

PART THREE. INFLUENCING PUBLIC POLICY

Chapter 12. Processes of Governmental Decision-Making

We voters in the United States elect 497,155 public officials. In that manner we provide our basic consent for them to govern. But that doesn't end the consent process. We continue to interact with them throughout their terms in office, and also with persons whom they appoint to policy-making positions. If we are to be effective in this relationship, we need to thoroughly understand how governmental decisions are made and who makes them.

In a strictly legal sense legislative bodies and executive officials make final decisions on public-policies: Congress, state legislatures, county, city and township councils enacting statutes and ordinances, adopting budgets, making appropriations, levying taxes; the president, governors, county executives, mayors, township commissioners making decisions on a host of executive matters.

In practice, however, almost always these formal decisions are the end product of processes involving a variety of persons inside and outside government and extending through weeks, months, and sometimes years. Rarely does an elective chief executive act without consulting others, though he or she may sometimes make decisions contrary to advice received or in face of certain opposition. Legislative decisions are always a group process even though some legislators have more power and influence than others.

In this kind of pluralistic decision-making, interpersonal relationships loom large. In particular, three sets of relationships are important.

The first set occurs among persons holding governmental positions: executive, legislative, and judicial. Within the executive branch elected officials interact with those whom they appoint in formulating policy. Legislators interact with one another as bills move through the legislative process. The judicial appeal process brings layers of courts into relationship, and judges in multi-member appellate courts deal with one another in make their decisions. Executive officials and legislators continuously interact. And judges deal with governmental executives and legislators in certain legal cases.

A second set consists of relationships between public officials and citizens, who are frequently organized into interest groups engaged in public policy advocacy. Varied manifestations occur: public officials providing information, citizens offering views and comments, direct and grassroots lobbying, public hearings, advisory committees, other participation processes, media campaigns, and protest demonstrations.

A third set involves relationships among individual citizens and interest groups. Citizens get together to formulate their views and work out strategies for dealing with government. Groups come together in coalitions. Interest groups with opposing views compete in their efforts to influence governmental policies.

Indeed, relationships hold the key to understanding democracy (really, any form of government). To be sure, constitutions, statutes, and operating procedures provide the framework. The organizational structure of government identifies officials in policy-making positions and charts their formal ranking. But the key variable is ever-changing relationships among influential persons within and outside government.

These are dynamic relationships. Many of the processes follow a predictable sequence. Some of them observe a regular calendar schedule. Accordingly, the time dimension is a constant factor in governmental decision-making.

To be influential, citizens therefore need to understand the decision-making processes, who the real decision-makers are, and how citizens can best relate to them and get involved in governmental decision-making. It is through this kind of interaction that consent of the governed achieves its continuity.

In this chapter we take an overview of several major processes, and in the next chapter we consider more carefully who the decision-makers are. Subsequent chapters examine decision-making processes in greater detail and the sets of relationships that occur around them.

Types of Decisions

Decisions by public officials can be divided into two categories. The first are basic policy decisions on laws, regulations, spending priorities, design of projects, and program operations. The second are day-to-day actions implementing broader decisions. The first involve governmental officials and also influential citizens and organizational representatives while the second are ordinarily handled by administrative personnel within government. Citizen advocates tend to be more concerned with the first than the second, though they want day-to-day decisions made fairly and expeditiously.

Here are some examples of the second category of routine decisions. A police officer in a patrol car, seeing a driver run a light and at the same time noticing a holdup in progress, goes after the robber. The health department receives a complaint that a restaurant is filthy and sends out an inspector as soon as possible. A school teacher notes that a pupil is repeatedly absent and calls his parents. The public works department hears the weather report that heavy snow is expected and dispatches snowplows.

The welfare office interviews a destitute person, determines that she is eligible for assistance, and writes a check. A coast guard crew observes a heavy-laden fishing boat, boards it, and discovers a large supply of illegal drugs. The U.S. Department of Education routinely sends checks to school districts according to an entitlement formula. And on and on as government personnel go about their duties in implementation of statutes and departmental policy. These are matters left to management personnel and service providers to carry out on their own.

In contrast to these actions that occur instantaneously or in short order, major public policy decisions usually take considerable time to accomplish. They generally occur in defined stages with an expected sequence and sometimes through a published schedule. Actors involved at different stages may vary, though one person or agency usually has continuity of involvement. In chapter 1 we saw the broad outlines of this multi-stage approach. Here we can examine it in greater detail.

Enacting Legislation

Enactment of laws by local, state, and national legislative bodies occurs through a regular sequence of events. Although the process usually doesn't have a precise time schedule, the necessary steps may consume three to nine months except in emergency situation.

Most city and county councils have only one chamber, that is, they are unicameral. So is the Nebraska legislature. In simplified terms the legislative process for a typical city is as follows:

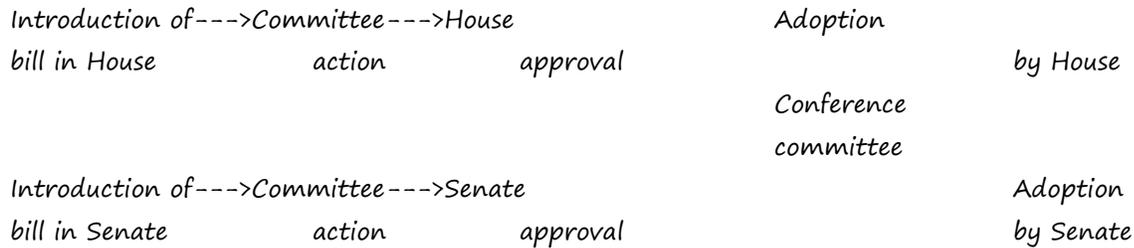
Introduction---->Committee----->Committee----->Adoption----->Approval
of bill hearing action by council by mayor

Obviously city council members are involved in each stage, but other persons are often in the picture. Bill drafting may have input from council staff, executive officials, and interest group representatives. City department representatives and citizen witnesses appear at public hearings. Relationships among council members is the key ingredient in committee consideration and floor action, but the mayor, department heads, interest group lobbyists, and ordinary citizens make their views known.

After the bill comes out of committee, citizens lobby council members to pass, reject, or modify it. The mayor may seek changes and may even threaten a veto if the bill is not amended in a certain way. As these outside influences press in on them, council members bargain with one another, sometimes looking back to past promises, sometimes looking ahead to matters that will come up later. Thus, past, present, and future enter into passage of particular legislation.

In the U.S. Congress and the 49 bicameral state legislatures the process is more than twice as

complicated because a bill has to go through these steps in each chamber (most commonly called the House of Representatives and the Senate), next to a conference committee drawn from the two bodies, and back to each house for passage. In simplified form the process is like this:

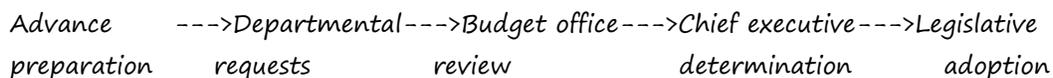


In Congress and many state legislatures subcommittees generally hold the hearings and "mark up" the bill before it goes to the full committee, which can make further amendments. Bills in the U.S. House of Representatives go to the Rules Committee, which schedules their consideration by the whole body.

Enactment of legislation in these bicameral bodies encompasses relationships with the chief executive, department heads, interest groups, and individual citizens, just as unicameral bodies do, but added are relationships between members of the two bodies.

Budget-Making

The annual budget of a governmental unit is one of its most important policy documents because it determines priorities for public spending and indicates sources of revenue. The legislative body enacts the budget, but before the budget enters the legislative process, it has additional stages of preparation within the executive branch. The typical pattern is as follows:



During the preparatory period governmental agencies begin considering what they want to request, and the budget office prepares instructions to guide agency submissions. Agency requests are based upon these guidelines, though sometimes they go beyond what the budget office suggests and agency heads may appeal to the chief executive. The budget office reviews agency requests, makes adjustments (conferring with the chief executive on important issues), and puts together the total budget with expenditures related to anticipated revenues.

The chief executive gets more and more into the process as it goes along, makes major policy decisions on spending priorities and proposed revenue measures, and then formally transmits the

of departmental preparation. As an exception to the general pattern, a few cities have a much fuller process for citizen participation in budget-making, beginning in the earliest stage, as we'll review in chapter 20.

Project Planning

Another process common in governmental decision making is the development and adoption of plans for geographic areas (neighborhood, city, region) and particular projects (new school, recreational facility, highway). Planning follows a regular sequence but usually isn't bound to a calendar schedule. Major phases include:

Study -----> Consider -----> Draw up -----> Approve -----> Implementation
problem alternatives project project

Usually public agencies, such as school boards, recreation departments, public works departments, and transportation agencies, conduct ongoing research on the need for the agency's services. For example, their staff studies trends in school enrollment, emerging recreational needs, volume of refuse, and traffic volume in various locations. This forms the basis for need determination and problem identification. Agency staff then goes about working out solutions, formulating program changes, picking sites for new facilities, and designing them. The product of this planning may first surface publicly in the annual budget, in a revision of the transportation plan, or in an announcement of a new facility. The school board, city or county council, and state legislature then hold hearings on the proposals.

This may be the first opportunity for public input unless the agency has established advisory committees, held public meetings, or used other methods to achieve citizen participation in the early stages of planning. Many public agencies do some of these things, but others strictly limit the amount of citizen participation they allow.

Program Implementation

Once major policy decisions are made and administrators are figuring out how best to implement them, a shorter sequence occurs. For example, in northern cities where numerous potholes appear in streets during the winter the public works department has an appropriation for repairs. It is up to the public works director to decide priorities, such as major streets first, secondary streets next, minor streets last; or certain neighborhoods ahead of others. The decision-making process is as follows:

Study -----> Determine -----> Implementation
problem priorities

This same process applies to many other governmental activities. For many of them citizens are quite willing for administrators to determine priorities for use of appropriated funds within the framework of policies adopted by the legislative body or the chief executive. But sometimes they aren't.

For instance, in one city the citywide federation of neighborhood councils was greatly concerned about the pothole situation. After considerable discussion the federation vote to recommend to the public works director that the neighborhood with the most potholes receive first attention, and so. The public works director accepted this as a reasonable approach.

In this case citizens were involved at a stage when decisions were under active consideration. They had an organization that enabled them to work out their own priorities. They knew who the official decision-maker was and had access. They were able to influence an aspect of public policy. This may seem a trivial example, but it illustrates a manner of citizen influence that has broader application.

And so we see that governmental decision-making consists of processes taking place over time. Citizens who want to influence these decisions must be aware of these processes, the sequences they follow, the best moments to achieve meaningful input, and who the key decision-makers are at each stage.

There are many ways for early citizen involvement to occur. Such as: Advocacy organizations conferring with legislators and their staffs in drafting bills. Citizens offering their ideas to departmental officials as the departments begin to prepare their budget requests. Neighborhood residents involved in defining problems during the initial stage of neighborhood planning. We'll consider these approaches in greater depth in later chapters.

Key Questions

In anticipation of such discussion, here is a checklist for citizens to analyze governmental decision-making:

- *What is the process followed by governmental officials?*
- *Who is involved, officially and unofficially?*
- *How can one's interests be represented among these decision-makers?*
- *At what stages do citizens have easy access?*

- *When do citizens have to be assertive to be heard?*
- *What is the best way to gain access in these circumstances?*

Timing is crucial. One can be too early -- advocating a specific position before official decision-makers are thinking about the issue; or too late -- recommending a particular action after concrete decisions have been made. More often citizens are too late than too early.

Conceptually consent of the governed in American is a continuous, interactive process. In practicality it occurs in specific situations at definite times and is accomplished by particular persons. To be effectively involved, citizens must know who, when, and how. With this knowledge they are in a position to interact with public officials in a timely manner. They can even gain representation within the ranks of decision-makers.

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committee

Introduction of bill in Senate ---> Committee action ---> Senate approval ---> Adoption by Senate

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Advance preparation ---> Departmental requests ---> Budget office review ---> Chief executive determination ---> Legislative adoption

During the preparatory period governmental agencies begin considering what they want to request, and the budget office prepares instructions to guide agency submissions. Agency requests are based upon these guidelines, though sometimes they go beyond what the budget office suggests and agency heads may appeal to the chief executive. The budget office reviews agency requests,

each function.

