

SPECIAL SECTION

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

On 4 October 1999 the Skytte Foundation at Uppsala University celebrated the fifth anniversary of the Johan Skytte Prize in Political Science with a panel discussion on 'The Future of Democracy'. Participants were the five prize winners so far: Robert Dahl (1995), Juan Linz (1996), Arend Lijphart (1997), Alexander George (1998) and Elinor Ostrom (1999). *Scandinavian Political Studies* has been given the opportunity to publish slightly edited versions of the introductory speeches.

Introduction

Leif Lewin*

The Skytte Prize is awarded every year to the scholar who in the view of the Skytte Foundation has made the most valuable contribution to political science. All areas of the discipline are considered: political theory, comparative politics, public administration, and international politics. At 400,000 Swedish crowns, the prize is one of the biggest in the social sciences. Members of the profession all over the world are invited to nominate candidates, and a prize committee then makes a recommendation to the Foundation. I am happy to say that the prize has had a good reception in the academic world, as well as among the media and the interested public, and has achieved an international reputation.

It was not difficult to formulate the topic for the panel discussion. Democracy is the main concern of political scientists theoretically as well as empirically – as regards its fulfilment in the nation states as well as its relevance to international politics. The triumph of democracy is by no means certain. The papers that follow reflect varying degrees of optimism about whether democracy can meet its challenges and continue to survive and develop.

* Leif Lewin, Department of Government, Box 514, S-75120 Uppsala, Sweden.

A Democratic Paradox?¹

Robert A. Dahl*

The Paradox: In many of the oldest and most stable democratic countries, citizens possess little confidence in some key democratic institutions. Yet most citizens continue to believe in the desirability of democracy.

Let me offer some of the most telling evidence for this paradox.

- In his study of the four southern European democracies, Leonardo Morlino found a discrepancy between the low levels of satisfaction with ‘the way democracy works’ and the high levels of belief in the view that democracy is preferable to any other regime.²
- More recently, Hans-Dieter Klingemann has shown that in the most highly democratic countries, including those both of older creation and of newer vintage, a very high proportion of citizens support democracy as an ideal form of government. Yet with few exceptions, only a minority of citizens in these countries have much confidence in the performance of their governments.³
- Contrary to some previous work indicating that rather low levels of confidence in government performance have been a steady state, a forthcoming multi-authored work on the Trilateral Democracies⁴ presents impressive evidence showing that in a disturbing number of the advanced democratic countries citizens’ confidence in several major democratic institutions has undergone a significant decline since the 1980s or earlier.⁵ In these countries, citizens have significantly less confidence, for example, in the extent to which politicians and parliaments care about their opinions.⁶ On a scale of confidence in five public institutions, in the early 1990s confidence had dropped significantly from the previous decade in all but two of 17 countries.⁷ The causes of the decline are by no means clear and may well vary in different countries.⁸

Yet these studies show that the decline in confidence in political institutions has not been accompanied by a decline in confidence in democracy. On the contrary, despite their disdain for some key democratic political insti-

* Robert A. Dahl, 17 Cooper Road, North Haven, CT 92122, USA.

tutions, citizens in democratic countries continue to express high levels of support for democracy as a system.

What are we to make of this paradox? And what does it mean for the future?

Understanding the Paradox: What Do People Mean by Democracy? Why Do They Value It?

If people in democratic countries continue to express their support for democracy, what is it, exactly, that they wish to support? What do they value about a democratic system? How can people who seem to have little regard for actual democratic institutions and leaders nonetheless strongly approve of democracy as the best system of government?

It is ironic, if not downright shocking, that amidst the enormous amount of survey data about democratic institutions, political participation, attitudes, ideologies, beliefs, and so on, we have astoundingly little evidence in answer to a seemingly simple question: when people say they support democracy, what is it that they wish to support? So far as I am aware, the evidence to answer this question is sparse.

A Theoretical Digression: Two Dimensions of Democracy

Before examining such evidence as I have been able to find, let me call attention to certain aspects of democracy both as an ideal and as a set of actual practices and institutions. Sometimes we conceive of democracy as an ideal, goal, aim, or standard, one that is perhaps unachievable but nonetheless highly relevant not only for classifying and judging political systems (e.g. as democratic or nondemocratic, more democratic or less democratic, moving toward greater democracy or toward a decline in democracy), but also for fashioning strategies of democratization, designing appropriate political institutions, and so on. At other times, however, we judge actual systems to be democratic, even though they fall short, probably far short, of the ideal, as when we say that the United States, France, and Sweden, for example, are democracies. It is possible, though we cannot be altogether certain, that many citizens think of democracy in both ways: as an ideal to be attained and also as an actually existing government exemplified, at least in important ways, in their own political system.

Although no model of democracy can claim universal acceptability, it is useful to consider ideal democracy as a political system that might be designed for members of an association who were willing to treat one another, for political purposes, as political equals. Although the members of the association might, and indeed almost certainly would, view one another as unequal in other respects, if they were to assume that all of them

possess equal rights to participate fully in making the policies, rules, laws, or other decisions that they are then expected (or required) to obey, then an association of political equals formed to govern a state would, ideally, have to satisfy several criteria. To save time, and because I have described them elsewhere, I shall omit these criteria here.⁹

As we all know, democratic ideals are too demanding to be fully achieved in the actual world of human society. So we need to ask: under the imperfect conditions of the real world, what political institutions would be necessary in order to achieve democratic goals so far as may be possible in governing an actual state? And by an ‘actual state’, I now mean, as we generally do today, a state capable of governing a large-scale unit of the magnitude of a country in our present world.

Most of us will agree that the minimal set of political institutions necessary for modern representative democratic government to exist in a political unit the size of a country are pretty much equivalent to the half dozen or so that I have sometimes called polyarchy. Again, I will omit describing these institutions here.

The point I do want to make, however, is this: if I reflect on the ideal criteria and the political institutions they require for large-scale democratic government in the actual world of human societies, I detect at least two dimensions. I am going to call them the First and Second Dimensions of democracy.

As to the First Dimension, each criterion and each political institution presupposes the existence of an enforceable set of rights and opportunities: rights and opportunities that citizens may choose to exercise and act on. The criteria of ideal democracy imply, for example, a right held by citizens to have one’s vote counted equally. So, too, the political institutions of actual democracy all imply as necessary to them certain rights and opportunities. Indeed, they imply a complex body of enforceable rights and opportunities: to participate in electing representatives; to enjoy freedom of expression, inquiry, discussion, and deliberation in the widest sense; to form associations with others for inquiry and political action; rights and opportunities to citizenship; and more. These rights and opportunities are not merely abstract moral obligations. In order for the basic democratic institutions to exist in actuality, the necessary rights and opportunities must also exist, not simply on paper but as effective rights and opportunities that are enforceable and enforced by law and practice. A country without these necessary rights and opportunities would, as a consequence, also lack the fundamental political institutions required for democracy.

But having rights and opportunities is not strictly equivalent to using them. That I possess the right to discuss politics freely with my fellow citizens does not necessarily mean that I will actually engage in political discussion. I may even choose not to vote – as a great many American and

Swiss citizens do. The Second Dimension of democracy, then, is actual participation in political life. Obviously this Second Dimension is important. The continuing existence of a democratic order would seem to require that citizens, or at least some of them, sometimes do actually participate in political life by exercising their rights and do act on the opportunities guaranteed to them.

Yet it is an all too common mistake to interpret democracy as if it were embodied only in its Second Dimension, to see democracy simply as a matter of political participation, and to assume that if some people in democratic countries say they value democracy it must be because they receive enjoyment or satisfaction from actually participating in political life. And if it turns out that they do not particularly enjoy participating in political life and do not engage much in it, then it might seem to follow that they do not care much about democracy.

As should be obvious by now, to view democracy in this fashion is simply wrong. It is wrong because it ignores what may well be the most important element of democracy, its First Dimension. In short, this mistaken view overlooks the fundamental political rights and opportunities that, both as an ideal and an actuality, are intrinsic elements of democracy.

What Do Surveys Show?

Nearly a half-century of surveys provides overwhelming evidence that citizens do not put much value on actually participating themselves in political life. If democracy were to consist only of its Second Dimension then a majority of citizens in democratic countries would give it at best their weak support and at worst none at all. For some years now surveys have revealed over and over again that few citizens in any democratic country participate in political life in ways other than voting, or perhaps occasionally signing a petition. For most people, even discussing politics is by no means a frequent event.¹⁰ Yet the fact that many citizens do not take full advantage of all the rights and opportunities provided by a democratic system should not be interpreted to mean that they are indifferent to their possession of these rights and opportunities. Indeed, when so many people in democratic countries say they value democracy, might they not value it primarily for its First Dimension, not the Second?

Lamentably, it is precisely on this question that the plentiful flow of survey evidence diminishes to a trickle. This trickle consists of several surveys in West Germany and the Netherlands. When respondents in those countries were asked to indicate the necessary characteristics of democracy, the results were striking. To an overwhelming proportion of people, the necessary features were precisely those of the First Dimension. What is

more, a survey taken in East Germany in 1990 showed that respondents identified the same characteristics.¹¹

But if this is what people mean by democracy, then it is a small and entirely permissible move to conclude that when citizens in these countries, and probably elsewhere, indicate that they support ‘democracy’, what they have in mind are the values and institutions of the First Dimension.

If that is so, then we have here the explanation of our paradox. Although a majority of citizens in most democratic countries may view participating in political life as neither very urgent nor particularly rewarding, and though many may be dissatisfied with the way their government works, overwhelming majorities of citizens do value the rights and opportunities their democratic system of government provides to them. To be sure, they may choose not to exercise their rights or to seize their opportunities very often. Yet their views are definitely not internally inconsistent.

