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SYSTEM FOUR:

A NEW FORM OF DEMOCRACY

By
Edwin L. Crosby
February, 1976

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INTRODUCTION AND OUTLINE

This paper describes a new form of government called System Four. The roots of System Four are found in my Ph. D. thesis Concern For All (University of Minnesota, 1973). There I outlined the basic moral assumptions behind my political thinking and made the first stab at a new form of democracy, System One. System Four is a revised version of System One, in light of the work I have done during the last two years in attempting to establish the Center for New Democratic Processes. Of primary importance was a pilot study conducted in the summer of 1974 on the Citizens' Committee, the new democratic structure outlined in Section II. *

In the outline of the paper which follows, the reader will find five sections. Any one of these could probably be expanded into book length and still not do justice to the topic. But it is very hard to know which section is the one deserving of major attention. Some readers may feel that it is foolish of me to construct new forms of democracy until I can demonstrate clearly that our current form is likely to fail. Others may assume that our current government will fail but feel there

* In Concern For All the Citizens' Committee is referred to as the RRCL group. In papers written in 1975 it is referred to as the RSC (Random Sample of Citizens).

is not much sense designing new governments unless I can show clearly how they can be adopted.

I have chosen to concentrate on System Four and slight the other sections of the outline. Thus the section on why our current form of government may fail is quite short, as is the description of System Five, a strong presidential form of government. If System Four generates any interest, then the other sections of the outline can be expanded to deal with important questions which come up in those areas.

Addendum on Sept. 28, 1976

This paper still represents my long range thinking about the basic democratic reforms we need. Currently, however, the research of CNDP is concentrating on how a Citizens Committee can be used to improve our current electoral system. This project is easier to fund than something which aims at reforming the whole structure of government. It also allows us to examine citizen competence and learn what types of citizen input we might hope for if system-wide reforms were instituted. Thus the current work of CNDP does not deal with the sweeping reforms suggested here, yet will provide important information should such changes ever become possible.

AN OUTLINE
OF THE PAPER

I. THE ARGUMENT FOR DEVELOPING
NEW SYSTEMS OF DEMOCRACY

1. There is a widespread belief that our government must be reformed if it is to deal with the increasingly complex problems our society faces.
2. A reasonable argument can be made that current reform efforts will fail.
 - A. Bureaucracies and interest groups have become very entrenched.
 - B. Our current pluralistic form of government is unable to adopt the planning approach or systems approach to policy making.
 - C. Current reforms aim at limiting the power of interest groups and bureaucracies, but they are not building a viable source of power as a replacement.
3. Therefore there is a distinct chance that at some point a "crunch" will come and a radical change in our form of government will occur.
4. Unless some very careful work has been done developing alternative democratic structures, the most likely result of a "crunch" will be a dictatorship.
 - A. Even if careful work has gone into developing alternate democratic structures, their adoption during a "crunch" would be something of a long shot.
 - B. This means that most reform efforts should still be aimed at what can be done in the near future.

5. But a certain portion of reform efforts (10% to 20%) should be devoted to developing alternate democratic structures.
 - A. If we spend circa \$9 billion a year on research and development for defense systems which have only a remote chance of being used, why not spend a few million developing alternative governmental systems whose chance of use is certainly no more remote?

II. A BASIC DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURE

1. The key to building a democratic alternative to dictatorship is to find some way of building the power of the people to make wise choices about their government.
 - A. In order to accomplish this, the citizens must be much better educated and informed than they are now on the choices they must make.
 - B. The best way I know of to accomplish this is to draw a random sample of citizens and use advocacy presentation to inform them on one particular problem.
2. Therefore I have developed two forms of government based upon decisions made by a random sample of citizens or Citizens' Committee (CC).
 - A. System 4 is a weak president system in which programs are suggested by a popularly elected Senate and chosen by CCs which replace the House.
 - B. System 5 is a strong president system in which the president is popularly elected after his or her programs are carefully reviewed by CCs, who then advise the voters.
3. If either of these forms of government is taken seriously, then the CC is obviously the key structure upon which research must be done. A pilot study was performed by the Center for New Democratic Processes in the summer of 1974. Although a great deal more work is necessary, it appears that the CC might operate as follows:
 - A. It should consist of 50 people, selected by a stratified random sampling technique. This is obviously far less than is needed for a true random sample. It reflects the belief that the educational aspects of the CC are much more important than the truly random aspects.

- B. The CC should study one problem or one area for about six months before reaching a decision. Most of the learning should take place in groups of 5 to 10, with care taken to control the influence of those who would be opinion leaders.
- C. The CC will choose a program from among 3 to 5 plans which have been carefully drawn up by experts of different political persuasions.
- D. In order to reduce bias and promote clarity, the CC will follow court room procedures. A judge will preside, the plans will be presented by advocates, interrogatories will be used between the advocates to sift as much "chaff" from their arguments as possible before proceedings begin.

III. A WEAK PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM

System 4 will operate as follows (many details are left out):

1. The House will have no elected representatives, but will consist only of 25 CCs. Twenty of these will deal with the on-going problems of government, and the others with elections, governmental reorganization, budget, major social change, and future problems. Every two years new CCs will be convened. They spend six months studying alternative programs. When they select a program, they also select the head of that department for 2 years.
2. The Senate will consist of 100 Senators elected every 4 years from 10 electoral districts using proportional representation. The aim is to promote many parties. The Senate will vote on no legislation. Instead, it develops the plans presented to the CCs in the House. The two largest parties will be given sufficient funds so that they can develop plans for all 25 CCs in the House. Funds will then be allocated to the rest of the parties so that for every Senator they can develop plans for one CC. The minor parties, however, will not be allowed to develop more than 50 plans even if they constitute more than 50% of the Senate.
3. The duties of the President will be shared by five individuals. These will be elected by the Elections CC in the House, selecting between 12 nominees from the Senate and 3 from the Supreme Court. The major function of the Presidents is to resubmit unpopular programs selected by the CCs. If a program is supported by 50% or more of the general public it must be carried out; if opposed by 75% or more of the general public, it must be resubmitted to a new CC; if in between, the Presidents may choose whether or not to submit it for reconsideration. The Presidents may also resolve certain disputes which arise between Department Heads and must pass on certain key decisions such as a declaration of war.

4. The Supreme Court will be broken into judicial and procedural sections, each having nine members. The judicial section will function much like the present Court, except with greatly reduced powers to make law via Constitutional interpretation. The procedural section will oversee the random selection of the CCs, the elections for the Senate, the operations of the CCs, the operations of the Departments in line with CC decisions, and other procedural matters.
5. The Planning Agency of Professionals is a special planning agency which is allowed to present one program every two years to each of the 25 CCs in the House. It is not a centrally run agency. Any person holding an advanced degree can become a "member" of the agency. Every member must join a "faction" which can be formed around any principle. The five largest factions will be given funds so that each can prepare programs for five of the CCs. The CCs to which the factions report will be rotated.
6. The Constitution setting up this form of government may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Supreme Court if this is supported by two-thirds of those eligible to vote in a general election.