In appropriation of funds each house of Congress has appropriations subcommittees dealing with each function. They make the first determination, followed by review and possibly amendments by the full appropriations committees. The committees report separate appropriations bills rather than a single, all-encompassing appropriations for the entire government. Next comes floor action where amendments are possible, reconciliation of differences between the two houses by a conference committee, final passage by the entire Congress, and approval by the president. If the president vetoes an appropriations bill, Congress may override by a two-thirds majority in each house, but if unsuccessful, Congress must modify the bill to satisfy the president.

The federal budgetary process takes about 15 months from the start of departmental preparation to appropriations of funds by Congress and approval by the president. State budgetary processes aren't quite as complex but are likely to take nine to twelve months from start to finish.

In most governmental jurisdictions in the United States, budget-making is primarily an internal operation until the complete budget is published upon submission to the legislative body. Even so, some interest groups seek to influence agency requests on particular items during the stage of departmental preparation. As an exception to the general pattern, a few cities have a much fuller process for citizen participation in budget-making, beginning in the earliest stage, as we'll review in chapter 20.

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December 28, 1992

Chapter 13. Governing Coalitions¹

In a formal sense governmental policy in the United States is determined by almost a half million popularly elected officials. They possess legal authority to make decisions for particular governmental units: national, state, county, municipal, township, school board, special district.

That seems like a lot of people. But at the same time 185 million Americans age 18 and older are *not* officeholders. We are the citizens who give our consent to public officials whom we elect to govern.

These officials gain our initial consent through election. They then appoint agency heads and other administrative officials to take on policy-making responsibilities. Some of them require legislative confirmation, and citizens can make their voices heard at confirmation hearings. The consent process then continues as citizens interact with both elected and appointed officials in the decision-making processes of government. Citizens -- some more than others -- constantly exercise their influence on these decisions. In this manner many persons both inside and outside of government join elected officials in determining public policy.

Citizens who want to participate more fully in this ongoing consent process need clear understanding about who the real decision makers are and how they go about making decisions.

EXPERIENCE WITH CITIZEN ASSOCIATIONS

Although most of us don't have first hand experience as an elected public official, we have had direct experience in democratic decision-making in organizations we belong to: neighborhood associations, churches, synagogues, civic groups, service clubs, lodges, and many others. Some of these organizations have staff, others are solely volunteer. We can build on our experience in them to obtain better comprehension of the public decision-making process.

If we examine the dynamics of these organizations, we notice a division of labor and a differentiation of roles, influence, and power. A few persons, such as elected officers and committee chairs, initiate policy which the governing board or attendees at membership meetings review and approve.

The president of the association and other officers have leadership across the board, and so

¹ Portions of this chapter are based upon my previous writing on this subject in *The Organization and Operation of Neighborhood Councils* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977), pp.126-8.

does the staff director if there is one. But on most issues these officers will not have the intensity of interest that committee members have on matters within their jurisdiction. So while every association member, everyone on the governing board has equal voting rights, some members have greater influence on particular concerns. To the extent that committee chairs and officers control the agenda and maximize their influence on decisions, they have greater power.

In these associations some persons are leaders, others are followers. A person may be a leader on one issue and a follower in other matters. Officers are chosen by the members and may have power to appoint committee chairs, so there is democratic accountability. At the same time there may be other persons on the governing board or in the association at large who hold no office but who have influence because of their wisdom, social stature, financial contributions, or leadership of a minority faction.

Thus, an association may have both formally elected and appointed leaders and informal leaders within it. Although an organization chart may show a neat hierarchy of officers and committees, policy determination is most frequently guided by a leadership coalition rather than a single commander with unchecked power.

Members have formal control of policies through decisions made by voting at business meetings with the majority prevailing. But long before the matter comes to a vote there is a lot of talk and often negotiations. Talk occurs not only in the formal setting of committee meetings and the business session of the whole body but also informally among leaders and advocates of particular positions. Most often an effort is made to achieve a consensus rather than force a vote on every jot and tittle.

To reach consensus advocates of different viewpoints make compromises, especially if they are interested in moving ahead. Formal votes are reserved for major issues where division is apparent and no ready mutual accommodation is in the offing. On the whole bargaining is the most common mode rather than showdown votes, although the latter may generate the greatest emotion and receive the most attention. Thus, there is much more to decision-making in democratic organizations than the final vote on issues.

GOVERNING COALITIONS

The kind of leadership coalition we observe in citizen associations also occurs in the decision-making processes of government. Rather than a command hierarchy suggested by typical charts of governmental organization, it is more accurate to say that governments in American democracy are directed by governing coalitions.

"Governing" describes the function. "Coalition" describes an alliance between persons possessing power and influence, not all holding governmental positions. It indicates that power is

pluralistic but acknowledges that the governing group is limited in numbers.

In Local Government

The governing coalition in municipal government will almost always include the elected officials -- mayor and members of city council -- and also the appointed city manager, if there is one. In county government, likewise: elected county executive, county commissioners or members of county council, and appointed county administrator. Similarly for township governments.

In addition, a governing coalition of local government is likely to include some of the following, though not necessarily all at the same time: administrators heading public agencies; leaders of the victorious political party; representatives of business and labor; leaders of ethnic, racial, and religious groups active in public affairs; leaders of other organized interests, such as social welfare organizations, vociferous issue groups, and strong neighborhood associations. Except for the elected chief executive, each member of the governing coalition represents a minority. Even the chief executive is limited in speaking for the people as whole, for his or her political base is likely to consist of a collection of minorities that together provided an electoral majority.

Within a governing coalition some will have more power than others, and the respective degree of influence will vary from one issue to the next. Moreover, the balance of power will be in a constant state of flux. If one person or group isn't exercising its full potential of influence, then another person or group is likely to claim more than its proper share. But if this second group goes too far, the first group, or a third or fourth group will begin to resist. Thus, a governing coalition is quite dynamic.

Around each cluster of decisions there is probably a subcoalition. One subcoalition might deal with housing, another with highways, a third with tax policies, and fourth with employment programs, and so on. Some subcoalitions are basically tripartite, consisting of administrators, legislators, and representatives of advocacy organizations. Memberships in subcoalitions may overlap but are never identical.

Leaders who are in several subcoalitions have different weights in each depending upon the strength of influence and depth of feelings of the group they represent. The mayor or county executive usually has a role in most of the subcoalitions. This makes the overall structure what political scientist Robert Dahl has called an executive-centered coalition.²

A governing coalition is no monolith. Internal decision-making is characterized by continual bargaining. Participants are constantly negotiating, trading support, building and reinforcing

² Robert Dahl, *Who Governs?* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961.

alliances. For the most part this isn't a formal process conducted around a table as in bargaining during labor-management negotiations, although some of this occurs in meetings of legislative committees and advisory boards. Rather it is informal, subtle, and sometimes quite elusive.

Although ultimately formal decisions are made by elected officials -- the chief executive and the local council -- they will usually take into account the views and strengths of others in the coalition, and even those outside the coalition in the opposition. Even a mayor or county executive who is reputed to be the local political boss lacks total command authority, for he or she has to constantly touch base with leaders outside of government and sometimes has to bargain with his or her own appointees.

Ultimately decisions retain their democratic character because they require formal action by elected officials, who were democratically selected for this role and can be replaced at the next election. Moreover, sometimes advocacy organizations not represented within the governing coalition can mobilize public support to overturn an informal decision of the governing coalition when it comes to vote at the city or county council. They might be assisted by council members who, though elected, are not included in the governing coalition. So broad-based democracy can prevail.

Even though an outsider may believe there is an unbreakable solidarity that excludes any new participant, an effective governing coalition will admit new individuals and representatives of groups which are showing increased strength and have enough in common with the coalition to be a useful working partner. Participants in governing coalitions who become out of phase with the objectives of the coalition or who lose their supporters will be eased out, or simply ignored.

Advocacy organizations will often find that it's better to be represented inside a governing coalition or a subcoalition than remaining entirely on the outside. Insiders talk with one another, bargain, and work out compromises that later emerge in policy proposals and legislation offered for formal adoption. Having a voice in such proceedings can be valuable -- if it's real and not merely manipulated for appearance sake. If the latter is the case, an advocacy organization may be better off to remain outside and mobilize its supporters to pressure legislators and executive officials who have legal authority to make the final decision.

Some governing coalitions will try to preserve the status quo while others will initiate change. In either case the coalition, as a leadership group, will be committed to objectives that aren't necessarily shared by the entire citizenry. Nevertheless, the key leaders of the coalition will claim that their policies represent a broad community consensus. Often this is the case, but not always.

In State and National Governments

The same kind of governing coalitions function in state governments and in the national

government, though they are more complex and subcoalitions are more diversified. The governor and leading state legislators, the president and leading members of Congress play central roles but seldom have unrestricted dominance. They have to bargain among themselves, with their own appointees, with career administrators, with political party leaders, with interest group representatives, and with other persons who have influence because of campaign contributions, moral stature, or ability to mold public opinion through the media.

Local elected officials, staff from their statewide organizations, and local party officials may be participants in the state's governing coalition. Representatives of local government, governors, state legislators, and state political parties may participate in the national governing coalition and subcoalitions dealing with concerns of local and state governments. Business and labor representatives and other kinds of advocacy organizations try to get into the inner workings of subcoalitions handling their interests.

Take virtually any subject that national and state governments deal with -- foreign policy, defense, international trade, transportation, housing, health, welfare, education, environment, natural resources, and dozens more --and you will find a coalition working out policies during the various stages of decision-making. Persons with official positions -- president, governor, chairs of authorizing committees and appropriation subcommittees on that subject -- will have the most power and influence, but their authority is contained by the bargaining that is an inevitable part of the political process.

Relation to Representative Democracy

This arrangement is widespread in American democracy. It fits within the framework of representative government because elected officials are principal participants and retain ultimate decision-making authority. Most persons from outside government who are involved in governing coalitions represent various interests. This achieves a kind of representative participation that is part of the consent-giving process.

Even so, we should ask of any governing coalition: Do all groups and viewpoints have equal access to gaining representation within the governing coalition? Often the answer is: No, they don't.

If the answer is negative, remedies are threefold. First, elected officials, who are supposed to take a holistic view of the common good, have an obligation to achieve very broad participation in public decision making. This includes truly representative consultation during the policy formulation process.

Second, advocacy organizations can examine the decision-making process, learn its stages, determine who is influential at each stage, seek to make an impact, and maybe gain representation

in the inner workings of governing coalitions. For them it is important to know both who makes decisions and how the decision-making process works.

Third, where segments of the population aren't well enough organized to participate effectively in the dynamics of governmental decision-making, strenuous efforts are needed to help them organize. To this need we now turn.

January 7, 1993

Chapter 13. Governing Coalitions¹

In a formal sense governmental policy in the United States is determined by almost a half million popularly elected officials. They possess legal authority to make decisions for particular governmental units: national, state, county, municipal, township, school board, special district.

That seems like a lot of people. But at the same time 185 million Americans age 18 and older are *not* officeholders. We are the citizens who give our consent to public officials whom we elect to govern.

These officials gain our initial consent through election. They then appoint agency heads and other administrative officials to take on policy-making responsibilities. Some of these approaches require legislative confirmation, and citizens can make their voices heard at confirmation hearings. The consent process then continues as citizens interact with both elected and appointed officials in the decision-making processes of government. Citizens -- some more than others -- constantly exercise their influence on these decisions. In this manner many persons both inside and outside of government join elected officials in determining public policy.

Citizens who want to participate more fully in this ongoing consent process need clear understanding about who the real decision makers are and how they go about making decisions.

EXPERIENCE WITH CITIZEN ASSOCIATIONS

Although most of us don't have first hand experience as an elected public official, we have had

¹ Portions of this chapter are based upon my previous writing on this subject in *The Organi-*

direct experience in democratic decision-making in organizations we belong to: neighborhood associations, churches, synagogues, civic groups, service clubs, lodges, labor unions, trade associations, and many others. Some of these organizations have staff, others are solely volunteer. We can build on our experience in them to obtain better comprehension of the public decision-making process.

If we examine the dynamics of these organizations, we notice a division of labor and a differentiation of roles, influence, and power. A few persons, such as elected officers and committee chairs, initiate policy which the governing board or attendees at membership meetings review and approve.

The president of the association and other officers have leadership across the board, and so does the staff director if there is one. But on most issues these officers will not have the intensity of interest that committee members have on matters within their jurisdiction. So while every association member, everyone on the governing board has equal voting rights, some members have greater influence on particular concerns. To the extent that committee chairs and officers control the agenda and maximize their influence on decisions, they have greater power.