Dissatisfaction with the way their government works might in the long run weaken the confidence of some citizens in the value of the First Dimension of democracy, and thus weaken their support for democracy. Other citizens may conclude, on the contrary, that they will simply have to participate more actively in political life in order to mend the defects they see in the operation of their democratic government.

They are less likely to do so, however, if they do not possess some idea of plausible remedies and solutions. Has not the time arrived, then, when political scientists, constitutional lawyers, and others who are concerned about the future of democracy should take up this challenge and look for feasible ways of remedying the defects that so many citizens see in the way their governments operate?

NOTES

1. Reprinted by permission of *Political Science Quarterly* 115 (2000), 35–40.
2. See Table 3.3 and Figure 7.1 in Morlino (1998).
3. Among nine countries with democratic governments of over 40 years’ duration, the mean support for democracy in 1996 was 88 percent, ranging from 75 percent in Finland to 93 percent in West Germany, Norway, and Sweden. Among 13 democratic systems of less than 40 years’ duration, support averaged 86 percent, ranging from 78 percent in Brazil to 95 percent in Croatia. In contrast, among the older democracies only 32 percent of the citizens on average rated the performance of their governments highly. Except for Norway (70 percent), only a minority of citizens ranked the performance of their governments as ‘high’, ranging from 46 percent in Switzerland to 12 percent in Japan. ‘Performance’ was on a 13-point scale that combined ‘performance of the system for governing’, ‘performance of people in national office’, ‘confidence in parliament’, and ‘confidence in government’. See Tables 2.7–2.9 in Klingemann (1999).
4. These are the 17 ‘Trilateral Democracies’ described in the 1975 report of the Trilateral Commission.
5. See Putnam et al. (2000). The data I present here, and the page numbers cited, are from chapters drawn from the book which were given as papers at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Atlanta, 2–6 September 1999.

6. See Tables 1.1 and 1.2 in Putnam et al. (2000).
7. In Northern Ireland and France the small decline was not statistically significant. In the Netherlands it was significant at $p < 0.05$, in the others at $p < 0.01$. See Table 3.3 in Newton & Norris (1999, 92).
8. Although a decline in 'social capital' may account for the decline in confidence in some countries, as Robert Putnam has suggested, Susan Pharr argues convincingly that in Japan the decline is primarily a result of citizens' perception of official corruption. That may also be true in Italy, France, and Germany (Pharr 2000, 255ff).
9. See, for example, Dahl (1989; 1999).
10. Thus, 'for the European Community as a whole, averaged over the entire period 1973-92 . . . 17 percent said they discussed politics frequently, and 34 percent said that they never do so' (Topf 1995).
11. On Germany, see Fuchs et al. (1999); on the Netherlands, see Thomassen (1999).

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Democratic Political Parties: Recognizing Contradictory Principles and Perception

Juan Linz*

In 1994 there was in Uppsala a symposium on 'Democracy's Victory and Crisis' and I have the feeling that in some ways we are thinking more about the crisis than we were a few years ago.¹ Why is this so? As to the victory, there are fortunately no alternatives to democracy presently appealing to people, as there were in the 1920s and 1930s: communism, fascism, authoritarian corporativism, and so on. There is no political system alternative to democracy, but that does not mean that we can ignore the problems of modern democracies in much of the world. I have the feeling that in addition to the two dimensions Robert Dahl has presented so well there is a prior one that is in some ways missing. A dimension that in Western advanced democratic liberal societies we are not questioning, which is the most important one, and that is that democracy is a method to govern a state. If there is no state there can be no political democracy. If there is no loyalty, commitment or obedience to a state, with all its elements and what it means, that is, the capacity to make rules binding for all the people throughout a territory and to achieve fair implementation of those rules and a monopoly of legitimate force, you cannot have democratic processes. You cannot introduce democracy in Liberia, Somalia or the Congo, and it is not working in Colombia, part of whose territory is dominated by various armed groups that are not subdued by the state but cannot win a civil war and do not really aim to take over the power of the whole state.

So, the question of the legitimacy of the state is a fundamental *prior* to democracy. That legitimacy is questioned in a multinational state in which the idea is that the state should be a nation state, but many of those who are not part of the dominant nation do not recognize that state. Until this issue is confronted, democratic processes will be challenged. It is governing a state that is the purpose of democracy. Now if the state is contested, that will no doubt affect the quality of democracy.

In the past the people who added adjectives to 'democracy' – 'organic', 'basic', 'people's', 'tutelary' – were the anti-democrats, non-democrats, who

* Juan Linz, Sociology Department, Yale University, PO Box 208265, New Haven, CT 06520-8365, USA.

wanted to share in the aura of democracy in some way. They thought they were developing their country toward democracy, that there was an alternative form of democracy. Today, those terms have disappeared from our vocabulary but we have ‘defective democracies’, ‘illiberal democracies’, ‘plebiscitarian democracies’, partial democracies in part of a country but not the whole country; we have electoral democracies in which elections take place but all the other freedoms and conditions for democracy do not exist. And, indeed, some of our colleagues, particularly David Collier, especially in one very important article with Robert Adcock entitled ‘Democracy and Dichotomies’, try to see democracy on a continuum from the most totalitarian rule to the most ideal democracy. I think we have to retain a clear notion of when we are dealing with a democracy and when we are not. Belarus is not a democracy. The Russian Federation, maybe at the center, functions as a poorly working democracy. In the case of many of the republics and units of the Russian Federation, with 89–90 percent vote for the incumbents, you wonder whether they are democratically ruled. So let us be very clear about where there is a failure of democracy. Let us call such regimes electoral authoritarian regimes. Let us call them by names that may indicate a process of liberalization, transition or transformation. But ultimately power does not come from the will of the people at regular intervals in these countries. Another dimension of democracy is *pro tempore* government. When you see rulers extending their mandate for seven or eight years by a plebiscite, you must wonder about their democratic commitment.

Secondly, we assume that government has the capacity to govern effectively within the territory of the country: to collect taxes, pay civil servants, enforce the decisions of the courts, and so on. If those elements do not exist, we are not dealing with democracies. In many cases when we talk about dissatisfaction with democracy, for instance in Colombia, are we really talking about dissatisfaction with democracy or are we talking about dissatisfaction with systems that are non-democratic? Moreover it is important to distinguish transformations in a non-democratic direction – failed transitions and distorted transitions – from the failures and crises derived from the quality of the society in question. People have expectations, and governments promise to do much more than they actually can do, and therefore the quality of a democracy is judged by the quality of the society and we should be very careful in making that distinction. There are rulers who are bending the democratic process in an authoritarian direction and we do not have the conceptualization of these new forms of authoritarianism. The new non-democratic rulers are not going to do what Hitler and the Bolshevik Revolutionaries did (say that they do not agree with our Western type of democracy), but they are adapting it in some ways. In addition, there is ‘chaocracy’, and no government and no state. We should pay more attention to such situations.

Political Parties: Some Contradictions in Their Structural Role and the Way It Is Perceived

It should be clear – and this was the point of my introduction – that we must distinguish non-democracies from reasonably institutionalized democratic states, governed by leaders committed to respect democratic-liberal rules. In addition we must separate – at least analytically – the problems faced by democratic institutions (even generated by them) from those derived from social, economic and cultural development, in so far that those problems are not directly the result of political processes – problems that in the short (and even medium) run are not amenable to solution by democratic governments.

Therefore I shall focus only on democratic regimes and a few problems faced by democratic institutions, particularly political parties – problems that should be the object of research. Our knowledge may help politicians to understand such problems and even to explain them to the citizens. Democracy involves contradictory principles and some of the dissatisfaction to which Professor Dahl refers is, in a way, structurally inherent in democracy. We have data on how people prefer democracy to any other form of government and are committed to it and do not question the legitimacy of democratic institutions as institutions, but also on how they question their performance, their efficacy, their incumbents. This is perfectly legitimate. There is an analogy in the history of the Church: people believed in the churches but were very convinced that some popes and many priests were very sinful. The distinction between the charisma of the office and the qualities of the individual were essential elements of the church institution as it developed from the Middle Ages. The charisma of the office, the authority of the president as president, coexists with the very negative opinion that many people may have about the particular incumbent. The two things should not be confused. That is why sometimes when data in Latin America show that the rating of a president has gone down from 70 percent to 20 percent (which is likely in presidential systems for various reasons), they conclude that democracy is in crisis. We should be careful about extrapolating from the incumbent's performance to the institution.

Let me take the central institution of modern democracies – political parties. We find general agreement that political parties are essential to a democracy; that there should be more than one party, and that the parties are in principle the instrument by which to participate in the political process. Without parties there can be no democracy. In Spain, for instance, 69 percent agree, 15.7 percent disagree, only 15 percent believe that parties do not serve for anything. As many as 74 percent agree that parties are necessary to defend the ideas and interests of different social groups. We have survey data from not only the Latinobarometer but also the Bruszt-

Simon 1991 survey of Eastern Europe showing the same pattern. However, in all those countries we find that those that believe in democracy as preferable, who believe that parties are necessary, still to a very large extent have very little or no confidence in political parties. But the differences between those who prefer a democratic system and those who prefer an authoritarian system in their confidence in political parties is not always that great.

