 1960: The American Voter (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.)

Campbell, D. T. and D. W. Fiske, 1959: "Convergent and Discriminant Validation by the Multitrait-Multimethod Matrix" in Psych Bull., v. 56, pp. 81-105

Crenson, Mathew, 1974: "Organizational Factors in Citizen Participation" in Jnl. of Pol., v. 36

Cronbach, L. J. and P. E. Meehl, 1955: "Construct Validity in Psychological Tests" in Psych. Bull., v. 52, pp. 285-302

Dahl, Robert A., 1970: After the Revolution? (New Haven: Yale University Press)

Eulau, Heinz, 1973: "Skill Revolution and Consultative Commonwealth" in Amer. Pol. Sci. Rev., v. 67, pp. 169-191

Fontaine, Gary, 1975: "Causal Attribution in Simulated versus Real Situations: When are People Logical, When are They Not?" in Jnl. Prsnlty. and Soc. Psych., v. 32, pp. 1021-29

Haan, Norma, 1975: "Hypothetical and Actual Reasoning in a Situation of Civil Disobedience" in Jnl. of Prsnlty. and Soc. Psych., v. 32, pp. 255-270

Hare, R. M., 1952: The Language of Morals, (N.Y.: Oxford U. Press - Galaxy Paperback, 1964)

_____ , 1963: Freedom and Reason (N.Y.: Oxford U. Press - Galaxy Paperback, 1965)

Hebb, D. O., 1951: "The Role of Neurological Ideas in Personality" in Jnl. of Prsnlty., v. 20, pp. 47-48

James, William, 1907: Pragmatism (New York: Longmans, Green)

Kahan, James P., 1975: "A Subjective Probability Interpretation of the Risky Shift" in Jnl. Prsnlty. and Soc. Psych., v. 31, pp. 977-982

Kessel, John H., 1972: "Comment: The Issues in Issue Voting" in Amer. Pol. Sci. Rev., v. 66, pp. 459-465

Kohlberg, Lawrence, 1969: "Stage and Sequence: The Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Socialization" in D. A. Goslin (ed) Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research (Rand, McNally and Co.)

Leakey, Thomas H. and M. Wagman, 1974: "The Modification of Fallacious Reasoning with Implication" in Jnl. General Psych., v. 91, pp. 277-285

Loevinger, Jane, 1957: "Objective Tests as Instruments of Psychological Theory", Psych. Reports, v. 3, pp. 635-694

Meltzoff, Julian and M. Kornreich, 1970: Research in Psychotherapy (New York: Atherton Press, Inc.

Peak, Helen, 1953: "Problems of Objective Observation" in L. Festinger and D. Katz (eds) Research Methods in the Behavioral Sciences (New York: Dryden Press)

Peters, R. S. 1958: The Concept of Motivation (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul)

Pomper, Gerald M., 1972: "From Confusion to Clarity" in Amer. Pol. Sci. Rev., v. 66, pp. 415-428

Porter, Nancy and Nancy Taylor, 1972: How to Assess the Moral Reasoning of Students (Toronto: The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education)

Schoner, Bertram, Rose, and Hoyt, 1974: "Quality of Decisions: Individuals Versus Real and Synthetic Groups" in Jnl. Appl. Psych., v. 59, pp. 424-432

Shapiro, Michael J., "Rational Political Man: A Synthesis of Economic and Social-Psychological Perspectives" in Amer. Pol. Sci. Rev., v. 63 pp. 1106-1119

Toulmin, S. E., 1950: An Examination of the Place of Reason in Ethics (Cambridge)

Yinon, Yoel, et al, 1974: "Risky-Shift in a Real versus Role-Played Situation:" in Jnl. Soc. Psych., v. 93, pp. 137-8