In these associations some persons are leaders, others are followers. A person may be a leader on one issue and a follower in other matters. Officers are chosen by the members and may have power to appoint committee chairs, so there is democratic accountability. At the same time there may be other persons on the governing board or in the association at large who hold no office but who have influence because of their wisdom, social stature, financial contributions, or leadership of a

tion and Operation of Neighborhood Councils (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977), pp.126-8.

minority faction.

Thus, an association may have both formally elected and appointed leaders and informal leaders within it. Although an organization chart may show a neat hierarchy of officers and committees, policy determination is most frequently guided by a leadership coalition rather than a single leader with unchecked power.

Members have formal control of policies through decisions made by voting at business meetings with the majority prevailing. But long before the matter comes to a vote there is a lot of talk and often negotiations. Talk occurs not only in the formal setting of committee meetings and the business session of the whole body but also informally among leaders and advocates of particular positions. Most often an effort is made to achieve a consensus rather than force a vote on every jot and tittle.

To reach consensus advocates of different viewpoints make compromises, especially if they are interested in moving ahead. Formal votes are reserved for major issues where division is apparent and no ready mutual accommodation is in the offing. On the whole bargaining is the most common mode rather than showdown votes, although the latter may generate the greatest emotion and receive the most attention. Thus, there is much more to decision-making in democratic organizations than the final vote on issues.

GOVERNING COALITIONS

The kind of leadership coalition we observe in citizen associations also occurs in the decision-making processes of government. Rather than a command hierarchy suggested by typical

charts of governmental organization, it is more accurate to say that governments in American democracy are directed by governing coalitions.

"Governing" describes the function. "Coalition" describes an alliance between persons possessing power and influence, not all holding governmental positions. It indicates that power is pluralistic but acknowledges that the governing group is limited in numbers.

In Local Government

The governing coalition in municipal government will almost always include the elected officials -- mayor and members of city council -- and also the appointed city manager, if there is one. In county government, likewise: elected county executive, county commissioners or members of county council, and appointed county administrator. Similarly for township governments.

In addition, a governing coalition of local government is likely to include some of the following, though not necessarily all at the same time: administrators heading public agencies; leaders of the victorious political party; representatives of business and labor; leaders of ethnic, racial, and religious groups active in public affairs; leaders of other organized interests, such as social welfare organizations, vociferous issue groups, and strong neighborhood associations. Except for the elected chief executive, each member of the governing coalition represents a minority. Even the chief executive is limited in speaking for the people as whole, for his or her political base is likely to consist of a collection of minorities that together provided an electoral majority.

Within a governing coalition some will have more power than others, and the respective degree of influence will vary from one issue to the next. Moreover, the balance of power will be in a

constant state of flux. If one person or group isn't exercising its full potential of influence, then another person or group is likely to claim more than its proper share. But if this second group goes too far, the first group, or a third or fourth group will begin to resist. Thus, a governing coalition is quite dynamic.

Around each cluster of decisions there is probably a subcoalition. One subcoalition might deal with housing, another with highways, a third with tax policies, and fourth with employment programs, and so on. Some subcoalitions are basically tripartite, consisting of administrators, legislators, and representatives of advocacy organizations. Memberships in subcoalitions may overlap but are never identical.

Leaders who are in several subcoalitions have different weights in each depending upon the strength of influence and depth of feelings of the group they represent. The mayor or county executive usually has a role in most of the subcoalitions. This makes the overall structure what political scientist Robert Dahl has called an executive-centered coalition.²

A governing coalition is no monolith. Internal decision-making is characterized by continual bargaining. Participants are constantly negotiating, trading support, building and reinforcing alliances. For the most part this isn't a formal process conducted around a table as in bargaining during labor-management negotiations, although some of this occurs in meetings of legislative committees and advisory boards. Rather it is informal, subtle, and sometimes quite elusive.

Although ultimately formal decision are made by elected officials -- the chief executive and the

² Robert Dahl, *Who Governs?* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961.

local council -- they will usually take into account the views and strengths of others in the coalition, and even those outside the coalition in the opposition. Even a mayor or county executive who is reputed to be the local political boss lacks total command authority, for he or she has to constantly touch base with leaders outside of government and sometimes has to bargain with his or her own appointees.

Ultimately decisions retain their democratic character because they require formal action by elected officials, who were democratically selected for this role and can be replaced at the next election. Moreover, sometimes advocacy organizations not represented within the governing coalition can mobilize public support to overturn an informal decision of the governing coalition when it comes to vote at the city or county council. They might be assisted by council members who, though elected, are not included in the governing coalition. So broad-based democracy can prevail.

Even though an outsider may believe there is an unbreakable solidarity that excludes any new participant, an effective governing coalition will admit new individuals and representatives of groups which are showing increased strength and have enough in common with the coalition to be a useful working partner. Participants in governing coalitions who become out of phase with the objectives of the coalition or who lose their supporters will be eased out, or simply ignored.

Advocacy organizations will often find that it's better to be represented inside a governing coalition or a subcoalition than remaining entirely on the outside. Insiders talk with one another, bargain, and work out compromises that later emerge in policy proposals and legislation offered for formal adoption. Having a voice in such proceedings can be valuable -- if it's real and not merely

manipulated for appearance sake. If the latter is the case, an advocacy organization may be better off to remain outside and mobilize its supporters to pressure legislators and executive officials who have legal authority to make the final decision.

Some governing coalitions will try to preserve the status quo while others will initiate change. In either case the coalition, as a leadership group, will be committed to objectives that aren't necessarily shared by the entire citizenry. Nevertheless, the key leaders of the coalition will claim that their policies represent a broad community consensus. Often this is the case, but not always.

In State and National Governments

The same kind of governing coalitions function in state governments and in the national government, though they are more complex and subcoalitions are more diversified. The governor and leading state legislators, the president and leading members of Congress play central roles but seldom have unrestricted dominance. They have to bargain among themselves, with their own appointees, with career administrators, with political party leaders, with interest group representatives, and with other persons who have influence because of campaign contributions, moral stature, or ability to mold public opinion through the media.³

Local elected officials, staff from their statewide organizations, and local party officials may be participants in the state's governing coalition. Representatives of local government, governors, state

³ A superb exposition of how coalitions functioned in Washington during the Reagan years is offered by Hedrick Smith in *The Power Game: How Washington Works* (New York: Random House, 1988; paperback by Ballantine Books, 1989), especially chapter 13, "The Coalition Game: The Heart of Governing".

legislators, and state political parties may participate in the national governing coalition and subcoalitions dealing with concerns of local and state governments. Business and labor representatives and other kinds of advocacy organizations try to get into the inner workings of subcoalitions handling their interests.

Take virtually any subject that national and state governments deal with -- foreign policy, defense, international trade, transportation, housing, health, welfare, education, environment, natural resources, and dozens more --and you will find a coalition working out policies during the various stages of decision-making. Persons with official positions -- president, governor, chairs of authorizing committees and appropriation subcommittees on that subject -- will have the most power and influence, but their authority is contained by the bargaining that is an inevitable part of the political process.

Relation to Representative Democracy

This arrangement is widespread in American democracy. It fits within the framework of representative government because elected officials are principal participants and retain ultimate decision-making authority. Most persons from outside government who are involved in governing coalitions represent various interests. This achieves a kind of representative participation that is part of the consent-giving process.

Even so, we should ask of any governing coalition: Do all groups and viewpoints have equal access to gaining representation within the governing coalition? Often the answer is: No, they don't.

If the answer is negative, remedies are threefold. First, elected officials, who are supposed to take a holistic view of the common good, have an obligation to achieve very broad participation in public decision making. This includes truly representative consultation during the policy formulation process.

Second, advocacy organizations can examine the decision-making process, learn its stages, determine who is influential at each stage, seek to make an impact, and maybe gain representation in the inner workings of governing coalitions. For them it is important to know both who makes decisions and how the decision-making process works.

Third, where segments of the population aren't well enough organized to participate effectively in the dynamics of governmental decision-making, strenuous efforts are needed to help them organize. To this need we now turn.

May 27, 1993

Chapter 14. Organizing for Citizen Advocacy

Governmental decisions in the United States, as we noted in the two previous chapters, are often significantly influenced by persons beyond the formal governmental structure. Some of these influential persons act individually. Some hold leadership positions in political parties. Others represent interest groups.

Interest Groups

Formation of interest groups is natural and inevitable in a democracy. Virtually everyone of us relates to one or more of them (often many). We form interest groups out of recognition that we share particular concerns with other persons. We realize that we can assert greater influence in the public policy arena by joining with others of similar persuasion.

Many interest groups consist of persons sharing common economic self-interest: farmers, commercial growers, industrial workers, manufacturers, retailers, consumers, importers, utilities, various professions, and many more. Other interest groups are organized around particular issues: civil rights, public education, health care, environment, campaign finance, disarmament, and many other causes. Some focus on ideology, such as socialism, capitalism, populism, liberalism, conservatism, and libertarianism, occasionally taking the form of a political party but usually more interested in promoting their ideas than expecting to gain political office.

Organizations established for other purposes, such as churches, synagogues, social clubs, colleges and universities, hospitals and social service agencies, on occasion seek to influence governmental policy, thereby acting as interest groups in the public arena. Associations of local governmental officials function as interest groups in dealing with state government, and they are joined by associations of state officials in addressing the national government on a wide variety of policy issues.

Even governmental employees organize as interest groups to influence policies of the governmental unit for which they work; for instance, employee unions, associations of teachers, and racial, ethnic, and women's caucuses.

To be sure, the framers of the U.S. Constitution were nervous about interest groups, which they referred to as "factions". Indeed in the 10th *Federalist* essay, James Madison claimed that the division of power among the federal executive, legislative, and judicial branches and the division of authority between the national and state governments had the advantage of protecting against the harmful effects of factions.

Over the years journalists and political reformers have advocated curtailing the supposedly harmful effects of interest groups. And nowadays some editorial writers and some politicians speak disparagingly of "special interests" (at least the ones they don't agree with).

The problem, though, is not interest groups *per se* but rather excesses and imbalance. Interest groups are important instruments of American democracy, functioning parallel with political parties to facilitate greater participation of the governed in continuous, interactive consent-giving processes.

Democracy expects interest groups to form, to articulate their views, and to press for advantage. The down side is that certain interests are disproportionately influential while some interests are scarcely heard in the tumult of policy debate and are rarely represented in the quiet, inner-workings of governing coalitions.

The remedy is not to prohibit interest groups from functioning, not to deny their access to public officials. Rather the challenge is to help the unrepresented to organize and get involved and to strengthen those organizations that counterbalance the most powerful interests.

An important function of democratic government is to achieve an effective balance among competing interests, to assure that no one group gains an unfair advantage, and especially to see that the interests of the weakest are not overlooked. Democracy also insists that all interest groups should constantly keep the common good in sight, not insist selfishly on always having one's way totally, and be willing to work out equitable compromises beneficial to the entire community, the entire nation.

Grassroots Organizing

Moneyed interests know how to organize, how to seek out decision-makers in a timely manner, influence them, and gain representation within governing coalitions. Many cause-oriented organizations also have this knowledge. At the same time there are segments of the population whose voice is seldom or weakly heard in public policy debate. There are also individuals newly activated to work for political reform or some other cause who are uncertain on how best to proceed. For the unorganized a grassroots approach is often the best course to follow.

The beginning point for grassroots organizing is to understand that one's effectiveness in the political arena can be multiplied by joining with others holding similar views. This is not to negate the need for individual expression. But under most circumstances persons sharing common concerns will have greater influence if they work together through some kind of organization.

Some grassroots organizations arise almost spontaneously in response to an immediate threat to the interests of persons coming together. For example, residents alarmed by a plan to develop a tract of land in a manner they deem harmful to their neighborhood. Proprietors of small businesses reacting to a proposal for higher taxes or a new, burdensome regulation. Environmentalists responding to an announcement that a corporation wants to fill in some wetlands for a new factory.

In these circumstances organizing is fairly simple. One person or a few people decide to call a meeting. They find a meeting place, pass the word, and a lot of people show up. With the audience already excited and aware of the issue, discussion can focus on next steps to take and who will do what.