IV. A STRONG PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM

System 5 will operate as follows (many details left out):

1. The House would be very similar to System 4, except that the 25 CCs do not select the programs for the next two years, but merely recommend their choice to the general public. These recommendations are made at the end of June in every even year. The President is elected in November of an even year for a four year term. In any non-election even year the CCs may also call for a special election for the President by a 60% vote of all CC members (25 x 50 = 1250 CC members).
2. The President is directly elected by the general public for a four year term, unless this is reduced to a two year term as the result of a special election called by the CCs. On September 1 of the election year, the President must announce who will hold the 20 Cabinet posts and what programs they will carry out for the next two years. The person receiving the largest popular vote in November will then be installed as President on January 3 of the next year.
3. Political parties will take over the planning function carried out by the Senate under System 4. The two top parties in the presidential elections will receive budgets to plan for all 25 CC committees in the House.

Other parties will be given planning funds and will be allowed to plan for one CC for each 1% of the popular vote they receive unless this must be reduced to prevent more than 4 plans from being presented to each CC. Plans will be developed every odd year and presented to the CCs on January 1 of every even year.

4. The Senate will consist of 100 members who are popularly elected. They will fill the role of ombudsman rather than passing on legislation. They will not be allowed to have any formal connection with a political party. There will be one Senator from each of 100 districts which will be approximately equal in population. Senators will be elected for a four year term at the same time the President is elected, although the term may be extended to six years in the case of a special election for President. Candidates will be nominated by a special CC for each electoral district. Committees of the Senate will be empowered to investigate and report on whether other agencies of the government are functioning properly. By a two-thirds vote they may recommend that any government official be impeached. The decision on impeachment will be made by a CC of the House.
5. The Supreme Court will be the same as the present Court, except with greatly reduced powers to make law via Constitutional interpretation.

V. PURSUING THE ADOPTION OF A NEW DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM

1. The first step in generating interest in new democratic systems is to get a moderate number of scholars and people with practical experience in government to accept the idea.
 - A. They must first accept the idea that it is worthwhile to develop alternate forms of democracy.
 - B. Once this is accepted they should carefully discuss which new approaches to democracy are most likely to be viable.
2. Once a moderate consensus develops on 1A and 1B, then it may be possible to raise funds in order to do research on alternate forms of democracy. Obviously something like the CC can be tested using standard social science techniques. Other types of democracy may not be amenable to testing in this way, but it might be possible to use gaming or some other novel approach to get some idea how they may work.
3. The process of testing the new forms of democracy will shade into the final step, that of educating the general public. No new form of democracy should be adopted unless a large portion of the general public is familiar with it and views it as legitimate.

- A. The CC, for example, might be tested out on some questions of long range planning. This might even be done on an official basis by a state planning agency. A successful project along these lines would not only test the method but also help legitimize it.
- B. It is especially important for the CC to be viewed as legitimate before Systems 4 and 5 are adopted. If this is not done, then the risks of Systems 4 and 5 dissolving into dictatorship would be high if strong pressures were placed on them.
- C. The process of testing and gaining legitimacy need not be threatening to those who support the current system. If the new forms turn out not to work well, then this should simply increase the support for the present system. If they turn out to work better than the current democratic system, we may still be able to add aspects of the new form to the current system, rather than having to change the whole thing.

I

THE ARGUMENT FOR DEVELOPING
NEW SYSTEMS OF DEMOCRACY

It should be noted that the argument as set down in the outline is a modest one. Instead of claiming that it is likely that our present form of government will fail within a few decades, I simply say that a reasonable argument can be made that it might fail. Thus research and development on new forms of democracy is simply insurance against a possible crisis. In light of the money spent on research and development in business and defense, it would seem very natural to do it in the area of government as well.

Thus I hesitate to spend a great deal of time trying to prove that indeed social change is rapid enough, the crises large enough, and the current reforms inadequate enough so that it is quite possible that our current form of government will fail. In the first place, it is very hard to find a good set of empirically based laws about when governments fail. It is also very hard to quantify the variables. Thus a critic can always say that any proof offered is based on shaky assumptions or shaky data.

The second problem is that it is often hard to know when a person's belief in the present system is founded on blind faith as opposed to a reasonable assessment of the situation. Since people tend to project their hopes and their fears onto the future, the discussion of new forms of democracy can elicit strong emotional reactions, both positive and

negative. For every person who "knows" that our current form of government is on the brink of collapse, there is another who "knows" it will last forever. There is no sense building elaborate arguments for those who will not be convinced anyway. Therefore I shall rest with the prima facie case based on the insurance analogy, unless it becomes clear that there are really good reasons for going beyond that.

On the other hand, the reasons I list for thinking that current reform efforts may fail (Outline I 2) determine the approach I take to designing new forms of democracy. The call for the "planning approach" or "systems approach" to policy making means simply that we must review our problems in a comprehensive way and then move rapidly to get at the basic causes of the problem. This will require a strong central government, but it does not mean that we must have a massive federal bureaucracy. What is needed is legislation which will either allow private parties to solve the problem or else give the power to a federal or local bureaucracy to solve the problem.

Most current reform efforts aim at curtailing the power of special interests groups. But this can only remove part of the problem with our pluralistic form of government. For if the power of special interests is removed, this still leaves the power of the bureaucracy and the distortions caused by ideology. The problems with the former are obvious, but the latter is seldom considered. By ideology I mean a rigidly held set of political values based on scanty empirical analysis. If the power of interest groups and of the bureaucracies is really

removed, what is to prevent our government from being dominated by some ideology? This is the danger William Kornhauser foresaw in his Politics of Mass Society.

It is for this reason that point I 2 C of the Outline is critical. It is indeed necessary to curtail the power of special interests and of the bureaucracy if we are going to have a strong government which can use the planning approach to policy making. But it is also necessary to replace the power of these groups with some power dedicated to an intelligent pursuit of the public interest. Otherwise we are going to end up with a government dominated by a rigid ideology or led by a dictator. It is this reasoning which leads me to advocate the use of Citizens' Committees as outlined in Part II.

These views obviously put me at odds with those who hold different views about the ills of our political system. Thus there are people who agree with me that our current government may collapse, but who see the cure for this to be decentralization or socialism or a more responsible party system. The best way to deal with these differences is not to argue about the "real" cause of our political problems, but rather to develop model political systems which are intended to cure these ills. Once these are developed, then we may be able to tell through careful analysis whether my new political system or some other new political system is most likely to work.