In 1997 the Latinobarometer survey found that 62 percent of Latin Americans agreed that without political parties there can be no democracy, but only 28 percent had 'much' or 'some' confidence in parties, 34 percent had 'little' confidence, and 33 percent had none. As we might expect, there are significant differences between countries, with 81 percent in Costa Rica, 79 percent in Uruguay, 75 percent in Argentina and 67 percent in Chile considering parties necessary. The most negative responses – beliefs that democracy can function without political parties – are found in Ecuador (48 percent), Venezuela (43 percent), Colombia (42 percent) and Paraguay (39 percent), four democracies that have recently experienced serious crises. However, we should note that there are countries in which people believe in the need for parties but have little or no confidence in parties. One example

Table 1. Necessity for Parties in a Democracy and Trust in Parties

Country	Without political parties there can be no democracy	Democracy can function without political parties	Confidence in political parties		
			Much or some ^a	Little	None
Argentina	75	18	29	32	35
Bolivia	60	31	20	34	41
Brazil	50	38	18	38	42
Colombia	51	42	21	38	40
Chile	67	28	35	37	25
Ecuador	44	48	16	33	46
Mexico	61	34	31	46	22
Paraguay	55	39	27	40	28
Peru	63	28	20	37	40
Uruguay	79	12	45	34	17
Venezuela	50	43	21	32	45
Costa Rica	81	14	26	34	35
El Salvador	70	19	35	34	16
Guatemala	55	35	24	19	36
Honduras	67	27	40	38	20
Nicaragua	74	24	30	30	35
Panama	56	39	28	33	34
Latin America	62	30	28	34	33

^a We have added together responses 'much' and 'some', because of the small number responding 'much'.

Source: Latinobarometer 1997.

Table 2. Confidence in Political Parties among Those Who Consider Democracy or Authoritarian Rule Preferable

Country	Democracy preferred	Democrats			Authoritarians			Total confidence in parties	
		A lot or some	Little	None	A lot or some	Little	None	A lot or some	None
Spain	81	34	39	21 (2018)	34	36	26 (201)	32	23
Uruguay	80	32	41	24 (964)	31	32	32 (111)	32	26
Argentina	71	20	34	44 (854)	11	29	55 (176)	17	49
Bolivia	64	16	31	52 (492)	21	31	48 (131)	17	52
Brazil	50	21	35	45 (539)	15	30	55 (260)	16	51
Colombia	60	12	33	53 (723)	11	37	52 (244)	12	55
Chile	54	32	36	31 (650)	27	41	30 (233)	28	33
Ecuador	52	19	38	41 (620)	15	43	40 (217)	18	42
Mexico	53	17	47	35 (811)	19	44	34 (358)	18	36
Peru	63	20	39	36 (752)	18	39	38 (157)	19	38
Venezuela	62	12	25	61 (933)	9	20	70 (287)	11	64

Notes:

Q: How much confidence do you have in the political parties: a lot, some, a little or no confidence?

Q: With which of the following statements would you agree more?: Democracy is preferable to other forms of government. There are occasions when an authoritarian government is better than democracy. For us democracy or no democracy is the same. (This last alternative is included in the totals but not in the table.)

Source: Latinobarometer 1996. Tabulation kindly made available by Marta Lagos.

is Argentina, where a very large proportion consider parties necessary but only 29 percent have ‘much’ or ‘some’ trust, 32 percent have ‘little’ trust and 35 percent have none. Only in Uruguay do we find a congruent strong belief in the necessity of parties and a high level of confidence (45 percent ‘much’ or ‘some’, 34 percent ‘little’ and 17 percent none).

Venezuela is an example of a country in crisis where democracy has perhaps disappeared; among those who were democrats 12 percent had much or some confidence in parties, 25 percent had little confidence and 61 percent had none. Among those who thought that under some circumstances an authoritarian system is better for a country, 9 percent had much or some confidence, 20 percent had little confidence and 70 percent had none; not a dramatic difference. A difference in the desirability of democracy is not determined by the confidence or lack of confidence in political parties. If we were to construct a scale from the Latinobarometer the most favorable country would be Uruguay, where only 24 percent of the democrats had no confidence in parties. Spain is included in the survey, with 21 percent among the democrats having no confidence.

We can demonstrate the low trust in political parties compared with other institutions in Latin America (Latinobarometer 1997) by giving some examples from three countries with now stable democracies and from two with unstable democracies. In all five countries people not surprisingly trust the church more, over 70 percent, except in secularized Uruguay (57

percent) and Argentina (59 percent). More unexpected is the trust in the armed forces in Ecuador (71 percent), Venezuela (63 percent), but particularly in Chile (48 percent), Uruguay (43 percent) and Argentina (34 percent). Only in Uruguay are the parties more trusted (45 percent), while in Argentina and Chile – in spite of the tragic role played by the armed forces – the parties are less trusted (29 percent and 35 percent). The gap between the trust in parties in Ecuador (16 percent) and Venezuela (21 percent) and the trust in the armed forces (respectively 71 percent and 63 percent), could not be more telling and worrisome. In four of the countries television is trusted by more than 50 percent and only in Uruguay is the trust in parties (45 percent) and TV (46 percent) matched. The church, armed forces and TV are probably perceived by a significant number of respondents as non-partisan, serving the people as a whole (although this is far from true for the armed forces and TV), whereas parties are seen as divisive and power seeking.

The combination of the belief that democracy requires political parties and a low trust in parties was also found in nine countries of Central Eastern Europe (Bruszt & Simon 1991). Agreement with the statement 'We need political parties if we want democratic development' ranged from 95 percent in Bulgaria to 82 percent in the Ukraine. The question on trust was: 'In order to get ahead, people need to have confidence and to feel that they can trust themselves and others. To what degree do you think you can trust the following totally, to a certain point, little or not at all?'. The respondents were given 14 institutions and groups including political parties. The maximum saying 'totally' for parties was 6 percent and therefore we have added those saying 'totally' and 'to a certain point'; the answers range from a maximum of 36 percent in Bulgaria to a low of 6 percent in Estonia. The most negative, 'not at all', ranged from 25 percent in Slovenia to 49 percent in Poland. Again we find a striking contrast with confidence in the media and the greater trust in the army, except in Estonia and Lithuania.

Now, why is there this lack of confidence in political parties? We really do not know much about parties. We know a lot about party systems. We know a lot about types of political parties. We know who votes for parties, but we know very little about what people really expect from parties and how they see the function of parties in a democracy. We get contradictory perceptions. Those contradictory perceptions are apparently not linked with Left/Right positioning or with voting for one party or another, as I can show with some Spanish data. Indeed, some of those opinions are exactly the same irrespective of which party people vote for.

For instance, one of the themes that we find in the literature, the public debate and the newspapers is that parties are all the same: 'they are not really very different'. On the other hand, we find the opinion that the parties create differences between people which were not really there. Both feelings

Table 3. Need for Parties in a Democracy and Confidence in Parties

Country	Parties are needed for democratic development (%)	Confidence in political parties (%)			Confidence in (totally or to some degree)		
		Totally or to some degree	Little	Not at all	Newspaper/ radio	Parliament	Army
Bulgaria	95	36	37	26	55	42	78
Czechoslovakia	86	32	39	29	53	39	40
Estonia	87	6	48	46	39	33	20
Hungary	90	25	48	27	53	49	60
Lithuania	83	26	36	38	60	62	16
Poland	83	7	43	49	45	38	63
Romania	88	28	33	38	–	60	81
Slovenia	91	14	61	25	35	41	–
Ukraine	82	14	39	47	30	22	47

Source: Bruszt & Simon 1990–1991.

Table 4. Answers, by Party Voted for in 1996, to the Question: Do You Agree Very Much, Agree, Disagree, Disagree Very Much with the Statement that Parties Criticize Each Other Very Much but in Reality They Are All the Same?

Response	Total	Voters for					Non-voters
		PSOE	PP	IU	CiU	PNV	
Agree very much	15.7	16.5	14.3	11.6	10.5	4.5	20.2
Agree	45.2	43.2	43.2	41.8	57.9	31.8	52.2
Disagree	25.5	27.4	28.0	34.9	26.3	50.0	14.0
Disagree very much	4.7	5.0	5.7	7.4	2.6	0.0	3.3
d.k., n.a.	8.9	7.8	7.8	4.2	2.6	13.6	10.3
N	2484	678	614	189	76	22	272

Note: Those voting for other parties, blank, do not remember, n.a. on party voted are included in the total.

Source: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS), Study No. 2240, April 1997.

IU = Izquierda Unida; PSOE = Partido Socialista Obrero Español (Socialist Party); PP = Partido Popular (Center-Conservative Party); PNV = Partido Nacionalista Vasco (Basque Nationalist Party); CiU = Convergència i Unió (Catalanist Party).

that parties are the source of disunity and feelings that they raise a false consensus in society are very widespread. It is natural that when we deal with the catch-all parties they should be perceived as undifferentiated. This is the case when we deal with parties that no longer represent any narrow social basis, kept electorates, but appeal to all voters, with parties that have no strong ideological models like those in the 1920s and 1930s: the Nazis, the Communists and their democratic opponents. They certainly were not the same. We might have preferred that they had been more alike than those parties, which represented totally different visions of society, or even the kind of parties that existed after the Second World War. Think of post-war Italy, the world of the *Don Camillo* movie where within one village the Catholics played in one soccer team and the Communists in another and the whole society was fragmented along party ideological lines. We have lost that kind of world, which I think is a good thing.

The competition between moderate catch-all parties aspiring to govern satisfies some of the basic aspirations of democratic citizens but also generates a number of dysfunctions that reflect negatively on parties. It has eliminated the ideological and social polarization that was so destructive in the inter-war years, and it has facilitated alternation of governments with considerable continuity in policies and a climate of consensus. This certainly is valued by many citizens disturbed by the potential divisiveness of democratic politics.