Such advocacy groups, though, often have short lives. Once the issue is resolved -- successfully, unsuccessfully, or through compromise -- the organization's primary reason for existence has dissolved. The organization will cease to exist unless some other cause is identified, or unless a small leadership group wants to keep it going as a base for other kinds of activities.

To establish a more enduring grassroots organization without the jolt provided by an external stimulus, careful preparation is essential. This is true for organizing lower-income persons and others who are left out of existing organizations. It is also the case in organizing to pursue causes that don't involve economic self-interest. In these situations a small core of volunteers might take the initiative, but sometimes paid organizers are used to get things rolling.

In a democracy the ideal for organizers, whether volunteer or paid, indeed for all democratic leadership, is the ancient wisdom of Lao Tzu, the Chinese poet-philosopher, who 2,500 years ago wrote:

A leader is best,
When people barely know that he exists,....

But of a good leader, who talks little,
When his work is done, his aim fulfilled,
They will all say, "We did this ourselves."¹

[In our day we would add "she" and "her".]

Although this isn't the place to offer a full course on grassroots organizing, a few hints on initial organizing may be useful.

Successful organizers have learned that they must spend considerable time talking with lots of people informally and listening carefully. They find out how various persons perceive the issue or

¹ Lao Tzu, *The Way of Life*. Translated by Witter Bynner. New York: Capricorn Books, 1962. pp.34-35. I first came across this passage used in this way in *Community Organization for Citizen Participation in Urban Renewal* by William C. Loring, Jr., Frank L. Sweetser, and Charles F. Ernst (Boston: Massachusetts Department of Commerce, 1957).

cause that is the focus of organizing. They determine the level of interest among potential participants.

By asking around the organizer learns who are considered natural leaders in the community. The organizer seeks them out individually, finds out their perceptions, and encourages them to take the lead in putting together a new organization.

The organizer then facilitates a leadership nucleus coming together and conferring on the possibility of establishing an organization. If they decide in the affirmative, the organizer may offer ideas on how best to proceed.

One option is to have a series of small meetings, leading to a larger gathering. Or the leadership nucleus might call a large meeting in the beginning. In either case a working agenda is useful. The agenda can be fairly informal for small meetings, but larger meetings require more structure to proceed effectively. To enhance democracy the nucleus can propose the agenda and let the audience approve or modify it at the beginning of the session.

At meetings small and large it's important for the leadership nucleus not only to talk but also to listen carefully. At the initial large meeting participants should be encouraged first to offer their views and then to make decisions on how to proceed thereafter. Maybe the leadership nucleus, with possible additions, is designated as an interim steering committee. A by-laws committee might be formed, and possibly a study committee on a particular topic might be established with instructions to report back to the next meeting. Before adjournment the time and place for such a meeting should be set. Democratic procedures should be followed throughout the session.

The next meeting receives committee reports, debates them, and may make decisions on organizational structure and key issues to pursue. Then the new organization starts developing a set of goals, concrete objectives to achieve, overall action strategies, and specific tactics to undertake. This process may take several weeks or months to accomplish, but it is better to move deliberately in developing consensus and building lasting strength than to rush ahead before cohesive bonds are fashioned.

And so it is that persons not now well represented in public decision-making process can become better organized and act as advocates for themselves. There is a solid body of knowledge available providing much greater depth of instruction than these few paragraphs. Several excellent guidebooks on grassroots organizing are listed at the end of this chapter. There are also organizations whose mission is helping people organize advocacy groups. Many of these are private nonprofit organizations, but some city governments have agencies to assist neighborhood organizing. Help for organizing is available for those who seek it.

Coalitions and Networks

In many instances advocacy organizations find that their strength is enhanced by joining in coalition with other organizations. Here, too, careful preparation is crucial.

Several initiators can get together, identify their common concerns, decide what other organizations might want to be involved, make contact with them, and then work out a call for an initial meeting of the new coalition. Such a meeting requires a combination of structure and openness so that the meeting isn't chaotic and without direction but at the same time organizational representatives don't feel that all decisions have already been made by the organizing nucleus.

Coalitions are among the most delicate of organizational species. Participating organizations usually want to retain their own identity, and in many instances they have different perceptions of the issue that brought them together. The challenge is to contain separatist tendencies in order to work out a common agenda that all participants can support. This requires mutual respect, including a willingness to agree to disagree on certain matters without dissolving the coalition.

Unity provides strength. One incentive can be the realization that some other advocacy coalition is already working on the other side of the issue. Unless your side is as well or better organized, you may lose out in the contest to influence public policy.

Individual advocacy organizations and coalitions may find it advantageous to tie into wider networks of similarly-minded people. Sometimes this occurs by forming local chapters of state or national organizations. Sometimes it happens by attending annual statewide meetings or national conferences. There are also information networks, some computer-based, others relying on mail to get out material. There are also systems of telephone alerts on legislative issues. Networking can multiply strength.

Activities

Interest groups are involved in the political process in a variety of ways. Other chapters in this book go into various approaches in detail. Here we summarize possible activities for advocacy organizations.

Lobbying legislative bodies. Legislative bodies -- Congress, state legislatures, county and municipal councils, and school boards -- receive the most attention of interest groups. These are the bodies which enact laws, adopt budgets, appropriate funds, determine tax rates, and make other important policy decisions. Except for some appointed school boards, members are elected by the voters, and at any one time a majority of incumbents are likely to be considering running for reelection.

Successful advocacy organizations pursue a dual inside-outside strategy. They lobby legislators directly at the capitol, county court house, city hall, township building, and school board headquarters (see chapter 15). They also work through grassroots networks (chapter 16).

Interacting with executive officials. Many interest groups also realize that executive officials make important decisions on administrative policies, site selection for public facilities, project design, budget requests, and tax proposals. So they give attention to elected chief executives and their principal appointees. They also penetrate bureaucracies to determine who is doing staff work and formulating proposals on various matters. They take advantage of citizen participation processes by gaining representation on advisory committees and task forces and appearing at administrative hearings. (See chapters 17, 19, 20, and 21).

Electoral involvement. Many interest groups realize that their task of lobbying is easier if the right people (from their viewpoint) are elected to that office. For that reason they get involved in election campaigns. (See chapters 3-8.)

Some interest groups, however, avoid direct involvement in political campaigns because it would be divisive among their members. This is especially true of multi-agenda organizations, such as neighborhood associations and human needs coalitions. But even these groups send questionnaires to all candidates, seeking their stand on particular issues, and sometimes hold nonpartisan candidate forums.

Interest groups that do get involved in elections through endorsements, financial contributions, and recruitment of campaign volunteers often find that this increases their access to the elected officials they have supported. It may not always secure the vote the interest group wants, but it does open doors so that they can make their case directly to the elected official. Access is a very valuable commodity.

Dealing with regulatory agencies. A wide range of public policy issues are determined by regulatory agencies, such as Interstate Commerce Commission, Food and Drug Administration, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Securities and Exchange Commission, federal and state bank regulatory boards, state and local utilities commissions. Supposedly these are nonpartisan, nonpolitical bodies, but because they have considerable discretion, interest groups seek to influence who is appointed to serve on them and what they decide. Interest group representatives appear at public hearings, communicate with top officials, and develop inside contacts to learn what is happening internally and to offer recommendations during policy formulation.

Dealing with judiciary. Likewise judges are expected to be nonpartisan and nonpolitical in considering criminal and civil cases before them and in hearing and deciding upon judicial appeals.

However, because judges are either appointed by elected chief executives or are elected by the voters, some interest groups try to influence the selection process. They also sometimes initiate law suits to enjoin administrative regulations and charge public officials with wrongful action. They file *amicus curiae* ("friend of the court") briefs on pending cases, especially in appellate courts.

Influencing public opinion. Some interest groups realize that they can affect public policy decisions indirectly by influencing public opinion. They pursue this course primarily through the mass media by staging news events, sending out news releases and op-ed pieces, and cultivating reporters, columnists, editorial writers, and television commentators. They encourage grassroots members to write letters-to-the-editor and place their own op-ed pieces. Interest groups also enter intellectual debate on public issues by publishing studies and getting experts to write articles and books reflecting their viewpoint.

Protest. On occasion advocacy organizations picket public officials and hold parades and rallies to attract attention to their grievances and their proposed remedies. Some groups engage in acts of civil disobedience for this purpose. Most often protesters are individuals and groups who cannot otherwise get public officials to pay full attention to their concerns. (See chapter 22.)

In sum, interest groups engage in a wide variety of activities to press their views on governmental decision-makers. They may seek representation within governing coalitions, remain totally outside, or try to combine roles within and outside. For some advocacy organizations, especially those with a broad membership base, their widespread support helps them gain representation in the governing coalition or a subcoalition, and their capacity to mobilize their supporters strengthens the hand of their representatives in the inner workings of government. All of this is further variation of the highly interesting and vital process of attaining the consent of the governed in a continuous manner.

April 8, 1993

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The next meeting receives committee reports, debates them, and may make decisions on organizational structure and key issues to pursue. Then the new organization starts developing a set of goals, concrete objectives to achieve, overall action strategies, and specific tactics to undertake. This process may take several weeks or months to accomplish, but it is better to move deliberately in developing consensus and building lasting strength than to rush ahead before cohesive bonds are fashioned.

And so it is that persons not now well represented in public decision-making process can become better organized and act as advocates for themselves. There is a solid body of knowledge

available providing much greater depth of instruction than these few paragraphs. Several excellent guidebooks on grassroots organizing are listed at the end of this chapter. There are also organizations whose mission is helping people organize advocacy groups. Many of these are private nonprofit organizations, but some city governments have agencies to assist neighborhood organizing. Help for organizing is available for those who seek it.

Coalitions and Networks

In many instances advocacy organizations find that their strength is enhanced by joining in coalition with other organizations. Here, too, careful preparation is crucial.

Several initiators can get together, identify their common concerns, decide what other organizations might want to be involved, make contact with them, and then work out a call for an initial meeting of the new coalition. Such a meeting requires a combination of structure and openness so that the meeting isn't chaotic and without direction but at the same time organizational representatives don't feel that all decisions have already been made by the organizing nucleus.

Coalitions are among the most delicate of organizational species. Participating organizations usually want to retain their own identity, and in many instances they have different perceptions of the issue that brought them together. The challenge is to contain separatist tendencies in order to work out a common agenda that all participants can support. This requires mutual respect, including a willingness to agree to disagree on certain matters without dissolving the coalition.

Unity provides strength. One incentive can be the realization that some other advocacy coalition is already working on the other side of the issue. Unless your side is as well or better

organized, you may lose out in the contest to influence public policy.

Individual advocacy organizations and coalitions may find it advantageous to tie into wider networks of similarly-minded people. Sometimes this occurs by forming local chapters of state or national organizations. Sometimes it happens by attending annual statewide meetings or national conferences. There are also information networks, some computer-based, others relying on mail to get out material. There are also systems of telephone alerts on legislative issues. Networking can multiply strength.

Activities

Interest groups are involved in the political process in a variety of ways. Other chapters in this book go into various approaches in detail. Here we summarize possible activities for advocacy organizations.

Lobbying legislative bodies. Legislative bodies -- Congress, state legislatures, county and municipal councils, and school boards -- receive the most attention of interest groups. These are the bodies which enact laws, adopt budgets, appropriate funds, determine tax rates, and make other important policy decisions. Except for some appointed school boards, members are elected by the voters, and at any one time a majority of incumbents are likely to be considering running for reelection.

Successful advocacy organizations pursue a dual inside-outside strategy. They lobby legislators directly at the capitol, county court house, city hall, township building, and school board headquarters (see chapter 15). They also work through grassroots networks (chapter 16).

Interacting with executive officials. Many interest groups also realize that executive officials make important decisions on administrative policies, site selection for public facilities, project design, budget requests, and tax proposals. So they give attention to elected chief executives and their principal appointees. They also penetrate bureaucracies to determine who is doing staff work and formulating proposals on various matters. They take advantage of citizen participation processes by gaining representation on advisory committees and task forces and appearing at administrative hearings. (See chapters 17, 19, 20, and 21).

Electoral involvement. Many interest groups realize that their task of lobbying is easier if the right people (from their viewpoint) are elected to that office. For that reason they get involved in election campaigns. (See chapters 3-8.)

Some interest groups, however, avoid direct involvement in political campaigns because it would be divisive among their members. This is especially true of multi-agenda organizations, such as neighborhood associations and human needs coalitions. But even these groups send questionnaires to all candidates, seeking their stand on particular issues, and sometimes hold nonpartisan candidate forums.