It may turn out that a variety of new political systems should be pursued simultaneously. In searching for a cure for cancer, we do not

try to determine at the outset what the "real" cause is and then pour all our research funds into one approach. Instead we invest in a variety of approaches until it becomes very clear that one is superior or that some do not work at all. In the same way we may want to pursue several new forms of democracy until we are very sure which is the best.

Thus we must beware of "proofs" that a new political system cannot work. Any newly designed political system is bound to have faults. What is needed is careful and constructive criticism about how to make improvements rather than facile claims that the defect is insurmountable. If someone were to study our current form of democracy without knowing that it had worked for 200 years, he might well come up with a variety of reasons why it would never work.

II

A BASIC DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURE:

THE CITIZENS' COMMITTEE

If one accepts the premise that we need a more powerful government using the planning approach, then the key question to ask is how this government will be kept serving the public interest.* There are basically two ways to do this: either the citizens themselves must oversee the government or they must delegate the power to some elite or set of representatives. I am more hopeful that the citizens can be

* I use public interest to denote the social good as defined by the processes described in Chapter 3 of Concern For All, 1976 revision.

taught to oversee the government than I am that elites can be kept in the service of the people or that representatives can avoid all the pitfalls of pluralism.

This is not to say that new forms of government based on elites or representatives are bound to fail. Hopefully political scientists will build new models using these institutions. It does not appear to me that current reforms of democracy based on the congressional or parliamentary approach are going to provide us with the kind of government we need for the 21st Century, but perhaps someone can build a long range plan which will prove me wrong.

In any case, I have chosen the option of trying to improve direct citizen control. There are three requirements for this: that citizens from all walks of life are given an equal chance to be heard, that they exercise control only after they have studied an issue carefully, and that the most articulate and politically experienced are kept from having undue influence. For this reason I am against citizen control by referendum (or any modern version of this using television or the telephone to dial in votes). Our society is so complex that even a full-time representative cannot understand all issues. Hence the committee structure in Congress.

If we are then to use committees of citizens to study problems, how do we select the committees? One way would be to draw a random sample for each committee. But to represent the public accurately, the committee would have to have 400 or perhaps even 1400 people. A

committee that size would surely be unmanageable. Another approach would be to appoint citizens as representatives of different groups and interests. But this would lead the people to adopt the same rigid defense of their own interests which prevents our current pluralistic system from dealing effectively with our problems.

Thus my approach to the Citizens' Committee (I abbreviate it CC to remind the reader that I am referring to my particular version of a committee of citizens) is to have them be made up of 50 citizens selected through a stratified random sample. The stratification would be necessary in order to insure that each panel has a balance of income levels, race, sex, urban-rural residences, etc. In System Four the exact criteria for stratification are set by a court. Thus the CC becomes a new version of something familiar to us all: the jury. It is larger than a jury because it must review policy for a whole society and thus needs broader representation than a body which must simply determine guilt or innocence within a specific law.

There are two avenues one must pursue in order to see how the CCs must work. First one must do research on the CC itself: Can the people understand complex social issues? Will they participate willingly? How can they be given information in an unbiased way? Etc. Second, we must invent the structure of government within which the CC will operate. Many of the doubts which arise about the CC can be answered only by showing how it will fit in with other institutions. It is for this reason that I have spent the time inventing System Four. As we learn more

about the CC from real life testing, we will surely modify or perhaps even scrap System Four. Conversely, as we explore the possibilities of governmental structures, we will learn more about how the CC must be set up.

So far, only one pilot study on the CC has been performed. This was a study done by me and two graduate students in the summer of 1974, to see how 18 randomly selected individuals would deal with the problems of health care on the national level. The project was too short for the participants to come up with a really solid health care plan, but it ran long enough to give at least an initial view of how the CC might work.

The participants were clearly very interested in the project. Of the eighteen who started the project, there was only one person who dropped out because of lack of interest. By using advocacy presentations, some of the obvious problems of staff bias were controlled. (For example, I, as director of the project, advocated the public approach to health care, but the group selected the private approach, as advocated by my assistant.) Even those with a poor educational background appeared to achieve a moderately good understanding of the issues they were discussing.

The enthusiasm of the participants was great enough that they requested an extra meeting so that they could take care of extra details in the health care plan they were drawing up. The tone of the discussion was seldom, if ever, acrimonious. Almost all of the appeals were couched in the language of public interest rather than self-interest.

Nevertheless, there were some critical points where decisions appeared to be irrational. Also many participants appeared to maintain their initial biases throughout the sessions. How severe these problems are can be seen only through further and longer tests of the CC.

One of the important ways in which the pilot study differed from the normal operation of a jury was that there was a good deal of discussion by the participants both among themselves and with the staff. This, together with our use of small groups (two to six people), meant that a feeling of openness and interest was generated. Whether this can be incorporated into the CC without introducing too great a chance of staff bias or undue influence by the most articulate remains to be seen. Let us turn therefore to a tentative description of how the CC might be run.

At present my views on how the CC should work are based as much on common sense as on what was learned from the pilot study. A great deal of research remains to be done. Therefore the description of how the CC should operate contains more questions than it does answers.

1. Who should be included and who excluded from the CC? As noted above participants will be selected through a stratified random sampling technique. The sampling procedures used will be open to inspection to insure that they are done in an unbiased way. The criteria used for stratification must be set by a court using basic guidelines from the constitution or law which sets up the CC. For example, the law might say that the CC should reflect a cross-section of the population both in terms of basic demographic variables and in

terms of the characteristics which mold political-social attitudes (e.g., Republican vs. Democrat). The court will have to find a balance using enough variables to get a good cross-section without having so many as to make the selection process too cumbersome.

The other question to decide is the grounds upon which people should be excluded from the CC. Since the decisions of the CC will be by majority vote, my initial belief is that no one type of person will unbalance the decision and therefore no one should be excluded. But if low intelligence turned out to be a real hindrance to making good decisions, then perhaps all parties presenting plans to the CC might be able to agree upon certain basic information which the participant should be able to understand. But I would entertain such exclusions only if experimentation showed a clear improvement in the decisions without any loss in the representativeness of the CC.

2. How should information be presented to the CC? The best way to present information and be sure that there is no bias is to allow for advocates of different points of view to present their own case. But this raises the question of how many different points of view should be presented. On major national issues there may be 50 or 100 different points of view if everyone is allowed to state their own case. System Four solves this problem by allowing each CC to hear five different points of view, four of which were selected by people voting in a general election. Research may show that the CCs can deal with more plans than this without becoming confused, or it may show

that only two or three plans should be presented.

Expert opinion is introduced into the CCs by giving those who present the plans an adequate planning budget and ample time to build their case. They will then be allowed to call expert witnesses to testify to the CC, although limits will be placed on this in order to prevent the CC from taking too long and to keep the participants from becoming confused.