There are, however, negative consequences. Foremost is the feeling that parties are all alike, that there are no real issues, that it makes no difference which is in power, and therefore that politics is only a competition for

power among politicians unresponsive to society and its cleavages. There are also indirect, somewhat undesirable consequences: competition focuses on personalities and from this arises the temptation to engage in negative campaigning.

A good example of such critical opinions about parties is the significant number of voters who agree with the statement – or stereotype – that ‘parties only serve to divide the people’. Among the Spanish population 4.5 percent agree strongly and 31.6 percent agree with this statement, with 43.2 percent disagreeing, 9.3 percent disagreeing strongly and 11.5 percent having no opinion. At the same time, a significant number agree with the statement that ‘parties criticize each other a lot, but in reality they are all the same’ – 15 percent agree strongly, 45.2 percent agree, 25.5 percent disagree and 4.7 percent disagree strongly. One would think that the parties on the extremes, the more ideological parties, would feel this way about parties one might more easily characterize as catch-all. In Spain we can test this assumption only on the Left, with the voters of IU (Izquierda Unida). Contrary to expectation, the proportions agreeing (strongly agreeing 11.6 percent, agreeing 41.8 percent, disagreeing 34.9 percent and strongly disagreeing 7.4 percent) are not that different, except perhaps in the slightly larger number recognizing differences between parties.

Recent Spanish survey data, after an election that led to a change of the party in power, reflect this feeling that parties ‘are all the same’. This opinion is not that of alienated non-voters, nor of supporters of anti-system parties, but belongs to equal proportions of the majority of the voters for the two major parties, the socialist PSOE (Partido Socialista Obrero Español) and the center-conservative PP (Partido Popular). It is not easy to interpret the answer, but it probably reflects the lukewarm ideological conflict, catch-all appeals, and moderate policy differences within a limited range that characterize democratic politics in stable Western democracies. It may, however, reflect something else, that parties in a stable democracy, although representing different policies, do as parties share certain common characteristics.

Another major theme is that the parties are too disciplined and that there is too much unanimity within the parties. In the parliamentary democracies this is the requirement for votes of confidence and stability of government. We would have to go back to earlier parliamentary politics when parties did not preclude an open debate and vote by separating issues on which there is a vote of confidence and issues on which there is freedom to vote by the parliamentarians. Sir Ralf Dahrendorf, in a recent article, ‘Traurige Parlamente’, in a German newspaper, writes about the changing role of parliamentarians and how parliament has been lost as an arena for real debate. There are a significant number of people in democracies, for instance in Spain 36 percent, who agree with the statement ‘In the parties

Table 5. Attitudes of Voters for Spanish Parties toward Party Discipline versus Independence of Parliamentarians (1996)

	Voters for					Non-voters
	PP	PSOE	IU	CiU	PNV	
Discipline	43.4	41.5	35.9	42.9	47.1	36.7
Independence	35.6	33.9	49.2	44.2	41.2	37.3
d.k., n.a.	21.0	24.6	14.8	13.0	11.8	26.0

Source: Survey by the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (Delgado et al. 1998).

there is too much unanimity'. The interesting thing is that 36 percent of Conservatives and 34 percent of Socialists say so. There is therefore agreement across parties. This reflects an image not of one party but of parties in general.

There is also a perception of excessive discipline. On the other hand, as soon as there are debates in a party in which there is disagreement between various leaders, the media immediately say that this party is not capable of governing because they are not united, they cannot 'get their act together'. The result is that the voters punish parties in which there is a considerable amount of conflict. Now, you cannot have it both ways. Should members of parliament follow the directives of the party or should they follow their own criteria?

One might think that party discipline would be considered more important by voters on the Left, associated with the more ideological parties, those linked to a tradition of mass-membership parties, than by voters on the Right. The responses of Spanish voters do not fit that hypothesis. It is possible that, given the anticentripetal tendencies of the Spanish electorate and the catch-all character of all major parties, our hypothesis would not hold. The fact is that the electorate of all Spanish parties splits almost the same way on the question of party discipline. The national average was 34.1 percent favoring party discipline and 48.3 percent saying that the deputies should follow their own criteria, with 67 percent without an opinion. What is significant is that 35.4 percent of PSOE voters and 37.6 percent of PP voters opt for party discipline, with, respectively, 46.9 percent and 47.7 percent favoring the independence of MPs. Only among the voters for the Catalan CiU and the Basque PNV were those favorable to party discipline slightly more numerous (42.1 percent and 40.9 percent, respectively), although the number expecting an independent attitude among CiU was also higher.

A glaring example of the ambivalence of voters about parties is provided by the responses to the following question (asked by the CIS, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, Study 2240, April 1997):

Think of two persons arguing about political parties in Spain. I would like you to tell me with which of these opinions expressed by them you agree more. (1) In (inside of) the parties there should be greater unity. (2) In the parties there is too much unanimity.

Among all respondents 40.4 percent agreed with the first statement and 36.8 percent with the second, while 21.1 percent did not know and 1.7 percent did not answer. What is more striking is that the socialist voters (PSOE) divided 44.7 percent versus 35.2 percent and the conservative voters (PP) divided 45.0 percent versus 34.7 percent. Non-voters were more likely not to have an opinion (27.9 percent), but when they had one they split again, although a few more felt that there was too much unanimity (33.1 percent versus 37.1 percent). With the media alternately highlighting the internal tensions and imposed unanimity, we can see how across party lines people are likely, for opposite reasons, to be critical of parties.

There is another kind of constant disagreement inherent in parties. We want politicians who have experience, who know the issues, who know how to work together, and they should be dedicated full-time to their public duties. Moreover, they should give up all their connections with private business, their professions and whatever else. MPs should cease involvement in any other activity. In Spain 58 percent say so and 27 percent say no. Among socialists the figures are 58 percent versus 26 percent, and among conservatives 58.5 percent and 27 percent.

We have on the one hand the image and criticism of the professionalization of politics in a society that, paradoxically, values professionalization highly. The politician, then, should be an amateur, but an amateur who spends the whole day in committees, who spends time participating in the meetings of the executive of the party, who has to campaign not only in the national elections but in every regional election in a federal country, who has to attend to his or her constituents and who has to be active in party matters. Such a politician cannot, in modern life, do what the parliamentarians did in the nineteenth century. They were doctors or medical professors in the morning, went to the hospitals, did their rounds, maybe taught a lecture, and were distinguished scientists, and then in the afternoon, for a short period of the year, sat in parliament, debated the major issues of the country and contributed sometimes to the making of legislation. This ideal is impossible in the modern world. We do not like professors who come back after five years in politics; even the three-year leave for public service is not very much liked by the universities.

There is disagreement among citizens about the professionalization of politicians, reflected in the desire on the one hand for continuity and efficacy and experience and on the other hand for term limits. Who wants to go into politics for five years, just learning the ropes, and never run again for that

office? We want accountability and at the same time those we entrust with public office should not be eligible again: how can we make them accountable for how well or how poorly they have done if they do not run again? This is an interesting issue in presidential systems. Again there is a tension between two contradictory principles.

Another question is that the people are ambivalent about the basic issue that 'my member of parliament should represent my interests'. That means the interests of my neighbors, the people of my community when there is a company closure, and so my MP should fight for those interests. Many voters feel that their representative does not really care for their interests. At the same time, we hear that parties and members of parliament serve all kinds of special interests. The voters of Seattle working at Boeing have 'special' interests different from those of another district, and so on. There is an interesting difference between America, where there is a certain legitimacy for interest representation, and the European system, in which the general policy of the party and the prime minister impose the party line independently of which district interests you are supposedly representing.

A special case are parties in multinational societies with a federal system and a nationalist dominant government in one of the component units, like Catalonia. In this case the party gives its support to the central government in exchange for policies benefiting that region. It has an imperative mandate from the regional government. It cannot be punished by the Spanish voters for what it does. It is rewarded by a local electorate only. Again, you may say the parties are, in a way, not representing the general interest.

There are some interesting debates about the internal democratization of parties and what we want parties to do to assure internal party democracy. But do we really want 383,000 members of a party to decide matters that affect 10 million voters for that party – especially if only 54 percent of the members participate (192,000 people), as was recently the case in the PSOE internal primaries. In turn, of those voting, 105,000 (55 percent) voted for the candidate who would be the party's candidate for the prime-ministership in the general election. Or should this be the decision of the parliamentarians who, after all, are elected by the whole electorate? So, we have a contradictory principle here: some people prefer one view and others prefer another view, and so there is bound to be some dissatisfaction.

At the same time that we find people agreeing with the statement 'Parties are only interested in my vote, not in my opinion', we find growing concern about 'poll-driven democracy'. Criticism is growing about democracy that sacrifices 'responsibility' and leadership in favor of 'responsiveness'. Appeals and policies are formulated in response to public opinion surveys and focus groups conducted to find out what people think. The emphasis on 'responsiveness' would seem to question the assertion that politicians do not care about 'my opinion'. Moreover, is not the vote an expression of a

preference, an opinion about a candidate and/or a party available to all citizens, with consequences for the politicians which require them to take interest in the voters' concerns?

The slogan 'The only cure for the failings of democracy is more democracy' is profoundly misleading. This is so because in most societies, except perhaps the United States, it can be translated into 'more presence and power for political parties'. A largely apathetic, fundamentally privatized, sometimes overworked citizenry will leave the filling of the many positions opened by 'democratization' on all kinds of executive or advisory boards (of public institutions or corporations, savings banks, universities, the mass media, etc.) to those nominated by the parties and will vote for them (if they care to do so) following their party affinities. The worrisome question is then: to what extent do the parties have people of independence, qualification and motivation to take over those functions? The result is *partitocrazia* and often opportunities for corruption. It would be interesting to study the Italian, Venezuelan and Austrian crises of party democracy from this perspective.