Interest groups that do get involved in elections through endorsements, financial contributions, and recruitment of campaign volunteers often find that this increases their access to the elected officials they have supported. It may not always secure the vote the interest group wants, but it does open doors so that they can make their case directly to the elected official. Access is a very valuable commodity.

Dealing with regulatory agencies. A wide range of public policy issues are determined by regulatory agencies, such as Interstate Commerce Commission, Food and Drug Administration, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Securities and Exchange Commission, federal and state bank regulatory boards, state and local utilities commissions. Supposedly these are nonpartisan, nonpolitical bodies, but because they have considerable discretion, interest groups seek to influence who is appointed to serve on them and what they decide. Interest group representatives appear at public hearings, communicate with top officials, and develop inside contacts to learn what is happening internally and to offer recommendations during policy formulation.

Dealing with judiciary. Likewise judges are expected to be nonpartisan and nonpolitical in considering criminal and civil cases before them and in hearing and deciding upon judicial appeals. However, because judges are either appointed by elected chief executives or are elected by the voters, some interest groups try to influence the selection process. Sometimes they initiate law suits to enjoin administrative regulations and charge public officials with wrongful action. They file *amicus curiae* ("friend of the court") briefs on pending cases, especially in appellate courts.

Influencing public opinion. Some interest groups realize that they can affect public policy decisions indirectly by influencing public opinion. They pursue this course primarily through the mass media by staging news events, sending out news releases and op-ed pieces, and cultivating reporters, columnists, editorial writers, and television commentators. They encourage grassroots members to write letters-to-the-editor and place their own op-ed pieces. Interest groups also enter intellectual debate on public issues by publishing studies and getting experts to write articles and books reflecting their viewpoint.

Protest. On occasion advocacy organizations picket public officials and hold parades and rallies to attract attention to their grievances and their proposed remedies. Some groups engage in acts of civil disobedience for this purpose. Most often protesters are individuals and groups who cannot otherwise get public officials to pay full attention to their concerns. (See chapter 22.)

In sum, interest groups engage in a wide variety of activities to press their views on governmental decision-makers. They may seek representation within governing coalitions, remain totally outside, or try to combine roles within and outside. For some advocacy organizations, especially those with a broad membership base, their widespread support helps them gain representation in the governing coalition or a subcoalition, and their capacity to mobilize their supporters strengthens the hand of their representatives in the inner workings of government. All of this is further variation of the highly interesting and vital process of attaining the consent of the governed in a continuous manner.

May 27, 1993

Chapter 15. Lobbying at Capitol, Courthouse, and City Hall

In order to influence public policy, numerous citizens and interest groups lobby legislators, elected executives, and appointed administrators. The term comes from the tactic of intercepting legislators in the lobby outside the legislative chamber, but the practice occurs in many other locations: in legislative and executive offices, in restaurants and hotel meeting rooms, at community meetings, on the street, and in any other place where public officials are found. Lobbyists press their views face-to-face, by telephone, telegram, fax, and indirectly through the news media.

Although some persons view lobbying as a nefarious occupation, it is a quite legitimate practice in a democracy. It is part of the continuous interactive processes that achieves the consent of the governed.

There are, however, two concerns. The first is where lobbyists corrupt public officials through bribes, personal favors, and illegal campaign contributions. The second is where significant groups within the citizenry are unrepresented in public advocacy. The first concern can be handled by public officials maintaining high ethical standards and can be contained through laws and regulations, properly enforced. The second concern can be met by helping the unrepresented to become better organized and to engage in lobbying in their own behalf.

Individuals and interest groups who want to become more active lobbyists should realize that lobbying occurs in two domains, inside and outside. Inside lobbying occurs in Washington, D.C., in state capitals, at county courthouses and city halls. It consists of direct contacts between lobbyists and legislators, legislative staff, and officials of the executive branch. Outside lobbying takes place within the home districts of legislators and among the constituencies of various elected officials. Work in both domains is essential and must be interconnected to be most effective.

LEGISLATIVE LOBBYING

Based upon experience of successful lobbyists, some key axioms can provide guidance to individuals and groups who want to start lobbying members of Congress, state legislatures, county and municipal councils.

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- *Some legislators have more power and influence than others, based upon leadership positions they hold, their knowledge of particular subjects, and their commitment to specific issues. Committee chairs are usually quite powerful, and often subcommittee chairs are very influential. A legislator may be a dominating force on certain matters but a follower on other issues.*
- *The leadership structure of most legislative bodies in the United States is based upon majority and minority party affiliation. There is variation in the dominance of the top legislative leader: speaker of the house, senate majority leader, city and county council president. Some hold tight reins while others have only loose control. The top leader and committee chairs may form a cohesive oligarchy, but sometimes leadership is quite fractured.*
- *Beyond the formal committee and party structure, many legislative bodies have caucuses and informal groupings reflecting a variety of interests: African American, Latino, women, urban, rural, and many more. Some of these cut across party lines.*
- *Although voting in committee and on the floor is the formal mode of decision-making, informal bargaining, compromise, and consensus-seeking are strong factors. Personal relationships (both good and bad) between individual legislators and among legislative blocs are often determinative.*
- *Legislative staff is commonplace, both for individual members and committees. Often top staff members are quite influential in drafting legislation, writing committee reports, and participating with other staff in fashioning compromises. Nonetheless, legislators themselves retain final decision-making authority.*

Effective lobbyists understand both the formal organization and procedures of the legislative bodies they deal with and also the informal network of relationships that determine how decisions are made. They comprehend the decision-making process and know who key decision-makers are at different stages. They look for legislators who will take the lead on their issues, both publicly and in the inner workings. They are well acquainted with legislators' personal staff and committee staff who are influential in getting legislation through the maze.

Successful lobbyists realize that good timing is essential for achieving legislative success. This can be shown by working through both the electoral and legislative calendars and indicating when and how lobbyists exert their influence.

Before Session Begins

Experienced lobbyists understand that their work begins long before the legislative session opens. It starts during the election campaign and continues after the election. Interest groups contact candidates through grassroots affiliates in candidates' home districts and also through lobbyists based in state capitals and Washington, D.C., especially for incumbents running for reelection.

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Lobbyists know that incumbents who want to be reelected (usually a majority of them) position themselves for the next election campaign by the votes they cast during the current session of the legislative body. Interest groups with a broad membership base keep track of legislative votes and inform their members, a practice that legislators are aware of. Through their political action committees (PACs) interest groups make *campaign contributions* well in advance of the election, and this strengthens their lobbying efforts.

Some, but not all, advocacy organizations become openly involved in the *nominating process*, which occurs through party conventions, primary elections, or a combination. They circulate questionnaires to candidates, offer position papers, and sometimes hold candidates forums. They may even endorse particular candidates, make campaign contributions, and build support among their members.

Many advocacy organizations become even more heavily involved during the *general election campaign*. Things done during the nominating process, described above, are repeated and intensified, or may be undertaken for the first time. An advocacy organization may decide to make specific endorsements or instead may prefer to press its views on all candidates and circulate information on policy positions of candidates to its members, who will make their own choices. (For more on the electoral process, see chapters 3-4, 6-7.)

Organizations which support winning candidates are then in a strong position to lobby them after they take office. But if an organization's candidate loses, the winner may be less accessible. For that reason many advocacy groups are cautious about making political endorsements. This is especially the case for broad-based organizations whose members agree on particular issues but are divided in their political party affiliation.

In the *post-election period* lobbyists get in touch with the winners, both reelected incumbents and newcomers. They offer proposals for the upcoming legislative session and provide background

position papers. They get acquainted with newly appointed staff. Lobbying coalitions meet to plot their legislative strategy, share their knowledge of newcomers, develop briefing material, and organize joint visits to new legislators.

Legislative Calendar

Lobbying intensifies when the legislative body goes into session. Lobbyists know every step of the way as bills are drafted and become law. They gear their tactics to the different phases of the legislative calendar. This can be understood by reviewing the process typical for the U.S. Congress and state legislatures. The process of city and county councils may not be quite so complicated but is likely to have most of the same steps.

The way legislation is framed during the *bill-drafting stage* is influential, for it offers the focus for public hearings and committee discussion and provides the framework for amendments. A variety of authors draft bills: legislators themselves, their personal staff, legislative committee staffs, a bill-drafting office of the legislative body, staff of the executive elected chief executive, operating departments, and interest groups. In many instances a bill is a product of an "iron triangle" relationship of legislative committee staff, departmental staff, and an interest group or coalition.

Economic interest groups especially give attention to bill-drafting because a word here, a clause there can be determinative of future regulation, lack of regulation, of economic gain or loss. Organizations of state and local officials get involved at least in formulating concepts of congressional legislation affecting their jurisdictions. Cause-oriented organizations with a sizable lobbying and research staff also get involved on their matters of concern. During the drafting stage these various lobbyists pay attention to both executive officials and legislators and themselves become the third side of the "iron triangle."

Introduction of a bill may be done by a single legislator or a number of sponsors. The latter is especially the case for major legislation. Lobbyists may help to line up cosponsors, sometimes at the request of the initial sponsor, so that the bill will show support from a broad cross-section of legislators. Advocacy organizations may even urge their grassroots members to contact their legislators, asking them to cosponsor particular legislation.

For bicameral bodies lobbyists work both houses during all stages of legislative process. Often similar bills will be introduced in each house, and sometimes even identical bills. This may come about through cooperation between representatives and senators, but frequently lobbyists play a role in orchestrating this cooperation. Where the two houses have different views on particular issues, lobbyists try to get a bill more favorable to their interest introduced in one house to offset a weaker bill under consideration in the other house.

Many bills are introduced but only a fraction become law, perhaps only one out of ten. Thus,

a legislator may show a response to interest group pressure by introducing a bill, knowing that it has no chance of final passage. At the same time lobbyists realize that some bills have a much greater chance than others. They focus their attention on building support for or against legislation that is most likely to clear committee and come up for consideration on the floor of the legislative body.

The U.S. Congress, state legislatures, and most city and county councils function through committees and subcommittees. Committees hold hearings on bills, make amendments, approve or disapprove bills, and report the ones approved to the whole body for consideration. Because of the crucial role of committees, skilled lobbyists want their bills introduced and handled by a member of the committee with jurisdiction, preferably by the committee chair, a subcommittee chair, or some other high-ranking member of the majority party.

In conducting *public hearings* committees and subcommittees tend to concentrate on major legislation that has a strong chance for enactment in some form. They will almost always hold a hearing on bills pushed by the executive branch. Sometimes a loud public clamor forces them to conduct hearings on controversial legislation that they would like to block.

In Congress most hearings are held by subcommittees rather than the full committee. Subcommittees pick their own witnesses and almost never hold hearings to listen to anyone who shows up (though some field hearings tend in this direction). Favored witnesses are executive branch officials, credentialed experts, and representatives of powerful interest groups. Citizen organizations, even those with a broad, grassroots membership are less frequently represented at congressional hearings.

Subcommittee chairs usually select the primary witnesses, but the ranking minority member often is afforded an opportunity to propose witnesses. Other committee members can also make suggestions. This means that subcommittee majority and minority staff are crucial actors in developing lists of potential witnesses, so lobbyists offer suggestions to them. They also work through other subcommittee members, who can propose witnesses to the chair.

State legislatures function in a similar fashion in calling witnesses to testify and holding public hearings, though many of them make less use of subcommittees. City and county councils likewise hold public hearings structured to hear from their chief executive, department heads, experts, and citizens. Local councils are more likely to hear from all who want to speak than are state legislatures.

Citizens who have an opportunity to testify at a legislative hearing can prepare a written statement that will become part of the hearing record, but at the hearing they can be most effective by speaking directly to committee members, maintaining eye-to-eye contact, without reading their statement. They can offer illustrations from their personal experience and address what they know

to be concerns of key committee members. If a committee member asks a question that the witness cannot fully answer, the witness can offer to provide further information later for inclusion in the hearing record.

Beyond suggesting witnesses, lobbyists often write questions that committee members can ask at a hearing. They give them to staff of friendly members on the committee. Such questions can be addressed to the chief executive's representative and to expert witnesses, including those of an opposite viewpoint from the lobbyist.