One important area of research is on the steps which can be taken to clarify differences between experts on complex policy questions. Courts already use interrogatories so that the opposing sides in a case can know each other's basic arguments. I have been experimenting with a technique called an "extended rational discussion" to see whether even further clarification of basic differences is possible. If it is, then these steps will be carried out before the advocates present their plans to the CCs.

It is also tempting to try to get the advocates to agree upon some basic introductory information which should be given to the CC. For example, the first third of the CCs' operation could be devoted to such an introduction. Again we have a situation to be studied: can the advocates easily agree upon what the basic information is, should a judge be given the power to force them to agree on the basic information, or is it best to let each advocate do their own job of presenting the basic information?

3. How should the deliberations of the CCs be organized? From the

1974 pilot study it appears that the CCs will work best in small groups. For example, most of the meetings of a 50 person CC could be done on a regional basis with 10 people in five different regions. For a regional group of 10 there would be two "attorneys" for each of the five plans being presented, a judge, and probably some supporting staff. What percentage of the discussion could take place in regional groups without fragmenting the decision remains to be seen. But it is likely that most people will feel happier being in a small group in their own region rather than a large group in Washington, D.C.

How much time to allocate for the decision is also not clear. Six months seems like a reasonable guess. It is unlikely that the participants can absorb more than 20 hours of information a week. Indeed, the CC may meet only two days a week for something like 14 hours. The research on this should also deal with the number of plans which can be advocated without confusing too many people. It would be nice if the judge who presides at the CCs could be given the power to organize the presentation of the information to make sure it is intelligible to the participants, but this might end up giving the judge too much power.

There are many possible objections to the CCs. Most of them probably cannot be answered until further research has been done. But it should be remembered that the CC should be judged in light of what we have now rather than some ideal. For example, it is often objected

that a randomly selected group of citizens could not possibly understand today's complex problems. My answer to this is that a group of citizens is likely to understand one problem after six months' study better than Congresspeople understand all of the issues they must vote on, usually with little or no study.

Another challenge is that with only 50 people per CC, there is a good chance that it will deviate in one way or another from a national cross-section. But this happens all of the time with Congressional committees and no one seems to worry. In fact, the CCs are less likely to be unrepresentative than Congressional committees, since Congresspeople are allowed to select the committee they want. This can lead to a situation like the one we have with our defense committees which have a disproportional number of pro-military people on them.

III

SYSTEM FOUR:

A WEAK PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM

This form of government is based upon a group of CCs setting policy directions for two years, selecting between programs prepared mainly by the political parties in the Senate. The office of President is shared by five people whose basic function is to prevent policies from being enacted if they differ too much from what the general public wants. This form of government assumes that the CCs can indeed establish broad policy guidelines in specific areas and that the general public

will be willing to accept a government where they cannot vote directly for any one candidate. Should these assumptions be wrong, then perhaps System Five would be a better way to use the CC in a new form of democracy.

(1) The House. This resembles the current House of Representatives only in that it will conduct business with roughly the same number of committees. But there will be no elected representatives in the House. Instead there will be 25 CCs. Twenty of these will deal with the main on-going programs of the government, while the other five will deal with special problems. Research may show that there should be two or three times as many committees, but it is easier to explain the government if one simply assumes 25.

Each of the 20 programmatic CCs will deal with the program for one particular governmental agency for 2 years. It will operate as described in Part II above, selecting between five programs. Four of these will be prepared by political parties in the Senate, and the fifth will be prepared by the Planning Agency of Professionals. Each group will be given the same amount of money to prepare their plan. In presenting their plan, each group must also present a list of individuals who will head the agency for two years should their plan be accepted. This process is repeated every two years with a new group of participants in the CC.

This outline of how public policy will be set leaves unanswered a whole set of questions surrounding specific legislation and the setting of agendas. For example, the CC for defense might find itself faced in

one six month period with the question of the B1 bomber, the Trident submarine, the question of arms control and the size of our conventional army. If only one of these can be dealt with effectively, then who sets the agenda? Or can they all be dealt with in one package, leaving the selection of a particular weapons system up to whomever is chosen as the Secretary of Defense? Indeed we might even want to give a legislative function to the Senators who have worked on the defense plans.

There is not much sense trying to give an elaborate answer to the above questions until more research has been done on the CC. The setting of agendas and the selection of specific programs within a general philosophy are problems which are hard for any government to solve in a reasonable way. The present approach taken by Congress is certainly no model of rationality and efficiency. Any approach is likely to have drawbacks and loopholes which can be used by special interests. It therefore seems best to wait until we know more about the strengths and weaknesses of the CC before we try to fill in the details in this area.

Once the CC selects the program and the Secretary for its agency, then it is up to the Secretary to be sure that the program does not conflict in any obvious way with the programs which have been adopted for other agencies. If conflicts exist, then the relevant CCs must be called back and work together to resolve them. If the conflicts are too large, then the new programs will not be put into effect at all until the conflicts are resolved. In that case the previous Secretary will remain in power until the problem is resolved. If conflicts arise

after the programs have been put into effect, then this problem will be resolved either by the affected Secretaries in consultation with each other, or finally by the Supreme Court or the President.

The five non-programmatic CCs will serve different functions. These may be made up of more than 50 members if their special function would seem to require it.* For example, the Budget CC might be made up of 100 people. Each person would attend meetings of two of the programmatic CCs and listen to their budget requests. This would mean that each of the 20 CCs would be visited by ten individuals from the Budget CC. They would then convene as a whole and set the national budget both in terms of the total amount and in terms of what goes into each of the 20 areas. Even if research shows that the programmatic CCs work, much additional work and modification will probably be necessary to get the Budget CC to work properly.

The Elections CC will elect the Presidents and the Justices of the Supreme Court. It might be advisable here to have two separate CCs for the two functions. The five Presidents will be elected every four years. Each of the four largest parties in the Senate will be allowed to nominate three people and the Supreme Court will nominate three as well. The Elections CC will spend six months in the choice and therefore should be able to do a much wiser job of selecting the Presidents

*This means that the total number of CC participants in the House will be 1,250 or more. Since this is close to the number used by the respectable pollsters in the United States, it means that the House as a whole should be a fairly accurate cross-section of the U.S.

than is done with our current form of election. The Supreme Court will be selected from nominees by the four largest parties in the Senate. Each party can nominate one person for each vacancy. Supreme Court justices will serve for nine years with terms staggered so that two vacancies will occur each year.

The Governmental Reorganization CC will review various suggestions for governmental reform. For example, they might consider changing the number of CCs in the House and their jurisdiction. There will be five plans presented to this CC, with a new party every two years being given the chance to set the agenda. For example, every ten years the Republicans would get a chance to select the area of the government which they think should be reformed and they and the other three parties and the Planning Agency of Professionals would present plans for changes in this area. Depending upon the kinds of changes recommended, their decision will either be put into effect immediately or have to be ratified by two-thirds of the Senate or two-thirds of the Supreme Court. A Constitutional change would require a two-third vote of the general public as well.