We need to understand much better how the structure of political parties and their functions in modern democracies lead some people to be critical irrespective of which party they vote for. It is not that they think the other party is wrong. Parties in general, even their own party, are seen as wrong on various dimensions. Half of the population feel one way, half another, and this explains some of the dissatisfaction and distrust of parties. It also helps to explain why the institutions in society which are not democratic, like the monarchy, army, etc., are trusted. Even in Latin America, after all that has happened in some countries, the army is trusted more, perhaps because it is not such a complex institution as a party in a democracy.

Another question about which we know very little is how the image of parties – and politicians – across the board, and the problems derived from the nature of party politics and parliamentary life, affect the vocation of politics. We hear journalistic accounts of distinguished politicians leaving politics, of people saying they would never consider going into politics, but we do not know how widespread such feelings are and even less how they affect the recruitment of party politicians and MPs. Do the negative image, the full-time demands of political activity, the need to give up one's professional career or business, the subjection to party discipline limiting the freedom to dissent, and so on, affect the decision to go into politics or to stay in politics?

NOTE

1. I want to thank Pilar del Castillo, the Director of the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, for including in the CIS surveys some questions relevant to this paper and making available some of the tabulations. I am also grateful to Marta Lagos, Director of the Latinobarometer, for making available her data and some tables I requested. Naturally, the responsibility for the interpretation is mine alone.

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The Future of Democracy: Reasons for Pessimism, but Also Some Optimism

Arend Lijphart*

The Third Reverse Wave

In the late 1990s there was considerably less optimism about the future of democracy than at the beginning of the decade. The third wave of democratization, identified by Samuel P. Huntington (1991), started with the democratic revolution in Portugal; it spread to Latin America in the 1980s; and it culminated in the early 1990s with the collapse of the Soviet Union. The mid 1990s saw the beginning of the third 'reverse wave', similar to the two counter-democratic reverse waves that followed the first and second waves of democratization earlier in the twentieth century, from 1922 to 1942 and from 1958 to 1975 (Huntington 1991, 16).

Particularly striking has been the rise of what are often called 'illiberal' or merely 'electoral' democracies, that is, countries that do have more or less free elections by universal suffrage but that lack some or most of the other requirements of democracy, like the freedom to form and join organizations, freedom of expression, and fair competition among political alternatives (Dahl 1971, 3). These are typically countries that the Freedom House Survey Team (1998) classifies in its 'partly free' category, in between the categories of 'free' and 'not free'. Such illiberal or electoral 'democracies' are, of course, not really democratic.

* Arend Lijphart, 4276 Caminito Terviso, San Diego, CA 92122, USA.

What are the causes of the third reverse wave? One plausible explanation is based on the up and down trends in democratization since the nineteenth century observed by Huntington. Every forward wave can be expected to be followed by a reverse wave and, because the third wave that started in 1974 was an especially powerful one, it is not surprising that the third reverse wave has been strong, too. However, this explanation is not necessarily a reason for long-term pessimism about the future of democracy. If Huntington's trends extend into the twenty-first century, the third reverse wave may well be followed by a fourth forward wave.

A second explanation is the clash of two conflicting forces. The 1980s and 1990s appeared to be the age of democratization, but they were also the age of increased ethnic conflict – and ethnic divisions and conflicts constitute grave threats to stable democracy. Ethnic strife in many countries, especially those that are not or not yet democratic, is a serious reason for long-term pessimism because there are no signs at all that it will diminish in the twenty-first century.

My third explanation is the continuing popularity of two key democratic institutions that have negative effects for democracy generally and that are particularly unsuitable for ethnically divided societies: presidential government and majoritarian election systems. If we look at the long-term consolidated democracies, the raw count is on the side of proportional representation (PR) and parliamentary government. For instance, of the 36 democracies that I analyzed in *Patterns of Democracy* (Lijphart 1999) – defined as countries with populations of at least 250,000 which were democratic in the late 1990s and had been continuously democratic since 1977 or earlier – 22 used PR in the late 1990s, compared with 13 that used majoritarian systems, and one that used a mixed system (Lijphart 1999, 145). A different count was done by Mark P. Jones (personal communication, 25 August 1999). He considers 38 countries with populations of at least two million that were clearly democratic in 1998 (with average Freedom House scores on political rights and civil liberties of at least 2.0 on the scale ranging from a high of 1 to a low of 7 which is used by Freedom House). Jones classifies 26 as having PR systems, six as using majoritarian methods (in single-member districts), and six as mixed.

These numbers are rather deceptive, however. First, PR may be the norm for the established democracies, but majoritarian systems are much more common among countries that are not fully democratic and in Third World countries. Second, even among the well-established democracies, only a relatively small number use majoritarian election methods, but these few countries tend to be the larger countries: India, the United States, the United Kingdom, and France. Japan should be added to this group as well: it adopted a new electoral system in 1996 that has both majoritarian and PR elements, but the majoritarian component is the dominant one because

60 percent of the seats are allocated by plurality in single-member districts without any proportional adjustments.

Similarly, among the established democracies there are many more parliamentary than presidential systems. Of the 36 democracies listed in *Patterns of Democracy*, 30 have parliamentary governments, compared with only five that have presidential governments (Lijphart 1999, 119). Switzerland is in an intermediate position but one that is closer to parliamentarism than presidentialism, so the ratio between the two systems can be said to be a lopsided 31:5. However, these numbers are also unrepresentative for the world at large. Presidential government is quite prevalent among the world's not fully democratic countries and in Third World countries generally. Moreover, the large countries again display a special pattern: Matthew S. Shugart's (1999, 78–81) tabulations of the world's less developed nations show that the more populous that nations are, the more likely they are to have presidential governments.

The Superiority of the Parliamentary–PR Combination

As I stated earlier, I regard the large numbers of countries that still use majoritarian electoral systems and/or presidentialism as a strongly negative factor for the future of democracy. Especially, but not only, in ethnically divided countries, PR and parliamentarism can work much more beneficially. In fact, it is the combination of PR and parliamentarism which is optimal. There appears to be a growing scholarly consensus on this point. Moreover, this conclusion has been reached from a variety of quite different perspectives, four of which I shall highlight in this section of my paper: (1) Juan J. Linz's approach which takes the presidential–parliamentary contrast as its point of departure, (2) my own distinction between majoritarian and consensus types of democracy, (3) Josep M. Colomer's public-choice argument, and (4) Bruce Ackerman's analysis from the perspective of constitutional law.

(1) Linz's indictment of presidentialism is so well known that I do not need to spell it out in great detail. He argues that presidential democracy is prone to failure because of serious institutional deficiencies such as the fixed terms of office which make the government very rigid, the tendency to executive–legislative deadlock and paralysis resulting from the coexistence of two branches that are separately elected and can both claim democratic legitimacy, the zero-sum or winner-take-all nature of presidential elections – a special problem in deeply divided countries – and the encouragement of the politics of personality instead of a politics of competing parties and party programs.

In his debate with Donald L. Horowitz in the *Journal of Democracy*, Linz (1990a, 56) sharpens this conclusion by adding the element of PR to his

preferred parliamentary type of democracy. He recognizes that parliamentary systems can also have majoritarian and winner-take-all characteristics, and he therefore adds, 'Although parliamentary elections can produce an absolute majority for a single party, they more often give representation to a number of parties. Power-sharing and coalition-forming are fairly common, and incumbents are accordingly attentive to the demands and interests of even the smaller parties.' In his rebuttal, Horowitz (1990, 79) states that this line of reasoning means that 'Linz's thesis boils down to an argument not against the presidency but against plurality election, not in favor of parliamentary systems but in favor of parliamentary coalitions' – in other words, that Linz's contrast is not between the two categories of presidentialism and parliamentarism but between presidentialism and plurality-parliamentarism on one hand and PR-parliamentarism on the other.

Linz's (1990b, 85–6) reply to Horowitz's charge is very important, because it makes clear that he is thinking in terms of three rather than two categories. About plurality-parliamentarism Linz states that 'Mrs. Thatcher ... probably has more power than an American chief executive [and] parliamentary democracies in which a single disciplined party obtains the absolute majority of all seats find themselves in what is close to a "winner-take-all" situation'. But this does not mean that plurality-parliamentarism can be equated with presidentialism: 'While the actual situation of a powerful prime minister like Mrs. Thatcher might be comparable to that of a president with a legislative majority, the *de jure* difference is still significant. If Mrs. Thatcher were to falter or otherwise make herself a liability, for instance, the Conservative majority in the House of Commons could unseat her without creating a constitutional crisis' – an event that took place only about a month after these words were published! On the other hand, plurality-parliamentarism should also be distinguished from parliamentary-PR government: winner-take-all situations like the British example are 'not the most frequent pattern in parliamentary systems, particularly when there is proportional representation'. Of the three main patterns of democracy, therefore, Linz's argument is that PR-parliamentarism is the most and presidentialism the least desirable form, with plurality-parliamentarism in between.

(2) My own approach has been to measure the majoritarian or consensual character of democracies on the basis of five variables: the degree of executive power sharing, the power relationship between the executive and the legislature, the degree of multipartism, the proportionality of the electoral system, and the degree of corporatism of the interest group system. I find that consensus democracy is clearly superior to majoritarian democracy. There are no big differences in the effectiveness of decision making on macro-economic policy, although consensus democracies have a slightly better record in this respect. But consensus democracies perform a great

deal better with regard to many qualitative aspects of democracy: the representation of women and minorities, income equality, voter participation, citizens' satisfaction with democracy, and the proximity between the government and the median voter (Lijphart 1999, 258–93).