After hearings on a bill are completed, the legislative committee or subcommittee meets to "mark up" the bill (as they say in Congress), that is, to rewrite it as deemed appropriate. These days legislative committees tend to have open meetings that the public can attend, though in some legislative bodies the work occurs out of sight in executive sessions. It is a crucial moment in the life of a bill, for amendments on the one hand can yield compromises that broaden the support for the legislation or on the other hand can water down the legislation or even change its purpose.

Accordingly lobbyists devote a lot of attention to the mark-up process. If the meeting is open, they appear early to get a front row seat. They talk with friendly legislators and their staffs during breaks in the proceedings. They may suggest language which the legislator can offer when the committee reconvenes. They may also provide data for the legislator to use in committee discussion. As appropriate, lobbyists also mobilize grassroots pressure on particular committee members on crucial issues under consideration by the committee.

When a committee completes its work on a bill, it reports the bill for consideration on the floor of the legislative body. The timing for bringing up the legislation is usually determined by the legislative leadership: speaker of the house, majority leader of the senate, a policy committee of the majority party, or by the Rules Committee in the case of the U.S. House of Representatives. Sometimes leaders of the minority party negotiate on the timing. Therefore, lobbyists get in touch with the leadership to press for floor action, or to delay consideration.

In anticipation of floor action on a bill, the sponsoring legislators and committee leaders line up support among their colleagues. Legislators in opposition seek out other legislators to vote against the bill or to support amendments that would dilute the bill's intent. Lobbyists join in this endeavor. They make their own contacts with legislators, share their information with the bill's sponsor, and work closely with the sponsor to put pressure on uncommitted legislators. On major legislation many lobbyists send out legislative alerts to their grassroots networks so that legislators will receive lots of mail and phone calls from the folks back home.

The day or days the bill is up for consideration on the floor, lobbyists will sit in the gallery and patrol the lobby outside the chamber to shore up support (or opposition) and to try to persuade the

still-uncommitted. When amendments are offered, they will pass the word on whether they support or oppose it.

In bicameral legislatures this process is repeated in the second house. Then the bill goes to a conference committee composed of members of the two houses. For the lobbyist it is similar to the mark-up session: finding out what compromises are being considered, offering support or opposition, suggesting alternative language. However, the process usually goes so fast and has so many nuances that it is difficult to muster grassroots pressure on the conferees.

The wording of the bill that the conference committee agrees on goes back to the two houses for approval or rejection but not further amendments. Although conference reports are almost always accepted, sometimes lobbyists press for disapproval with the hope that the legislation will die or that the bill will go back to conference for further change.

The bill as enacted goes to the chief executive for approval or veto. If his or her position on the legislation is unclear or possibly in opposition, lobbyists will urge him or her to sign or veto the act and may encourage grassroots contacts to send a similar message to the chief executive. Even earlier in the legislative process, lobbyists may urge the chief executive to threaten a veto unless particular changes are made in committee, on the floor, or in conference committee.

In sum, an effective lobbyist follows legislation through every single stage of the legislative process. Lacking a direct voice or a vote, the lobbyist is totally dependent upon what legislators do. This puts a premium upon personal relationships, both with members and with legislative staff, established through physical presence and a steady acquaintance. Although seldom does a lobbyist change the vote of a legislator who has announced her or his position on a bill, successful lobbyists exercise quiet influence and friendly persuasion at many points along the way.

EXECUTIVE LOBBYING

Numerous interest groups also devote considerable attention to lobbying decision-makers within the executive branch: the elected chief executive, department heads, bureau chiefs, boards and commissions. As in legislative lobbying, personal relationship is a key factor but points of influence are different.

There are similarities during the electoral process as persons interested in running for mayor, county executive, governor, and president position themselves, seek the nomination, and campaign for election. Interest groups contact positioners and candidates, try to influence their stands on policy issues, support or oppose them in the primary and general elections, make campaign contributions. They also use an elected chief executive's desire to be reelected as a leverage for influencing his or her positions on current issues.

When a newcomer wins election, interest groups begin immediately to exert their influence during the *transition period*. They suggest persons to be appointed to top positions and make known their opposition to certain persons who others have suggested. They quickly seek to establish a relationship with new appointees. They expand upon policy papers they offered during the election campaign.

As a means of getting policy commitments, interest groups offer ideas, and sometimes precise wording, for the chief executive's *annual address* on the state of the union, state, county, or city. This they do by working through the executive's staff or friendly people in various departments.

Lobbyists work with their contacts in administrative agencies in the development of *legislative proposals*. They also try to influence *budget requests*.

After legislation is enacted and signed, lobbyists follow closely the writing of *administrative regulations*. They try to get a look at draft regulations, offer their comments, and suggest alternative language. Where possible they line up insiders within the departments to advance their cause and provide inside information.

Interest groups and their lobbyists try to affect executive decisions on *discretionary spending* and *law enforcement policies*. Wherever else the chief executive and administrative agencies are making decisions, interest groups seek to exert their influence if it affects them.

Citizens who are concerned about government policies and whose voices aren't heard on the inside in Washington, at state capitals, in county courthouses, and city hall would be well advised to make a connection with some kind of lobbying operation or to organize their own. Governmental decision-making is a continuous process. Accordingly, citizen involvement must also be continuous if citizens are to have their presence felt inside the decision-making arena.

At the same time citizens are in an excellent position to exercise their influence from the outside through grassroots lobbying, a subject to which we now turn.

May 27, 1993

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In Congress most hearings are held by subcommittees rather than the full committee. Subcommittees pick their own witnesses and almost never hold hearings to listen to anyone who shows up (though some field hearings tend in this direction). Favored witnesses are executive branch officials, credentialed experts, and representatives of powerful interest groups. Citizen organizations, even those with a broad, grassroots membership are less frequently represented at congressional hearings.

Subcommittee chairs usually select the primary witnesses, but the ranking minority member often is afforded an opportunity to propose witnesses. Other committee members can also make suggestions. This means that subcommittee majority and minority staff are crucial actors in developing lists of potential witnesses, so lobbyists offer suggestions to them. They also work through other subcommittee members, who can propose witnesses to the chair.

State legislatures function in a similar fashion in calling witnesses to testify and holding public hearings, though many of them make less use of subcommittees. City and county councils likewise hold public hearings structured to hear from their chief executive, department heads, experts, and citizens. Local councils are more likely to hear from all who want to speak than are state

legislatures.

Citizens who have an opportunity to testify at a legislative hearing can prepare a written statement that will become part of the hearing record, but at the hearing they can be most effective by speaking directly to committee members, maintaining eye-to-eye contact, without reading their statement. They can offer illustrations from their personal experience and address what they know to be concerns of key committee members. If a committee member asks a question that the witness cannot fully answer, the witness can offer to provide further information later for inclusion in the hearing record.

Beyond suggesting witnesses, lobbyists often write questions that committee members can ask at a hearing. They give them to staff of friendly members on the committee. Such questions can be addressed to the chief executive's representative and to expert witnesses, including those of an opposite viewpoint from the lobbyist.

After hearings on a bill are completed, the legislative committee or subcommittee meets to "mark up" the bill (as they say in Congress), that is, to rewrite it as deemed appropriate. These days legislative committees tend to have open meetings that the public can attend, though in some legislative bodies the work occurs out of sight in executive sessions. It is a crucial moment in the life of a bill, for amendments on the one hand can yield compromises that broaden the support for the legislation or on the other hand can water down the legislation or even change its purpose.

Accordingly lobbyists devote a lot of attention to the mark-up process. If the meeting is open, they appear early to get a front row seat. They talk with friendly legislators and their staffs

during breaks in the proceedings. They may suggest language which the legislator can offer when the committee reconvenes. They may also provide data for the legislator to use in committee discussion. As appropriate, lobbyists also mobilize grassroots pressure on particular committee members on crucial issues under consideration by the committee.

When a committee completes its work on a bill, it reports the bill for consideration on the floor of the legislative body. The timing for bringing up the legislation is usually determined by the legislative leadership: speaker of the house, majority leader of the senate, a policy committee of the majority party, or by the Rules Committee in the case of the U.S. House of Representatives. Sometimes leaders of the minority party negotiate on the timing. Therefore, lobbyists get in touch with the leadership to press for floor action, or to delay consideration.

In anticipation of floor action on a bill, the sponsoring legislators and committee leaders line up support among their colleagues. Legislators in opposition seek out other legislators to vote against the bill or to support amendments that would dilute the bill's intent. Lobbyists join in this endeavor.

They make their own contacts with legislators, share their information with the bill's sponsor, and work closely with the sponsor to put pressure on uncommitted legislators. On major legislation many lobbyists send out legislative alerts to their grassroots networks so that legislators will receive lots of mail and phone calls from the folks back home.

The day or days the bill is up for consideration on the floor, lobbyists will sit in the gallery and patrol the lobby outside the chamber to shore up support (or opposition) and to try to persuade the still-uncommitted. When amendments are offered, they will pass the word on whether they

support or oppose it.

In bicameral legislatures this process is repeated in the second house. Then the bill goes to a conference committee composed of members of the two houses. For the lobbyist it is similar to the mark-up session: finding out what compromises are being considered, offering support or opposition, suggesting alternative language. However, the process usually goes so fast and has so many nuances that it is difficult to muster grassroots pressure on the conferees.

The wording of the bill that the conference committee agrees on goes back to the two houses for approval or rejection but not further amendments. Although conference reports are almost always accepted, sometimes lobbyists press for disapproval with the hope that the legislation will die or that the bill will go back to conference for further change.

The bill as enacted goes to the chief executive for approval or veto. If his or her position on the legislation is unclear or possibly in opposition, lobbyists will urge him or her to sign or veto the act and may encourage grassroots contacts to send a similar message to the chief executive. Even earlier in the legislative process, lobbyists may urge the chief executive to threaten a veto unless particular changes are made in committee, on the floor, or in conference committee.

In sum, an effective lobbyist follows legislation through every single stage of the legislative process. Lacking a direct voice or a vote, the lobbyist is totally dependent upon what legislators do. This puts a premium upon personal relationships, both with members and with legislative staff, established through physical presence and a steady acquaintance. Although seldom does a lobbyist change the vote of a legislator who has announced her or his position on a bill, successful lobbyists

exercises quiet influence and friendly persuasion at many points along the way.

EXECUTIVE LOBBYING

Numerous interest groups also devote considerable attention to lobbying decision-makers within the executive branch: the elected chief executive, department heads, bureau chiefs, boards and commissions. As in legislative lobbying, personal relationship is a key factor but points of influence are different.

There are similarities during the electoral process as persons interested in running for mayor, county executive, governor, and president position themselves, seek the nomination, and campaign for election. Interest groups contact positioners and candidates, try to influence their stands on policy issues, support or oppose them in the primary and general elections, make campaign contributions. They also use an elected chief executive's desire to be reelected as a leverage for influencing his or her positions on current issues.

When a newcomer wins election, interest groups begin immediately to exert their influence during the transition period. They suggest persons to be appointed to top positions and make known their opposition to certain persons who others have suggested. They quickly seek to establish a relationship with new appointees. They expand upon policy papers they offered during the election campaign.

As a means of getting policy commitments, interest groups offer ideas, and sometimes precise wording, for the chief executive's annual address on the state of the union, state, county, or city. This they do by working through the executive's staff or friendly people in various departments.

Lobbyists work with their contacts in administrative agencies in the development of legislative proposals. They also try to influence budget requests.

After legislation is enacted and signed, lobbyists follow closely the writing of administrative regulations. They try to get a look at draft regulations, offer their comments, and suggest alternative language. Where possible they line up insiders within the departments to advance their cause and provide inside information.

Interest groups and their lobbyists try to affect executive decisions on discretionary spending and law enforcement policies. Wherever else the chief executive and administrative agencies are making decisions, interest groups seek to exert their influence if it affects them.

Citizens who are concerned about government policies and whose voices aren't heard on the inside in Washington, at state capitals, in county courthouses, and city hall would be well advised to make a connection with some kind of lobbying operation or to organize their own. Governmental decision-making is a continuous process. Accordingly, citizen involvement must also be continuous if citizens are to have their presence felt inside the decision-making arena.

At the same time citizens are in an excellent position to exercise their influence from the outside through grassroots lobbying, a subject to which we now turn.

May 27, 1993

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Every individual living in the United States is free to communicate her or his opinions to the president of the United States, members of Congress, governors, state legislators, mayors, city council members, county commissioners, county executives, county council members, township officials, school board members, and all other elected officials, and also to appointed governmental officials, too.