The Future Problems CC will operate in a somewhat similar way. Every two years a new problem of the future, as chosen by one of the five groups, will be examined. The right to set the agenda will be rotated among the groups. Problems such as food production, population, energy, etc., will be obvious candidates for discussion. The CC will not be allowed to take any direct action on their decisions.

Instead, they will recommend action to the relevant programmatic CCs. Indeed, the Future Problems CC might be the only CC which would be reconvened with the same participants two years later to see if their recommendations are given adequate consideration. They may then be given the power to set the agendas for some of the programmatic CCs in order to insure adequate consideration of the problem.

The jurisdiction of the Major Social Change CC will overlap that of the Future Problems CC to some degree. For example, both might want to consider the question of whether there should be a conscious attempt to cut back consumption in the United States. But the Major Social Change CC will concentrate on changes which could take place now rather than on problems of the future. For example, it might consider whether we should continue to operate with modified capitalism or whether we should move towards purer capitalism or purer socialism. Or it might want to consider a major change in land use or settlement patterns. Like the Future Problems CC, the setting of the agenda will be rotated between the five groups and the plan selected will be recommended to the relevant programmatic CCs for action.

Further special CCs might be possible. For example, one of the basic unresolved problems of System Four is what to do about basic rights and the achievement of basic values. In Concern For All I originally hoped that the CCs would be guided in their work by a system of moral norms. If this worked properly, it would remove the need for a Bill of Rights. I am now doubtful that it can be made to work properly.

On the other hand, I do not like to have a Bill of Rights stated in fairly absolute terms which necessitates giving a great deal of power to the Supreme Court to decide how to apply these rights. One way out of this would be to have a Moral Norms CC which would operate like the Future Problems CC, except it would try to make sure that our government is doing a good job of promoting the basic rights and values stated in the Constitution. But the problems involved with this are so extensive that it is suggested in a much more tentative way than the other special purpose CCs.

Another possibility would be an Ombudsman CC. Since the role of Ombudsman is to be played by the procedural wing of the Supreme Court, this would be suggested only if it turns out that the programmatic CCs must operate at such a general level that they are unable to check out specific advantages which interest groups obtain from the governmental agencies. This CC would contract with private "professional citizens' groups" such as Ralph Nader's Public Citizen and request reports from them on which political parties were apparently giving favors to which interest groups. The Ombudsman CC could then advise the general public of this before the next election for the Senate.

(2) The Senate. There will be 100 Senators elected from ten regional districts using proportional representation. This will be done by having each party run a slate of ten candidates in the district. Each voter has only one vote and can vote only for a party. The party will then be given seats in the Senate in proportion to the popular vote they

receive. E.g.: in the Upper Midwest Electoral District, if the Democrats received 54% of the vote, the Republicans 26%, the Conservatives 13% and the Socialists 7%, then there would be five Democratic Senators, three Republicans, one Conservative, and one Socialist. Each party would have to rank order their list of candidates so that it would be clear who would be seated in what order. Elections will take place every four years.

The reason for using this system is to promote a large number of parties and hence a diversity of views in the Senate. Such a diversity of parties is probably not good in a parliamentary system where the prime minister needs a majority in order to govern. But since the Senate will not pass on legislation (with a possible exception noted below), a large number of parties in the Senate will do no harm. Instead it will insure that each CC in the House will have a diversity of programs from which to choose.

The task of the Senate is to make up the plans which are presented to the 25 CCs in the House. The two parties which have the largest number of senators will be allowed to make up a total of 50 plans and the minor parties will make 50 plans, with each party being allowed to plan programs in proportion to the number of Senators they have. The following chart shows an imaginary breakdown of the Senate and the resultant number of plans each party is allowed to prepare. Note that in "rounding off" the number of plans given to the minor parties, benefit was given to the smallest. The reason for allocating plans in this way is to insure that each CC

in the House receives four plans from the Senate.

Allocation of Planning Rights for
an Imagined Senate

Party	Number of Senators	Number of Plans
Democrats	37	25
Republicans	23	25
Conservatives	15 x 1.25 =	18
Socialists	10 x 1.25 =	12
Revisionists	9 x 1.25 =	11
States' Rights	5 x 1.25 =	7
Communists	$\frac{1}{100}$ x 1.25 =	$\frac{2}{100}$

The minor parties may apply for the CC to which they wish to report, but in case of conflict the decision will be made by lot. A choice by lot may be appealed to the Supreme Court if a party can argue that they devoted a much more substantial part of their election campaign to the area of the given CC than the party which won the right to report to it. Once a party receives the right to plan for a CC, they will be given federal funds to do so. The four parties planning for any one CC will all receive equal funds for this and will not be allowed to transfer funds from one planning area to another. But the planning budgets will vary between the CCs; e. g., a party may receive three times as much for defense planning as for national parks planning.

Originally I had intended to allow each party to draw up one

plan for every Senator they had. But this might have encouraged parties to form coalitions for elections in order to squeeze out the minor parties. (If coalitions are formed, these must be final at least three months before the elections.) The present approach is also designed to prevent so many parties that no one party can present a coherent and complete program. This is achieved by giving the two largest parties the opportunity to draw up 25 plans each, even if they fall short of electing 25 Senators.

The main job to be performed by a Senator is to serve on one planning committee. If a Senator is to be the head of the agency for which the plans are being drawn up, then he or she must spend a major portion of their time helping to draw up the plans. What is not yet specified is whether a planning committee must be headed by a Senator or whether a Senator can spend a major amount of time on some other task such as party activities. For example, a party may prefer to have the planning committees headed largely by professional planners and have their Senators spend most of their time working on party activities. I am tempted to require that the Senators head the planning committees, but am still willing to consider the other approach.

Each party in the Senate will hold caucuses. The party caucus at the beginning of each term will select the top party officials by secret ballot. They will also appoint Senators to the planning committees by secret ballot. In the case of a party which has more than 25 Senators, if two Senators are appointed to one committee, then one must be designated Chairperson. Each Senator who is head of a planning

committee may appoint the staff of that committee. Any party member on the staff must resign any party position they hold which requires anything more than occasional volunteer work. The party nominees for the Supreme Court and Presidents will also be selected by secret ballot by the party caucus.

As noted above, we may discover that the CCs in the House are not able to deal with anything more specific than a general program orientation. One way to deal with this would be to have a CC select a general program for four years and then have further CCs pass specific legislation along the guidelines set by the general program. Another approach, however, would be to have the Senate pass specific bills which would be in accord with the philosophy of the general program.