My next question is: which constitutional and electoral law characteristics are associated with consensus democracy? The answer: parliamentarism and PR. Countries that have both parliamentary government and PR elections are likely to be on the consensus side of the majoritarian–consensus continuum; countries that have presidential government or majority elections, or both, are likely to be on the majoritarian side (Lijphart 1999, 303–4). My dependent variable differs from Linz's: my emphasis is not on the success or failure of democracies in terms of their survival, but on the performance record of democracies that have successfully survived. But our conclusion concerning the superiority of the parliamentary-PR alternative is identical.

(3) Spanish political scientist Colomer (2000) uses social choice theory to determine which are the most 'socially efficient' institutions, that is, which institutions maximize political satisfaction. He argues that this quality can be measured in terms of whether the party of the median voter is included among the winners and in the executive. According to his logic, the best systems are the parliamentary-PR ones; the worst are parliamentary-plurality systems; and presidential and semi-presidential systems are intermediate between these two. Colomer's rank order differs from Linz's, but both give the PR-parliamentary option their highest ranking. Colomer also tests his conclusions by means of quantitative analysis, which strongly supports his theoretical arguments.

(4) Ackerman (2000), a professor in the Yale School of Law, presents a lengthy constitutional-legal analysis in which he first contrasts presidentialism with the Westminster model of parliamentarism, and then introduces a third model which he calls 'constrained parliamentarism'; he concludes that this third model is far superior to the other two. His primary empirical examples are, respectively, the United States, Great Britain, and Germany – which can also be used as the prototypical examples of presidentialism (the United States), plurality-parliamentarism (Britain), and PR-parliamentarism (Germany). The 'constraints' that Ackerman has in mind for his constrained parliamentarism are not so much PR – although he clearly favors PR – than judicial review and occasional referendums. Constrained parliamentarism therefore does not neatly coincide with PR-parliamentarism. Nevertheless, Ackerman's analysis can be read as at least an indirect and partial confirmation – from a fourth theoretical angle – of Linz's, Colomer's, and my own conclusions.

The only strong counter-argument is Shugart's (1999) contention that presidentialism has important advantages for Third World countries because

political parties in developing countries tend to be weak, and hence poor interest aggregators. Presidents, he argues, may be produced by winner-take-all elections but they are still much more broadly representative than the members of typically fragmented legislatures, and they can therefore assume the vital aggregative function.

This line of reasoning certainly has some merit, but I find it not entirely persuasive. For one thing, the development of strong parties is much less likely under presidentialism than under parliamentarism, because parliamentary government needs cohesive and disciplined parties to support cabinets and it therefore encourages the development of such parties. The classic example is the contrast between Canada and the United States; in Seymour Martin Lipset's (1990, 81) words, 'the difference between presidential and parliamentary systems in comparable continent-spanning, federal polities results in two weak parties in the United States and multiple strong ones in Canada'. Moreover, it is too defeatist to simply accept as an unalterable given that parties in a particular country are too weak for parliamentary government and hence to look for alternatives to parliamentarism. It is also possible – and much more constructive – to stimulate the growth of strong parties by direct measures; for instance, there are PR systems that make for cohesive parties, such as list PR with closed lists, and parties can also be strengthened by the regular receipt of state subsidies.

The Instructive Case of Bolivian 'Presidentialism'

The kind of quantitative analysis performed by Colomer, mentioned above, is similar to the many quantitative studies of the merits of parliamentary versus presidential government which do not take the second variable of the electoral system into consideration. Fred W. Riggs (1988) was the pioneering scholar in this respect, and he found presidentialism to be extremely prone to failure and hence a highly 'problematic regime type'. Of the several later studies that came to the same conclusion, the one by Alfred Stepan and Cindy Skach (1993) is probably the best known. There have also been a few studies that have shown no significant differences between the two types (for instance, Power & Gasiorowski 1997). To my knowledge, however, not a single study has been produced that shows that presidentialism actually works better than parliamentarism. This is in itself a significant finding that can make us more confident about recommending the parliamentary alternative.

However, these studies are beset by serious problems of definition and measurement. There is no consensus, for instance, on the exact definitions of presidentialism, parliamentarism, and semi-presidentialism, and therefore no consensus in classifying specific countries in these categories either. Another difficulty is how exactly to define and measure the 'success' of the

different types of democracies or how long they have to endure in order to qualify for 'survival'. Perhaps an even more serious problem is to control for other variables that may affect success and survival. In particular, presidential systems are concentrated in Latin America, and it has been argued that it is the political culture of the countries in this part of the world that can explain their sorry record of democracy, rather than their presidential systems of government (Lipset 1990).

One Latin American case is of special interest: Bolivia. Since its return to democracy in the early 1980s, Bolivia has been one of the democratic bright spots in the region. This is particularly remarkable because Bolivia is a poor country and because it has one of the worst histories of military coups and dictatorships. What distinguishes Bolivia from other Latin American countries is that its political system is more parliamentary than presidential in spite of its formally presidential constitution; Bolivia also has PR elections (which is not unusual in Latin America).

One important parliamentary characteristic is that the president is normally elected by the legislature instead of directly by the voters. The first stage of the electoral process is still a popular election but if no presidential candidate receives an absolute majority of the votes the legislature selects the president from the top two candidates (the top three candidates prior to the 1997 election) – with no certainty, or even high probability, that the plurality winner of the popular contest will be selected. Because Bolivia has a multiparty system and multiple presidential candidates, no candidate has ever been elected by popular vote in the 1980s and 1990s, and a legislative coalition has always needed to be formed to make the final choice. The second parliamentary feature is that this process has resulted in the appointment of a multiparty coalition cabinet with real power instead of a cabinet that is simply appointed by the president as a mainly advisory body. The Bolivian executive is therefore much closer to the collegial executive that is typical of parliamentary systems than to the one-person executive that is the hallmark of presidentialism.

In only one respect is Bolivia more presidential than parliamentary: the president has a fixed term of office and, once elected, cannot be removed by the legislature. Linz has coined the term 'parliamentarized presidentialism' for the Bolivian hybrid, which operates much more like a parliamentary system – and a PR-parliamentary system – than a presidential one (cited in Mayorga 1997, 143–4).

The recent success of Bolivian democracy can clearly not be explained in terms of a political culture that is different from that of the other Latin American countries. Nor is its economic condition more favorable than that of the neighboring countries; if anything, it is much less favorable. Nor does it have a more favorable democratic historical background than its neighbors in the region; here again, if anything, its history is less of a

positive factor. The conclusion seems inescapable, therefore, that it is the mainly parliamentary fashion in which its 'presidential' system works that has made the crucial difference. This conclusion is confirmed by the judgment of René Antonio Mayorga, Bolivia's best-known political scientist. Mayorga (1997, 143) attributes the country's exceptional democratic success to the 'system of interparty bargaining, postelectoral coalitions, consensual practices, and congressional election of the chief executive', and he suggests that Bolivia may become an attractive 'model for imitation' by other Latin American countries.

Conclusion

My conclusion can be summarized in just a few sentences. I believe that a serious problem for the success and spread of democracy in the twenty-first century is the continued popularity, especially among political leaders in not yet or not fully democratic countries, of two major institutions that have negative consequences for democracy: presidential government and majoritarian election systems. This factor, together with the salience of ethnic tensions in many countries, necessitates serious pessimism about the future of democracy. However, politicians do have the ability to learn, and it is certainly not impossible that they will start to listen to the conclusions and recommendations of political scientists. Concrete examples like the highly significant and instructive Bolivian case of parliamentarized presidentialism may also have an impact. For these reasons, I have added the words 'and also some optimism' to the title of this article.

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Democracy and Peace¹

Alexander L. George*

In recent years research has pointed to the possibility that democracies are more peaceful than other kinds of regimes. If true, such a finding would lend support to liberal theorists who argue that it is domestic politics and institutions that shape outcomes of inter-state relations and not, as realists maintain, the material dimensions of the international system. Even the narrower claim that democracies are not more peaceful in general but do not go to war with each other has important implications for the practice as well as the study of international relations. For American policymakers, the premise of a 'democratic' peace is already embedded in US foreign policy.

This article will not assess the evidence and arguments for and against the existence of some form of democratic peace which have emerged in addressing this issue.² Instead attention will be directed to a major conceptual issue that needs to be clarified and its implications for additional research addressed. Specifically, the issue of how we define peace is of fundamental importance but has not received adequate attention. It is obvious that refinement of the democratic peace thesis will require a better specification of different types of peace to replace the simple distinction between 'war' and 'peace'. I have in mind here a more profound conceptual and causal inquiry than the standard quibble over whether 1000 battle deaths, or any other arbitrary cut-off point, should be used to define 'war' in quantitative data sets.³ It may be of some interest in this connection to indicate the development of my interest in this issue.

In 1992 when Professor Shimon Shamir (Tel Aviv University) and I were fellows at the United States Institute of Peace we discussed how best to characterize the state of peace that had emerged in Israeli–Egyptian relations. It was clear that some way of identifying different types of peace was needed to replace the simple distinction between war and peace.

* Alexander L. George, Department of Political Science, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305, USA.