We citizens let these public officials know what we think about current issues. If we disagree with their vote on a legislative matter or their executive decision, we tell them. If we like what they've done, we express our approval (not as often as we should). We ask them to help us in our dealings with the bureaucracy. Sometimes we request their assistance on other matters of our personal interests.

In doing so, the active citizen can choose from a variety of methods for reaching public officials. Citizens can:

- **Write letters to legislators and executive officials.** This is most effective if it is spontaneous rather than part of a campaign of an advocacy group with a canned message. Being human, public officials respond more readily to courteous letters, even those opposing their viewpoint, than to vituperative missives. Many legislators read all of their constituent mail. Virtually all of them look over staff tabulations of calls and letters in order to notice trends of opinion.
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- **Talk to elected chief executives and department heads when they appear at community meetings.**
- **Be alert to appearances of public officials on radio and TV talk shows. Call in your questions and comments.**

In making these contacts good timing is indispensable. To be effective you need to reach legislators on a particular issue before they vote on it. You should communicate with the chief executive and department heads before specific policy decisions are finalized. The major steps of several decision-making processes are laid out in chapter 12. Legislative process is reviewed in depth in chapter 15 and reviewed again in this chapter. Local budget-making is considered in chapter 20.

Public officials expect to receive communications from their constituents. Some are more responsive than others. If they are too unresponsive, we have an opportunity to replace them at the next election.

ACTIVITIES OF GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS

A significant amount of grassroots lobbying occurs through local citizen organizations. Many of them are purposefully organized in the manner discussed in chapter 14. Other organizations spring up rather spontaneously through initiative of one person or a few individuals.

Thus, some local residents discover that they have a common concern which has a legislative remedy or that they oppose some measure under consideration by the state legislature, Congress, or

city council. They pool their resources, especially their time, and get friends and neighbors to support their position. In other instances, persons belonging to an existing organization -- such as a church, service club, a local trade group -- get that organization to take a position on a particular issue. They then get other members to write their representative. These actions are an extension of the things individuals can do, as presented above.

In contrast to impromptu initiatives, some local organizations develop a legislative agenda every year. They discuss it before the legislative session begins, talk with their representative before she or he goes off to the capital, and follow the legislation they are interested in throughout the session. They write letters, get others to write, and keep in touch with their representative by phone and when she or he is in town. They might even send a delegation to the capital at a crucial moment.

If a local organization is a chapter of a national organization, it is likely to add the national agenda to its own priorities of concern. Conversely, many national organizations look to their local units as a major resource for grassroots lobbying. They might even spend more money on printed material, postage, and phone calls to mobilize grassroots action than they do in direct lobbying in Washington and the state capitals. National and state offices mail out legislative alerts throughout the legislative session. They also operate computer networks for this purpose and send out faxes for faster communication than U.S. mail. They call for letters and phone calls on specific matters, and they let local persons know about legislative recesses when representative are likely to be in their home districts.

Offices in Washington organize their mailing lists by congressional districts and the offices at the state capital maintain their lists by legislative districts. In this manner they can send out special alerts to selected districts with legislators they want particularly to influence. They organize "phone trees" so that the state or national office can call a few main contacts, who call others, who in turn call others in spreading branches of telephone contacts.

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Because the president, governors, mayors, county executives, their department heads, and various boards and commissions make numerous public policy decisions, grassroots advocates seek to influence them. They give attention to proposed laws and programs that the chief executive and departments intend to submit to the legislative branch. They deal with the writing of administrative regulations and their application as they affect their interests. They suggest persons for appointive positions in government. They may try to influence decisions on contracts and other benefits of government.

TIMING

Like many other aspects of the consent process, the calendar is an essential tool for grassroots lobbying.

Electoral Involvement

A grassroots organization concerned about public policy may want to get involved in the electoral process, at least in a nonpartisan manner. This can start as early as the positioning period and continue through the election campaign. Grassroots involvement might be initiated locally and carried out independently, or it might be part of a broader effort orchestrated by an interest group based in Washington or the state capital.

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If the favored candidate of an advocacy group wins, it is in an excellent position to confer with the newly elected official and to have close contact after he or she takes office. But if the candidate loses, the organization has to find ways to establish contact with the winner and to exert pressure without a close personal relationship.

In contrast, a nonpartisan organization is able to deal with any winner and can seek an appointment during the transition period before the legislative body convenes or the elected executive takes office. This gives advocates an opportunity to lay out their expectations and establish relationships that will last throughout the winner's term in office.

In the case of incumbents running for reelection, grassroots organizations can openly track a legislator's voting record or a chief executive's major decisions and can share this information with its members. Public officials, cognizant that this is occurring, may be more likely to take the organization's views into consideration in legislative votes and executive decisions.

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In addition to tying into existing consultative arrangements, grassroots organizations can be assertive (in a friendly manner) with elected chief executives and operating agencies. They can form study committees, develop recommendations, send delegations, and when appropriate, get members to make phone calls and write letters.

The interactive nature of the consent process functions in two directions. As important as it is for public officials to reach out to the citizenry, it is equally important for citizens to initiate contact with elected and appointed officials of their governments. This makes grassroots lobbying an indispensable tool of democracy.

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The interactive nature of the consent process functions in two directions. As important as it

is for public officials to reach out to the citizenry, it is equally important for citizens to initiate contact with elected and appointed officials of their governments. This makes grassroots lobbying an indispensable tool of democracy.

May 27, 1993

Chapter 17. Gaining Information, Offering Views

Effective citizen participation in governmental decision-making must be based upon free and open communication between citizens and public officials. This requires, first, the availability of adequate and timely information for the citizenry and, second, plentiful opportunities for citizens to offer their views and proposals at relevant stages of the decision-making process.

This chapter considers methods public officials use to provide information and receive citizen input from all who are interested in getting involved. Citizens seeking greater involvement can take advantage of these opportunities. Citizens wanting to get public officials in their jurisdictions to be more open to citizen participation can draw upon the illustrations in pushing for greater accessibility.

ADEQUATE INFORMATION

Knowledge is power. The most knowledgeable persons -- public officials and citizen advocates alike -- have an advantage when decisions are made. Therefore, we should insist that all information pertinent to pending policy decisions be fully available to all citizens who want to know.

Dissemination Methods

To whom and how should information be made available? There is a range of answers.

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State and local governments by law are often required to print *legal notices* on certain matters in newspapers of general distribution. However, these notices usually appear in fine print in the classified section and are read by scarcely anyone except lawyers. To announce proposed major undertakings, such as new highways, community development projects, and other large capital improvement projects, it would be preferable to put *display ads* in the news section.

The national government publishes the *Federal Register* five days a week to announce all proposed and adopted regulations. It indicates when and where comments can be made. In 1992 the *Federal Register* ran to ____ pages [to be completed], so it takes diligence to follow it and ferret out particular kinds of information. Many advocacy organizations in Washington do this, and it can be done by organizations based elsewhere.

Public agencies can go beyond legal requirements for notices by maintaining *mailing lists* of organizations and individuals who request to be kept abreast of particular subjects. For instance, neighborhood and civic associations which want to know about proposed zoning changes; citizen organizations interested in environmental regulations and enterprises affected by such regulations; diverse organizations in the health field which have an interest in policy changes. An agency can take initiative to build its mailing list and also be open to citizen requests to be on the list. Periodic updating can occur to weed out those no longer interested.

Information depositories can be created in public libraries and elsewhere so that concerned citizens have easy access to key reports and other documents. For issues drawing a lot of attention, an agency can establish a *hot line* -- an announced telephone number where trained personnel are available to answer pertinent questions. *Public channels on cable television* offer further opportunities.

Numerous governmental jurisdictions and public agencies follow some or all of these practices. Citizens should stimulate the laggards to do a better job of disseminating relevant information.

At the same time citizens have an obligation to use the information that's publicly available. This can be done by individuals and through committees and associations engaged in dialogue with public officials.

Ferreting Out Information

When public agencies are uncooperative, citizens can turn to the federal *Freedom of Information Act* and state and local counterparts, which require public officials to provide requested information within a reasonable time. If they still refuse, citizens can ask their legislators to help them. Sometimes it may be necessary to go to court to force out the desired information. As last resort, voters can remember the lack of cooperation and openness at the next election.

Citizens can also turn to a potential ally: the *news media*. It's the business of newspapers, news magazines, television, and radio to obtain, publish, and broadcast information of all kinds. By their nature they are usually far ahead of most citizen organizations in the quest for public information and in the search for wrongdoing by public officials. Sometimes, though, they are excessive in their investigation of private lives of public officials and in use of other smear tactics. We shouldn't condone these media excesses, and indeed should condemn them, but we can encourage and make use of legitimate investigative journalism.

Citizens can also initiate their own investigations of suspected mismanagement and malfeasance by public officials. A number of citizen organizations in Washington, in state capitals, and

major cities and county seats perform this function. It's at the adversary end of the spectrum of citizen/ public official relationships but is appropriate when officials are uncooperative.

TIMELY INPUT

Gaining information is the first step for citizens who want to influence public policy. This needs to be followed by timely input. Emphasis should be on *timely*. Because policy-making often occurs in stages, to be effective citizen input at each stage must occur when decisions are still open. It's much easier to influence a public officials who hasn't taken a public position on a specific policy than trying to change her or his announced position.

Advocacy organizations and individual citizens don't have to be asked to express their opinion to public officials. They can and do take the initiative through lobbying techniques, as discussed in previous chapters. They can also take advantage of a variety of arrangements through which public agencies offer all interested citizens an opportunity to make their views known on proposed plans and pending policy decisions. Although only a small minority of citizens may choose to participate in this manner, the opportunity is open to everyone without screening by public officials.

Views and Comments

Numerous public programs of a planning nature publish proposed plans and ask for public comment. For example, city and county master plans, community development projects, construction of schools and recreation facilities, highways and bridges, improvements of rivers and ports, and other kinds of public construction. This provides an opportunity for individuals and advocacy organizations to make their views known.

At best alert citizen organizations can anticipate these requests for comments by keeping track of what public agencies are planning. This they can do by talking informally with agency staff who have responsibility for preparing plans. Citizens can even offer their views on uncompleted plans.

They can also undertake their own studies and work out a consensus on what views they want to express during the formal comment period when it arrives. This period may be only 30 or 60 days. In this short time voluntary organizations may be hard pressed to study the plan and come to agreement on whether to support, oppose, or suggest modification. Anticipation is essential for citizen effectiveness.

Sometimes citizens are invited to provide written comments on proposed plans. On other occasions they can offer testimony at public hearings and participate in community meetings, workshops, and conferences. These events provide opportunities to achieve face-to-face interchange with public officials.

Public Hearings.

Public boards and commissions and staff units of public agencies often use formal hearings as a means of achieving citizen input. When done properly, the hearing body provides public notice sufficiently in advance so that potential witnesses can prepare testimony. The notice should state the purpose of the hearing and indicate where pertinent background documents are available. The hearing should be at a time and place that's convenient for potential witnesses. In localities this might encompass evening and Saturday hearings and be located in neighborhoods particularly affected by the proposed plan.

From a public agency's perspective hearings are valuable as a means of assessing public opinion on proposed plans and administrative policies. They offer agency board members and staff an opportunity to hear a wide range of opinions and to gauge the depth of feelings on the issue at hand. Hearings can also provide new information and expert analysis of pending proposals. Persons on the hearing panel can ask questions and engage in dialogue with witnesses.

Some hearings are open to all comers and stay in session as long as there are witnesses. Other hearings permit only invited witnesses to testify but do allow other interested parties to file written testimony for the record. Many hearings are in the middle between these two extremes.

Where numerous witnesses want to testify, the hearing panel usually allows only brief oral testimony from each witness (say, three to five minutes) and rarely asks questions. After eight to twelve hours panel members are saturated and exhausted. Where oral testimony is restricted to agency representatives and outside technical experts (and this occurs often in congressional hearings), the views of grassroots citizens and even public interest advocacy organizations are rarely heard.

The best hearings achieve a balance between too much and too little by scheduling witnesses who are likely to provide a fair cross-section of perspectives on the issue at hand and to allow sufficient time for panel members to ask questions. Sometimes persons with a range of views are at the witness table at the same time, and the panel benefits from listening to them debate. Afterward panel members can read written testimony submitted by persons who weren't able to testify.