The most obvious way for this to be done would be to have the Senate function in much the same way it does now. The problem with this, however, is that a Senate with many parties and a weak President might be unable to pass any significant legislation. A way around this would be to establish a small Senate committee for each of the agencies for which there is a House CC. On this committee would be the four Senators from the different parties who made up plans for that agency. The party whose program was selected by the CC would be allowed to appoint three more individuals to the committee with powers on that committee equal to the Senators. Thus any party in power in an agency would have a corresponding committee in the Senate where they would have a four to three majority. This committee would then pass

the necessary legislation.

(3) The Presidents. There will be five Presidents in System Four, each sharing the same powers and functions, except as they mutually agree to divide some of their tasks. The reason for having five people holding the office is to rid Americans of the myth of the omnipotent President. No one person can be competent in all of the ways expected of a current President of the United States, yet the press and the public continue to feed the myth. An office with five Presidents should help to free the people from believing that in some magical way one person will solve all their problems.

There are four major duties of the Presidents: to submit for reconsideration those programs selected by the CC which deviate too much from public opinion; to pass on certain key decisions of the Secretaries which head the Agencies; to decide on which Secretaries are to get their way in certain disputes; and to perform a variety of ceremonial duties common to the chief of state.

Of these duties, the most important one is probably re-submission of CC decisions. In a political system where the powers of the people to elect officials are quite limited, it is important for there to be some way to keep the governmental policies from deviating too widely from public opinion. Were this to happen with any regularity, it would not be long before some coalition of groups or some charismatic leader would rely upon public support to overthrow the government.

The principle of resubmission is easy to state: if a public

opinion poll shows too many people opposed to a specific program selected by the CC, then the program will be resubmitted to a new CC. But there is a great variety of ways in which this can in fact be carried out. Should one or more polls be taken? Should the polls be conducted by the government or by private organizations supervised by the government? If resubmission can start at the point of 50% opposition, is that 50% of all citizens or only of those with opinions? Etc.

One way to set this up would be as follows: We shall consider only those who have an opinion on the question. If 50% or less of the general public oppose the program, then it will automatically go into effect. If 51% to 57% oppose it, then it can be resubmitted only if at least four of the five Presidents vote for resubmission. If 58% to 63% oppose it, at least three out of five are required for resubmission. If 64% to 69% oppose it, then only two or more votes are necessary for resubmission. If 70% to 75% oppose it, then a single vote is sufficient for resubmission. If 76% or more of the general public oppose it, then it must automatically be resubmitted.

The Presidents will surely go on TV to explain their votes regarding resubmission. In doing this they are likely to use additional data gathered by the polls. For example, they may vote for resubmission on a program where only 53% of the people are opposed, because 90% of the opposition is rated as extremely opposed on a five point scale. Also, the Presidents can be expected to present an analysis of the program itself. In this way they will provide some leadership for the

country, at times urging adoption of a program which is fairly unpopular and at times urging reconsideration of a program they think is bad even when the opposition is not great. Clearly limits will have to be placed upon the Presidents' use of the media, but these will be considered in some future paper. Also, the political parties are sure to want equal time if they do not have one of their members as President. Indeed equal time may even be given to the CC participants to say why they voted as they did.

An option open to the Presidents besides resubmission is to hold a plan for up to 80 days to see if public opinion might change. If they do this, they must order a series of presentations on the media from the four parties which had submitted programs and from the CC participants who voted for it. If a change in public opinion results, this may indicate to the Presidents whether or not to resubmit the bill. If a favorable change does occur, then this would be a quicker way of dealing with the situation than resubmission to a new CC. How often a program can be resubmitted by the Presidents is a matter not determined at this point.

The Presidents' power to veto a decision by the Secretary of an Agency is limited to only a few situations. Some choices, such as the choice to go to war, will be specified by the Constitution as ones which the Presidents can veto. Otherwise the Presidents can veto only if offered the option by the Supreme Court or by the general program adopted by the CC. The latter case could arise if a program adopted

by a CC specifically noted certain actions by the Secretary which could be taken only if approved by some vote by the Presidents.

The Supreme Court comes into this in the case where a party brings a challenge to the Court regarding some decision by a Secretary. The challenge can only be brought on the grounds that the decision is unconstitutional or that it goes beyond the guidelines laid down in the program selected by the CC. The Court then has the option of making its own ruling or of turning the decision over to the Presidents. The latter choice would be made if the situation is fuzzy enough so that no clear judicial ruling is possible.

The Presidents' power to decide which of two Secretaries should get his or her way in case of a disagreement is also contingent on a decision by the Supreme Court. The Court will act on its own if it finds that the guidelines in the program clearly give the choice to one or the other. But if the guidelines are not clear or are in conflict, then the choice will be turned over to the Presidents. It should be clear that if the Supreme Court and the Presidents are called in on a large number of disputes, then the whole system will become bogged down. Since this is a way in which System Four could fail, very careful research should be done on this before System Four is enacted.

The ceremonial roles of the Presidents need no particular comments other than that they should probably share the White House as an office and live elsewhere.

(4) The Supreme Court. The Supreme Court will consist of a

judicial and a procedural section, each having nine members. They will serve nine-year terms, which are staggered. This means that the Elections CC in the House will have to choose one judicial and one procedural judge each year.* The selection will be between four nominees for each seat, the nominations coming from the four largest parties in the Senate.

At first glance, it may appear unwise for a panel of average citizens to select Supreme Court judges. Obviously they will not be able themselves to make valid decisions about who is the most skilled draftsman or whose knowledge of the law is most extensive. Under these conditions, might it not turn out that the nominee with the "best personality" will consistently win, regardless of his or her legal qualifications?

These questions cannot be answered properly until the process has been thoroughly tested. Nevertheless there are some reasons to believe that the CCs can do a good job of selecting judges. In the first place, there will be expert testimony on the judges' qualifications. The Bar Association and other professional groups will surely express their opinions as they do now. This testimony will be sifted down and organized for the CC participants just as is done in a substantive CC. This should insure that a certain minimum standard is

*If it turns out to be inconvenient to convene the Elections CC every year, then the terms can be made 10 years and four judges will be elected every other year, except that on the tenth year only two will be elected.

out properly. Briefly, this will include:

1. They will be charged with making sure that all random sampling is carried out properly. This includes not only the random selection of the CCs but also the polling which will be done by the Presidents in order to see whether the CC decisions are acceptable to the general public. As noted above, this random sampling may be done either by a public agency under the Presidents or by private organizations contracting with the government. In either case, the Procedural Supreme Court must have an adequate staff to insure that the sampling is done in as scientific a manner as possible.
2. They will see that the elections for the Senate are conducted properly. This will include a careful examination of campaign financing and other types of electoral help given to parties by private organizations and individuals. The Constitution will contain either a clear set of rules to insure that no party has a financial advantage over another, or else a clear mandate for such rules to be drawn up by the Governmental Reorganization CC. The Procedural Supreme Court will not only hear challenges regarding election fraud, but will have their own monitoring staff.
3. They will oversee the operations of the CCs to insure these are run properly. This will include the power to review decisions by the CC judge, to investigate charges of outside tampering with the CCs or to examine any other factor alleged to have "biased" the operation of the CC.
4. They will hear challenges that the Secretaries in charge of Agencies

are not following the program adopted by the CCs. Here they will have no investigatory staff, but will simply hear challenges from citizens' groups or from the political parties. If they decide the matter is clear (either that the Secretary has acted properly or improperly) then they may decide the matter themselves by at least a 6 to 3 vote. If they decide the matter is unclear, they may refer it to the Presidents.