Professor Shamir's preferred typology at that time was a four-fold distinction between 'adversarial peace', 'restricted peace', 'rapprochement', and 'cooperative peace'. Somewhat dissatisfied with this typology, I suggested as an alternative a three-fold distinction between 'precarious peace', 'conditional peace', and 'stable peace'.⁴ Indeed over time a number of other typologies have been advanced. Clearly there is a need to bring together the different concepts and terms being used by different scholars to distinguish types of peace in order to show the extent to which they overlap and to expose various ambiguities in their definitions. If a common, shared set of concepts can be developed, it will benefit research by providing a basis for systematic, cumulative research on this important question. It has not been entirely clear when investigators were in agreement or disagreement in applying elements of their different typologies to empirical cases.

My own typology was influenced by important writings of scholars, in particular Karl Deutsch (1957) and Kenneth Boulding (1979). Deutsch's concept of 'peace' pointed in the right direction. Deutsch's classic description of a 'security community' emphasized that the peace it brought with it was based on, among other things, 'the real assurance that the members of that community will not fight each other physically, but will settle their disputes in some other way'. This identifies a core element of the definition of 'stable peace'. And his emphasis on the importance of developing a 'community' remains of prime importance, though whether it is either a necessity or a sufficient condition for the emergence of stable peace in all situations needs to be subjected to empirical testing (Deutsch 1957, 5). I found Deutsch's concept of peace to be somewhat ambiguous, however, and his various definitions of it inconsistent. Boulding's concept of 'stable peace' was quite useful but in need of clarification and additional specification. He defined peace as a situation in which the probability of war is so small that it does not enter into the calculations of any of the people involved (Boulding 1979, 13). The full research program envisaged by Deutsch and his colleagues was never completed, though several books were published after his major publication.⁵

Balanced assessments of Deutsch's seminal contribution have been provided by a number of scholars, quite recently by Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (1998). Perhaps the most systematic follow-up to Deutsch's book was the important study by Stephen R. Rock, *Why Peace Breaks Out* (1989). But I find inconsistency and some ambiguity in his treatment as well.

As Erik G. Yesson reminds us, all these definitions evoke Kant's insistence in his classic work, *Perpetual Peace*, that peace is not a 'suspension of hostilities' but, rather, 'an end to all hostilities', which means the nullification of 'all existing reasons for a future war' (Yesson 1995, 5).

I would like to clarify now my own three-fold typology which will

emphasize the extent to which peace depends upon deterrent and compellant threats.

'Precarious peace' is a relationship of acute conflict between two states who have already engaged in warfare in the past and/or have been and still are on the verge of major war. At least one state is dissatisfied with the status quo and one or both see the use of military force as legitimate for either defending or changing the status quo. 'Peace', therefore, means little more than the temporary absence of armed conflict. Such a peace depends not merely on 'general deterrence', a term introduced into the literature some years ago by Patrick Morgan. Maintenance of a 'precarious peace' between two adversaries may require frequent use of 'immediate deterrence', that is military alerts and deployments, issuance of deterrence threats in war-threatening crises. Arab-Israeli relationships until recent times and the India-Pakistan relationship over many years are examples of 'precarious peace'.

'Conditional Peace', on the other hand, describes a substantially less acute, less precarious conflict relationship. General deterrence plays the predominant role in maintaining peace except in quite infrequent crises or pre-crisis situations in which one or both sides feel it necessary to resort to activities that provide immediate deterrence to avoid outbreak of war. The US-Soviet relationship during the Cold War qualifies as an example of 'conditional peace'. During that era there were occasional but infrequent diplomatic crises, over Berlin and Cuba, for example, in which general deterrence was supplemented with immediate deterrence.

Neither in precarious peace nor in conditional peace does either side rule out initiating military force as an instrument of policy, and deterrent and compellant threats of doing so do occur.

'Stable Peace' is a relationship between two states in which neither side considers employing force, or even making a threat of force in any dispute, even serious disputes between them. Deterrence and compellance backed by threats of military force are simply excluded as an instrument of policy. Two states that enjoy stable peace may continue to have serious disputes but they share a firm understanding that such disputes must be dealt with by non-military means. For example, in the Suez Crisis of 1956 President Eisenhower made strong, credible threats of economic sanctions to pressure the British to withdraw their forces from the Suez.

This typology and indeed other typologies are conceptual in the first instance. As in any typology, it can only be the starting point for attempting to characterize actual relationships between states and to undertake empirical research. Types should not be reified; they should not be imposed on historical cases in a mechanical, simplistic way that obscures relevant uncertainties and complexities. The test of a typology should be whether it facilitates empirical research and development of

theory. A comprehensive research program on this fundamental aspect of international relations entails a number of questions and problems which I will now address.

One of these is the task of determining whether two states – whether or not they are democracies – enjoy a genuine stable peace. This may be difficult to discern for various reasons and it is a matter of finding ways to distinguish between the existence of conditional peace and stable peace. The continued absence of war and war-threatening crises in a relationship, however significant in and of itself, is not sufficient to establish the existence of stable peace. Peace between two such states may not yet have been subjected to tough tests, disputes severe enough to stimulate one side or the other to consider or make use of immediate deterrence. In fact, if one sees beneath the surface of peace that the military on one or the other side is still preparing secret contingency plans of a serious kind for possible use of force, then one must question whether stable peace really exists. In such cases general deterrence may still play a role, though not a conspicuous one, in backstopping what appears to be stable peace.

And though the peace appears to be stable, leaders and publics on both sides may feel that it is not a sufficiently cordial relationship including all desired forms, activities, and institutions of a cooperative nature such as confidence-building measures, cooperation on non-security issues, and dispute-resolution mechanisms. Thus, Israeli scholars have felt it necessary to distinguish between ‘cold peace’ and ‘warm peace’ to call attention to the fact that Israel and Egypt have never managed to develop the kinds of interactions with each other that include the full repertoire of warm, friendly relations between neighbors. Can one say, nonetheless, that stable peace exists between Israel and Egypt? Has peace between them been subjected to tough tests? Does either side have contingency plans for possible use of force or for purposes of backing up immediate deterrence threats should they become necessary in a future crisis?

One may take note of the possibility, too, that although the dominant leadership on both sides may enjoy what appears to be stable peace and believes in and acts in accord with the requirements of stable peace, important elements of the elites or counter-elites and of the public still regard the other side as posing a latent threat to its security. When this suspicion prevails, stable peace may be vulnerable. Such a state of affairs may characterize US–Russian relations since the end of the Cold War. Certainly leaders and elements of their publics have moved from the conditional peace that characterized US–Soviet relations during the Cold War towards stable peace, but important elements of the political–military elite and of the publics on both sides evidently question whether general deterrence is no longer necessary and whether the possible need for resort to immediate deterrence in the future can be safely excluded.

A better example of stable peace is the relationship among most of the Western European countries embraced by the European Union and NATO, a development in the post-1945 era which engaged the interest of Karl Deutsch and his colleagues, and many others.

The research agenda should also include study of the conditions under which and the processes by which states move from a relationship of precarious or conditional peace to one of stable peace. There may be many paths to stable peace: negotiated settlements, regime transitions (especially democratization), demographic changes, changes in military, economic and transportation technologies, social or normative changes, and so on. There are few studies of this kind as yet and many historical examples of such a development that should be studied and compared. A leading example, of course, is the already mentioned emergence of the security community in Western Europe.

Some years ago I asked Magnus Jerneck, then visiting Stanford University, whether Swedish or other Scandinavian scholars had studied the transition to stable peace in relations between Scandinavian countries. Jerneck, a political scientist at Lund University, checked with colleagues in the History Department at Lund and was told that, although the phenomenon was well known, no systematic studies of it existed. Accordingly, Jerneck and several of his colleagues formed an interdisciplinary research team that has undertaken research on this problem.⁶ Other possible examples include Argentina–Brazil, South Africa and its neighbors after the end of apartheid, and US relations with Canada and Mexico.

Obviously, the interest in stable peace – its emergence, what it is based upon, how it can be recognized, etc. – overlaps with the democratic peace thesis, which has received a great deal of attention and discussion, particularly in the United States. Much of the scholarly attention has focused on efforts to explain what it is about being a democratic polity that is the basis for the absence of war between two states. Not enough attention has been given to study of historical transitions in relations between democratic states which have resulted in stable peace between them. It may matter, for example, whether one state in the dyad in question became a democracy through civil war, international war, revolution, occupation, or gradual political development.

In fact, much of the research addressed to explaining what it is about democracy that explains why democratic states do not engage in war with each other does not appear to distinguish clearly between conditional peace and stable peace. The task of unravelling the blurring of the difference between these two types of democratic peace would be facilitated if more attention were given to historical studies of transitions to stable peace. An exemplary study of this is Stephen Rock's recent study (Rock 2000) of how the British employed a strategy of appeasement of the United States

towards the end of the nineteenth century to remove the serious war-threatening disputes in their relations, thus paving the way from conditional to stable peace in their relationship.

Another example of study of such a transition is offered by the earlier Deutsch study and by many others that have traced the development of stable peace among Western European countries. Perhaps more so than the Deutsch study itself, these other studies have focused on deliberate efforts after World War II to create the attitudes, policies, and structures for a new peaceful relationship between France and Germany.⁷ Such studies are important because they indicate that efforts and strategies can be adopted to bring into being a relationship of stable peace.

Studies are needed of many other cases of transition to democratic peace. For example, the considerable research already available on relations of the United States with Canada and Mexico should be reviewed in order to identify and explain critical turning points that led to what seems clearly to have become stable peace.

Broad generalizations about conditions and processes that have led to stable peace in different situations may be possible, but it would be well to act on the presumption that this process, like so many other phenomena in international relations, is subject to equifinality (referred, to as 'multiple causation' by some scholars). That is, similar outcomes (i.e. stable peace) can occur through different causal processes. It would be counterproductive to good comparative research to assume that similar outcomes in different cases must have a common explanation. Even when a common factor can be identified, in many cases the question remains whether that is either a necessary or sufficient condition for the emergence of stable peace and how much causal weight can be attributed to it.