5. They may decide disputes between Secretaries whenever a conflict arises between them which they cannot resolve. As in #4, they may decide the matter themselves if they find that the CC program clearly specifies what should be done, or they may refer the decision to the Presidents in unclear cases.
6. In order to make all of the above decisions with dispatch, they have the power to establish special lower courts which will hear most cases first. This might mean that the Procedural Supreme Court would only hear appealed cases or cases of great national significance. Approval of the relevant CC will be necessary for the establishment of such lower courts.

The above powers mean that the Supreme Court will be intervening in the administration of our government more than it does now. It is possible that such intervention may lead to a "constitutional crisis" in which the Supreme Court makes an order which a Secretary or the Presidents refuse to obey. Problems of this variety must be thought through very carefully. Perhaps some "safety valve" should be

put in such as the referral of such disputes to a CC. This, on the other hand, may unnecessarily complicate the government or overburden the CC process. Some sort of procedural oversight as outlined above will be necessary for System Four to operate correctly, but it may be that there are better ways to do it than using a Procedural Supreme Court.

(5) The Planning Agency of Professionals. The purpose of this group is to provide a non-political source of plans to the CCs. This may lead to novel approaches which are not taken by the plans drawn up by the Senate. Often intellectuals in America have objected that their ideas do not receive adequate consideration by society as a whole. The Planning Agency of Professionals will remove this objection. If the CCs ignore plans from the PAP, then it is likely that the fault lies with the plans and not with the CCs.

Any person with an advanced degree can become a general member of PAP. They will then be expected to join one "faction." The factions may be formed upon any grounds desired: e. g., they may be formed around the various professions, around allegiance to political party, around some set of moral norms or political convictions, etc. Every two years the five largest factions will be given the right to plan five programs to be presented to the CCs in the House. The faction as a whole will not do the planning; instead, they will be given funds to hire a full time staff, just as is done in the Senate. The faction does have the power, however, to present guidelines for how the plans should be drawn up. They may also reject a plan if it does not suit them.

The initial decision of which factions report to which CCs in the House will be made by lot. Thereafter the CCs will be rotated. Thus if a faction remains one of the five largest, after ten years they will have had an opportunity to report to each CC. If a faction ceases to be one of the five largest, then its place in the rotation of CCs will be given to the new faction. Upon mutual agreement between two or more factions, it will be possible to trade the CCs to which they report. Any trade, however, is only valid for the two-year cycle in which it is made; it does not become part of the rotation plan.

The faction approach is adopted because professional organizations are as liable to domination by an oligarchy or "old guard" as any organization. By allowing new factions to be formed around any idea and by giving the five largest the opportunity to present plans, we thereby insure that new ideas can be put forward without having to wait for years until the "new idea" has gained majority support in the PAP. In current professional organizations it often happens that "new ideas" gain general acceptance only after they have been around for a long time.

If it turns out that the PAP works well, then their activities could be expanded. For example, they might be allowed to suggest nominees for President or for the Supreme Court. If the plans developed by the minor parties in the Senate were widely regarded as being of poor quality, then the CCs might be given only three plans from the Senate and some new group like PAP could be set up (e. g. , a group of business and labor or of the general public).

(6) The Constitution. If System Four ever were to be adopted as the new structure of government, its basic rules would have to be set down in a constitution. If System Four is ever taken seriously, then after more research and reflection, a model Constitution might be drawn up. It must be remembered, however, that a model Constitution is only an example. The actual writing of a constitution is usually a political process in which the various powerful interests try to devise a political system which is acceptable both to them and to the general public.

This means, of course, that the actual writing of the Constitution entails great dangers. A variety of attempts will be made to water down or eliminate key parts of System Four. This might go far enough so that the original supporters of System Four will no longer want it enacted. It is possible that the Constitution could be enacted by the President of the current form of government relying upon a general plebiscite. But this approach is quite dangerous. It raises the possibility that other Presidents will use the same approach to substitute their pet forms of government.

Another disadvantage of System Four being adopted as a whole by the President and the general public is that this breaks the continuity with the present Constitution. One of the great strengths of the U.S. political system is belief in the rule of law; the foundation of this belief is the widespread respect shown for the current Constitution. If a new Constitution were to be adopted by means other than those set down in the current Constitution, there are large risks of damaging

this basic belief. Therefore the best way for System Four to be adopted would be through revision of the present Constitution, keeping the Preamble and such other parts as are relevant.

In the Constitution establishing System Four I would suggest that there be a section on amending the Constitution which requires a two-thirds vote of the general public. Part of the reason for this is to provide a safety valve in case the general public becomes disenchanted with System Four. If there is not such a safety valve, then some coalition of interests or some charismatic leader might use the disenchantment of the public to call for an overthrow of System Four instead of an orderly transition to some new form of government or perhaps an orderly return to the present form of government.

Currently I also believe there should be a two-thirds vote of the Supreme Court in order for any amendment to become law. I have not given much thought to this, however, so that we should also consider the possibility of a four-fifths vote by the Presidents either as a substitute for, or an alternative to, the vote by the Supreme Court.

IV

SYSTEM FIVE:

A STRONG PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM

Nothing will be said about System Five beyond what is included in the Outline, p. p. 6 and 7. The reason for including it is merely to show that other forms of government based on the CC are possible besides

System Four.

System Five is personally less interesting to me than System Four. It is something to pursue if System Four does not work out as hoped. For example, we may discover that System Four becomes bogged down because it lacks someone with the power to coordinate the work of the government agencies. Or we might discover that the general public is unwilling to give up its right to vote directly for president.

The reader will notice, however, that System Five is really quite similar to System Four. It still assumes that our nation needs comprehensive plans to solve our problems and that which plan to use for which problem should be chosen by a group which puts the welfare of all above the rights of special interests.

V

PURSUING THE ADOPTION OF A NEW DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM

Taken as a whole, the ideas of this paper will seem far-fetched to many. It is hard to imagine that in two or three decades the United States would be governed under System Four. If it takes us over a decade to decide on a national health care plan, how is it conceivable that we could adopt a whole new form of government in the foreseeable future?

The answer lies in reviewing the ideas step by step rather than taking them as a whole.