What I have been suggesting is that it is best to regard the 'democratic peace' phenomenon as a subset of the broader general phenomenon of stable peace. In this connection I would like to raise the question of whether stable peace is possible only and has occurred only between countries that are democracies. A more comprehensive research program would look for historical cases of stable peace between countries that are not democracies or between states only one of which is a democracy. Some of the research on 'zones of peace' by Arie Kacowicz, reported in his earlier publication and referred to in the forthcoming volume he is editing, moves in this direction. It is important to apply the distinction between conditional and stable peace in such studies also.

Finally, I believe it is important that a full research program should include efforts to judge whether lessons can be drawn from historical studies which may be of relevance for efforts to move relations between adversarial states to stable peace, or at least to something approximating it. Several years ago when I was preparing a foreword to James Goodby's book *Europe*

Undivided, I was struck by the fact that he was addressing the desirability and feasibility of moving US–Russian relations from conditional peace to stable peace. Following the publication of his book the United States Institute of Peace has set up a working group to develop further Goodby's ideas. This study will examine several alternative future developments affecting the nature and scope of security in the Euroatlantic community. It will consider whether and how a democratic Russia can become a member of a Euroatlantic security community, all members of which enjoy stable peace.

In sum, there are ambiguities and inconsistencies in definitions of the concept of 'peace' in research that addresses the possibility of 'democratic peace'. This major conceptual issue needs to be addressed and clarified given its important implications for scholarship and policy. This paper proposes a distinction between three types of peace: 'precarious peace', 'conditional peace', and 'stable peace'. It is important to clarify whether presumed instances of 'democratic peace' blur the important distinction between conditional and stable peace. This paper also identifies a number of important problems that should be part of a research program on democratic peace, which is usefully regarded as a subtype of stable peace.

NOTES

1. The author wishes to thank the Carnegie Corporation of New York for funds that supported the research reported here, and Professor Andrew Bennett for helpful comments and suggestions on an earlier draft.
2. For a detailed summary and commentary on theoretical and methodological issues associated with this research program, see Bennett & George (1997). A revision of this paper will appear in the book they have in preparation on the use of case studies for theory development.
3. The concept of 'democracy' – its defining characteristics and how to distinguish between different types of democracy – requires specification, since this influences the selection of historical cases for testing the peace thesis. This issue has received increasing attention from scholars, for it is clear that how it is resolved has a distinct bearing on the extent to which research findings support the peace thesis.
4. For Shamir's typology, see his remarks as reported in the *U.S. Institute of Peace Journal* (Shamir 1992). My own typology is briefly noted in the same issue. This paper draws also on my presentation on the Grawmeyer Panel at the annual International Studies Association Meeting in Toronto in March 1997 and from the foreword I wrote for Ambassador Goodby's *Europe Divided* (1998).
5. See Lindgren (1959), Russett (1963) and Katzenstein (1976).
6. An early study was prepared by Magnus Ericson (1997). Other studies will appear in the forthcoming volume being edited by Arie Kacowicz, Yaacov Bar Simon Tov, Magnus Jerneck and Ole Elgström, provisionally entitled *Stable Peace: Dimensions, Conditions, and Prospects for Success*.
7. This literature is too numerous to cite here (see, for example, Willis 1965). It includes, of course, the initiatives of Jean Monnet and others to bring about reconciliation between France and Germany and to create structures for cooperative economic development. Interestingly, it also includes the contribution of non-governmental actors and organizations such as Frank Buchman's moral rearmament movement.

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The Future of Democracy

Elinor Ostrom*

I wish I could simply be very optimistic when discussing the future of democracy. Unfortunately, I think that it is essential that we do not naively think that the future of democracy is automatically bright. The sustenance of a democratic system is similar to the sustenance of an initially successful family firm. The first generation works very hard to build it up. The second generation has usually witnessed some of the struggles of the first generation and usually is able to continue the effort started by the first generation. But, when the firm is turned over to the third, fourth, or fifth generation, problems can occur. Children are born already rich and without a deep

* Elinor Ostrom, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University, 513 North Park, Bloomington, IN 47408-3895, USA.

understanding of the struggle that it took to build the enterprise in the first place. What took many years to build can be dissipated within a short time. Now, that does not mean that all family enterprises will fail. And it certainly does not mean that all democratic institutions will eventually fail. It does mean that I share Vincent Ostrom's concern, articulated in his most recent book (Ostrom 1997), that democratic systems are vulnerable if the basic constitutive ideas of democracy are not strongly held and practised over time.

Let me be bold and indicate that no democratic society can sustain itself as a democracy over multiple generations unless citizens in general understand that:

- It is always a struggle to keep a democratic system functioning as a democracy – requiring at times the willingness to engage in civil disobedience.
- There is a necessity for complex institutions that balance one another – courts that balance executives, national governments that balance regional divisions and local units – and vice versa. In other words, it is important to have multiple, organized voices – citizens who are active in political parties and other kinds of associations. It is important that there are officials who have some independence and autonomy as well as those who are elected for limited terms. And having strong local government is as important as having strong national government.
- Voting is not the only activity of a good citizen, and participation in civic groups, NGOs, and neighborhood associations is an important way of participating in democratic life.
- It is important to be active in and knowledgeable about sustaining a diversity of public and private organizations that consider alternative ways of life and public policies.

I share a deep conviction that democratic systems of government are the highest form of human governance yet developed. Yet I worry that the need for continuous civic engagement, intellectual struggle, and vigilance is not well understood in some of our mature democracies and is not transmitted to citizens and officials in new democracies. I base this on several related experiences.

One of these is the 'democracy projects' that have been sponsored by the US Department of State and USAID in many developing countries. I have been fortunate to participate in some USAID projects that have made a positive difference. On the other hand, some donor-assisted projects have set democratic development back rather than enhancing the future of democracy. About five years ago, for example, USAID decided to make the creation of democratic systems a major focus of attention. They set up study groups in Washington and sent out officers around the world to 'facilitate' democracy in developing countries.

I was asked what readings I would suggest as background to this important work. Besides recommending some of the best books written by contemporary political scientists, I asked whether *The Federalist Papers* (Hamilton et al. 1788) or de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (1945) or *The Old Regime and the French Revolution* (1955) was on their discussion list. (I do not think that other countries should adopt the American system of government as a blueprint, but these are pretty basic works for an American to have read who is going to discuss democracy intensively with others interested in understanding the foundations of democratic thought.) I was told that this was a ridiculous suggestion. No one read these books any more. They were not relevant for a contemporary democracy project. What they wanted to know was how to set up the mechanics of running a good election. Period – end of study. (And, even though several of these officials had taken political science courses, they told me that they had never been assigned to read de Tocqueville or *The Federalist Papers*.)

Soon thereafter, a colleague of mine was asked to join the USAID office in Kathmandu, where he was assigned to a democracy education project. He was married to a Nepali woman and had lived and worked in Nepal for many years. He was deeply concerned about how to help farmers set up more diversified operations. He knew that there were many public fishponds in the *terai* of Nepal that had been allowed to deteriorate after the national government had declared them to be public property. He also knew that it would be possible for local communities to redevelop some of these ponds in order to gain a good source of local food as well as an important source of local revenue that could then be invested in local schools, roads, health facilities, and literacy campaigns. Further, trying to find ways of reducing the financial dependence of local communities on the national budget was a way to increase local democratic strength, he thought. He was ridiculed and told that such activities had nothing to do with democracy and that he should stop trying to find ways of helping farmers help themselves. My colleague finally left USAID with great regret, for he was witnessing efforts by individuals who knew nothing about Nepal to stress only the mechanics of running an election and nothing related to helping Nepali citizens gain greater capabilities and independence. Thus, one of my worries is that my own country has been spreading a trivialized notion of democracy which I do not consider a sustainable foundation for future democracies.

This past year I taught a junior-level course for political science majors. On the first day of the course, I asked the students how many of them had read any of the above-mentioned books. I asked them what kinds of voluntary associations they belonged to and a variety of other questions about their political activities. I also asked them how they would approach solving a variety of public policy questions. Unfortunately, few of them were participating in any voluntary groups and almost all of them identified national

political offices as the first place they would approach in an effort to cope more effectively with a local school problem and with a local environmental problem. None of them had much idea at all about American state and local government and how one could approach solving these problems without writing to their national representatives.

By the end of my course they did have another view as we took on together a research project studying the NGOs in the region which were active in regard to environmental questions. And we did find a large number of such groups that were active and doing some very good and interesting work. So I was reassured that we did have many citizens in Indiana who were organized to deal with a variety of environmental questions and that my students now had a much richer view of democratic life.

Another of my worries is that political scientists no longer consider it an important part of our responsibilities to teach civic education. As a recent president of the APSA, I established a Civic Education Task Force as a way of stimulating considerable thought about these problems. Some of my fellow political scientists criticized the effort and challenged the legitimacy of teaching civic education in high school or college. Fortunately, it is officially one of the goals of the APSA, so I was on firm ground and the Task Force has been successful in stimulating a lot of interest. The experience, however, left me concerned that the professionalization of political science has led to a lack of concern about the sustenance of the very system that allows us to have a vigorous and independent higher education system in the US.

I hope I have not sounded too pessimistic here – but I would rather sound a warning note that if we are not vigilant about these problems, we can lose democratic systems very easily. We have to avoid slipping into a naive sense that democracy – once established – will continue on its own momentum.

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