- A. The crises we face are large. This seems hard to dispute when one studies such problems as food, population, energy, proliferation of weapons, etc. and considers where current trends will lead by the year 2000.
- B. We should not expect our form of government to be immune to major change. This is tempting when we look at our past, but history shows that it is common for governments to change in times of great crisis and that governments which hold their same form for over 200 years are rare.
- C. Therefore, we should build contingency plans so that if a major change occurs, we have options available to make the change an improvement rather than a deterioration.

I do not run into very much opposition on the first two points, but find a great deal on the third. To me this opposition is best described as fatalism. There are two major strands to it: If we are unable now to make moderate changes, then how can we ever hope to carry out a monumental change at some unknown point in the future? The answer to this is fairly simple: at times when a structure does crumble, then major change can be carried out by a relatively small group. Russia in 1918 and Germany in 1933 are good examples.

This usually leads to the second part of the fatalism: Granted that major changes can occur and relatively small groups can come out on top, nevertheless these tend to be groups which are very unscrupulous and manipulative. Who ever heard of a major political change where

the most reasonable and humane came out ahead? Instead, good intentions and carefully designed plans are pushed aside in the struggle.

Such a viewpoint, of course, can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. If an alternative form of democracy is going to be adopted at a time of impending disaster, it will have to be quite familiar to the people for it to succeed. It can become familiar only through fairly intensive research, pilot studies, and discussion. Thus the conviction that such a plan would not work will insure that it is never tried.

There are several reasons why I feel such fatalism is inappropriate. First, we have in the United States a tradition of freedom for experimentation. Although this tradition is often upheld in theory alone, nevertheless the chance to experiment is greater in the United States now than in Russia in the early 1900s or Germany after World War I. Second, the social sciences give us tools with which to experiment. Although far from perfect, these allow us to test out new structures in a way unavailable to Marx or to Germans in the 1920s. Thus one of the reasons we have not had rational plans dominating major political changes of the past is the lack of opportunity and of analytical tools with which to explore alternatives.

Finally, a plan like System Four may serve as a point of compromise between important interest groups. Game theorists speak of a minimax strategy in which players try to minimize their maximum possible loss. Fanatics and ideologues shun such a strategy. They are the ones who are willing to risk all to gain some fond hope. But interest

groups are much more likely to play the minimax strategy. To them, something like System Four (if it has been tested out properly) may offer the best way to minimize their risk of losing everything. Thus the very interest groups which now would strongly oppose System Four might be the ones who would turn to it in a time of crisis in order to prevent chaos.

With this in mind, let us now turn to the three steps listed in the Outline p. 7.

The first step may seem like a platitude: to get the idea of new democratic systems accepted, there must be acceptance of the idea by a moderate number of scholars and practitioners. Although obvious, there are still a few comments worth making. First, academia is not immune to Groupthink. A "foolish idea" can suddenly become an obvious idea if enough people accept it. Given the hesitancy of foundations to invest in "foolish ideas," it is vital that a moderate number of intellectuals come to view the idea of alternate forms of democracy as reasonable.

But acceptance by mere numbers is obviously not enough. The quality of the analysis is critical. The grander and more complex an idea is, the easier superficial discussion becomes. My description of System Four, for example, is open to a large number of devastating criticisms simply because it is an overview of how a very complex structure might work. If the idea of alternate forms of democracy ever gains credence, it is possible to imagine hundreds of intellectuals

producing their own schemes and offering "conclusive proof" that everyone else's scheme will fail. If this were to happen, the idea would suffer the fate of other academic fads, fading away as rapidly as it came.

In order to avoid this, those who develop new structures of government must carefully review each other's work in order to identify the key differences worthy of research. In the past year I have tried to develop a method called the "extended rational discussion." The purpose of this is to get experts on some problem to listen to each other carefully and then to isolate their key differences. It is not yet clear how well the method will work. What is clear is that the pressures of academia do not help us to give careful consideration to each other's ideas. If alternate forms of democracy are to be developed and tested by intellectuals,* some way must be found to avoid superficiality and to promote some sort of consensus about which structures or problems are worthy of research.

Point 2 of the outline needs little comment. It should be obvious that research or testing is a necessary ingredient in the development of a new form of democracy. This testing should involve, if possible, both

*The term intellectual is used here in its broadest sense. Some of the best political analysts and thinkers are found outside of the academic community. Indeed it is hard to imagine that a viable form of democracy could be created by someone who has not had a moderate amount of practical experience.

the social science techniques familiar to the academic world and the pilot study approach which is preferred by practitioners. It is hard to say in the abstract what combination of the two approaches is best.

As noted in the outline, the process of testing will shade into the process of educating the public about new forms of democracy. For example, the CC as a tool for long range planning might be tested out by a state planning agency. Some problem such as land use or energy could be worked up in a way similar to that described in System Four. One of the problems faced by many state planning agencies is their lack of a constituency. They find relatively little citizen interest in their long range plans and discover that most state legislators are more wrapped up in current political issues than future ones. This leaves them with the dilemma of either coming out with a plan in which they themselves have made important value decisions or else producing a plan of little interest because the hard value choices have been avoided.

Such a practical test of the CC is obviously a good way to see if it will work in the real world. If it does, its appeal to the general public might grow fairly rapidly. But there are dangers as well. If too much reliance is placed on a method before its kinks have been worked out, an early and well publicized mistake could delay or even kill public acceptance of a basically sound idea. Furthermore, if the CC adopted a plan which was opposed by some powerful interest, the CC itself might come under very strong attack.

An even more direct test of the CC would be to try it out on

some issue presently being considered by Congress. If this were done carefully, certain politicians might be guided by the results and adopt as their own the program selected by the CC. This approach would be even more likely than the previous one to throw the CC into political controversy, but it would also have the advantage of testing the CC on an issue of high current interest. If it were to survive such a test, then it might really start to gain fairly broad public acceptance.

Any nation capable of setting up NASA and reaching the moon in a ten year period is also capable of inventing and testing thoroughly new forms of democracy in a ten or twenty year period. The only question is whether or not this is the proper route to take in reforming our government and whether sufficient momentum can be generated to get the idea established. But I have little doubt that the nation would be as stimulated by such an effort as it was about putting a man on the moon.

Essentially, what I am proposing is a very American idea. It appeals to the inventiveness and freedom to experiment which we have always admired. It reaffirms our basic belief in government of, by, and for the people. It is a program which should have valuable "spin-offs" even if the new structures as a whole are never used. If we fail to find anything which looks better than what we have, this should reinforce our belief in the current system at a time when such reinforcement is needed.

Thus the major roadblock to inventing and testing new forms of democracy lies not in the fact that it could never be adopted. It lies

instead in the difficulties of getting initial acceptance for the basic ideas. Therefore my present aim is to get others to pay serious attention to the idea that 10% to 20% of our reform efforts should be devoted to the construction of new democratic structures. If the idea holds up after careful examination and a moderate number of scholars and practitioners begin to accept it, then a very important step will have been taken.