Citizens who want to be effective at public hearings should make careful preparation. They should study the proposal meticulously, get the facts straight, analyze arguments for and against the plan, and perhaps develop a counter proposal. They should select an articulate person to represent them, though not necessarily a professional (for grassroots persons-of-the-people are often the most effective witnesses). They can prepare visual material and offer a written statement to the hearing panel that is longer in length than their oral presentation.

Depending upon the nature of the hearing, a citizen organization might assemble a sizable group of supporters in the hearing room. Then when their witness is testifying, he or she might ask that all who share the organization's point of view to please stand up. But there's a delicate balance between showing broad support and trying to intimidate the panel with a raucous crowd. Hearing officers are human and may react negatively to coercive tactics, thereby harming the cause of the citizen advocates.

As to the hearing panel, attentive listening is essential. If panel members treat the hearing as a pro-forma, it-doesn't-make-any-difference event, its value is lost and witnesses become alienated over the process. If nothing comes of the hearing or the dominant opinion of witnesses is ignored without explanation, citizen cynicism increases.

Sometimes hearings on highly charged issues, such as abortion, racial integration, or location of a highway or public facility considered undesirable (such as prison, sewage treatment plant, landfill, incinerator), produce so much rancor that they are counterproductive. To lessen this danger, adequate explanation of proposed policies should be presented and a broad range of witnesses should be called to testify. The presiding officer should be fair and unbiased but also should insist upon decorum on the part of the audience. Democracy in action can be stormy, but leaders need to insist upon mutual personal respect among persons with opposing viewpoints.

Even better is to achieve a substantial amount of citizen participation long before a project reaches the hearing stage, including methods designed to mediate differences and achieve as broad a consensus as possible. Ideas along these lines are offered in the chapter 19.

Community Meetings

Another way for achieving dialogue between citizens and public officials is through community meetings (sometimes called town meetings). They are less formal than public hearings and generally permit greater two-way interchange.

Often a citizen organization schedules a community meeting and invites legislators and other public officials to attend. This may be a regular meeting of the organization or one called especially for this purpose. Some legislators and elected chief executives organize their own town meetings. Having a citizen organization to serve as the primary sponsor, rather than a public official, is likely to achieve greater openness in dealing with a full panoply of citizen concerns. But this doesn't preclude public officials from taking the lead where citizens are not holding community meetings to meet with government representatives.

Having a good community meeting requires careful preparation. The purpose of the meeting should be clearly stated, and the span of the agenda should be proportional to the anticipated length

of the meeting. If there are to be speeches or panel presentations, speakers should understand how long they may speak. Impromptu speakers from the floor should also have this understanding. Invited public officials should be told in advance how the meeting will proceed and what is expected of them. They might be asked to speak first and then respond to questions. Or citizen presenters might go first and the public official asked to respond to what they have said.

Whatever the order of agenda, emphasis should be upon honest dialogue. To be avoided is mere propaganda by public agencies and malicious haranguing by citizens. Debate can be vigorous without becoming nasty. Democracy depends upon even the staunchest adversaries recognizing that their opponents have worth and dignity as human beings.

Workshops and Conferences

Greater depth for study, education, and dialogue can occur through workshops and conferences. They are generally longer than community meetings and give more people opportunity to express their views.

Workshops can draw in resource persons from citizen organizations, public agencies, colleges, universities, and other institutions as resource persons. However, the sessions should not be dominated by outside experts, for citizens need a chance to ask questions, share information they have, and offer their opinions.

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Conferences can also be used to bring together groups which seem to be in contention with one

another, such as racial and ethnic groups, factions within neighborhood organizations, and advocacy groups of different persuasion (for instance, those with differing approaches to dealing with crime). Workshops at such conferences facilitate two-way education and dialogue. Earnest, face-to-face conversation replaces shouting from a distance. Sometimes bargaining can occur and compromise positions can be worked out. Mutual acceptance of one another and better understanding can develop even if individuals and groups continue to disagree on particular issues.

The various methods that public agencies use to provide adequate information to citizens and seek timely input into governmental decision-making are quite valuable for American democracy. They complement lobbying and other advocacy activities that citizens initiate.

All who seek information and want to offer their input can do so without pre-selection by public officials. This complements processes of in-depth study and planning with designated citizen representatives on advisory committees and task forces (see chapter 17).

Each method of citizen involvement has its proper place. Altogether they facilitate broad, ongoing participation in the consent-giving process.

November 11, 1992

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All who seek information and want to offer their input can do so without pre-selection by public officials. This complements processes of in-depth study and planning with designated citizen representatives on advisory committees and task forces (see chapter 19).

Each method of citizen involvement has its proper place. Altogether they facilitate broad, ongoing participation in the consent-giving process.

May 27, 1993

Chapter 19. Representative Participation

In addition to methods of citizen participation open to all -- hearings, town meetings, interactive television -- public agencies frequently establish arrangements that produce a kind of representative participation. A relative small number of citizens participate intensely. They represent the broader citizenry just as elected members of legislative bodies represent the broader electorate.

In some of these arrangements public officials appoint the citizen representatives, though often in consultation with leaders of citizen organizations. In other cases citizens choose their own representatives, either directly or through citizen organizations. Some arrangements have a combination of public official-appointed and citizen-selected membership.

In this manner the representative basis of government is expanded manifold. For instance, a city may have eleven members on city council but also a dozen citywide advisory committees for major operating departments, each with 15 members appointed by the department head, and 15 neighborhood councils, each with 21 members elected by residents. This brings over 500 citizens into an ongoing advisory relationship with city government.

County governments likewise make use of advisory bodies, though not many have officially recognized neighborhood councils. Advisory bodies are commonplace with state and federal agencies, and governors and the president appoint citizen commissions with specific assignments. Citizen-selected advisory bodies, however, are found less often in state and national government than in local government.

Appointed by Public Officials

City and county departments, state and federal agencies frequently set up advisory bodies in order to engage in dialogue with representatives of varied interests and to seek advice on particular issues. Some of them are permanent, and members are appointed for specified terms. Others are temporary and dissolve as soon as their assignment is completed. Some advisory bodies have full-time staff assigned to assist them while others meet with top officials but receive no staff support.

Most commonly they are called "advisory committees", reflecting that they offer advice but do not make official policy. Some are referred to as "task forces" or "working groups", indicating that they have a short-term assignment, perhaps of a technical nature. Members of such working groups tend to have practical knowledge of the subject matter.

Sometimes an body is designated "commission" with an assignment to grapple with a perplexing public problem or a controversial issue where a public consensus is lacking. Its membership is usually composed of well-known persons who represent major interests. Its recommendations receive considerable publicity while advisory committees and task forces usually function more internally and out of public sight.

From the viewpoint of effective citizen participation, advisory bodies display a wide range. Some are tightly controlled, manipulated by public officials, and serve to rubber stamp what the agency has already determined. Others achieve plentiful give-and-take among the participants and between members and public officials, and they have genuine input into public decisions. Some are constituted with a limited membership drawn from a few special interests or community elite. Others are diverse and broadly representative.

The most important variable producing these differences is the attitude of the agency head, or in some cases the elected chief executive. Many public officials have a sincere commitment to public participation in formulating agency policy and welcome the wisdom that advisory committee members offer. They also understand that members can serve as a buffer for controversial but necessary policy changes and can help build support for legislative approval of agency recommendations. Advisory committee members are willing to play these roles if their participation has been genuine.

In contrast some public officials want wholly captive advisory committees, expected to bless whatever the agency head wants to do without much input or debate. Other officials want none at all, but if circumstances dictate that they have one, they make it a pro forma operation. Voters can remember which is which at the next election.

An agency that wants to make effective use of advisory committees will take great care to achieve broad representation of diverse interests related to the subject of concern, including opposing viewpoints. Committee members will receive background information on issues and proposals prior to meetings. Meetings will be held with sufficient frequency and length to achieve full discussion. Committee recommendations will be forthcoming prior to the agency's decision on the issue at hand.

A second major variable is the attitude of the citizen participants. For an advisory committee to be effective its members must be willing to study the issues and be diligent in attendance. Although members will want to articulate their views forcefully, they also need to listen carefully to other points of view and do their best to seek a consensus that may require compromises by different members. In some circumstances, a minority report may be in order, but as far as possible mutual accommodation is preferred. Bargaining rather than guerrilla warfare should be the mode.

Citizens need to understand that their role is advisory, that final decisions will be made by a

public official or legislative body. An advisory committee isn't a form of citizen control, but it does place citizens within the governing coalition with access to ultimate decision makers. Furthermore, citizens retain their right of advocacy through lobbying and other methods of influence in their life beyond committee membership.

There are, however, some citizen boards that go beyond the advisory role and have full policy-making responsibility. They act as the governing board of an agency that deals with a particular governmental function. This is the case with boards of education, some of them elected, some appointed by an executive official. City and county planning commissions and boards of public health are other examples, and many state governments have commissions as the policy board for operating departments.

These citizen policy boards have a much a larger measure of control than the typical advisory committee, but they are usually under budgetary control of the chief executive and the legislative body. However, some school boards and governing bodies of special district have tax powers. Because of their policy-making authority, these kinds of citizen boards themselves need to employ methods of citizen participation in their affairs. Some of them do in fact make use of advisory committees and public hearings.

Chosen by Citizens

Advisory bodies appointed by public officials provide an indirect kind of representation. Those represented don't get to choose who represents them, though sometimes they are consulted and may even push for certain nominees. The other arrangement is for citizens and citizen organizations to choose their own representatives. This method has become a more common approach during the past thirty years.

The civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s was the major stimulus. As progress was made in voting rights and equal access to public accommodations, civil rights activists turned their attention to how government programs operated and who controlled them. This concern was reflected in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, which required that the Community Action Program achieve "maximum feasible participation of residents of areas and members of groups served." The Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) encouraged that at least one-third of community action agency (CAA) boards consist of representatives of the poor. Congress made this a part of the law in 1966. The following year Congress, reacting to pressure from mayors and county commissioners, added a requirement that at least one-third of CAA boards consist of local governmental officials but retained the requirement for representation for the poor.

Thereafter, citizen participation requirements entered many of President Johnson's Great Society programs. They were retained though somewhat reshaped in President Nixon's New

Federalism. In 1978 the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental identified 155 federal grant programs mandating citizen participation. Of these 89 required boards or committees with public representation, including 24 that gave these bodies some decision-making authority. In many cases program constituents or citizen organizations named their own representatives.¹ The Reagan Administration in its quest for deregulation curtailed many of the citizen participation requirements, but most localities have preserved some form of participation. They understand its value, and furthermore the participants will not allow themselves to be set aside.

Another product of the '60s was the formation of neighborhood corporations to run social services and community development corporations, based in neighborhoods, to develop housing and business enterprises. They were supported by federal funds and foundation grants. Their boards were elected by residents so that there was complete community control within the framework of grant conditions. In this manner they entered the nonprofit sector, separate from government though with substantial inflow of public funds. Most of them are still flourishing in the 1990s, though financial support has ebbed.

In the late '60s parents and other citizens sought greater community control of public schools, especially in subdistricts of large cities. This occurred, however, only in New York and Detroit, and the latter abandoned this approach a decade later. This interest has revived in the '90s, but with sharper focus on individual schools. In some localities parents and neighborhood residents are electing representatives to neighborhood school boards that have some policy-making authority, though seldom budgetary control. For pre-school education Head Start units throughout the nation have advisory committees chosen by the parents.

In the 1970s a number of city governments on their own initiative set up networks of neighborhood councils, elected by residents. Others gave official recognition to existing neighborhood associations which had open membership and direct election of officers. These neighborhood councils and recognized neighborhood associations then took on an advisory relationship with city agencies on matters affecting their neighborhoods. Still flourishing in the 1990s, they receive zoning proposals and public facility plans for comment. They work with the city planning agency in developing neighborhood plans. In some cities they have input into the city budget at an early stage (see chapter 18). Neighborhood councils are a worthy embodiment of grassroots democracy.

Much of the growth of resident-chosen representation has occurred in a decentralization mode: in neighborhoods and individual schools, for instance. From this foundation it has extended outward by allowing neighborhood councils to appoint their own representatives to agency advisory

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committees, or at least to nominate persons for agency appointment. By extension other community organizations have gained a similar opportunity. The advisory committee may remain only an advisory body, but representation comes more directly from citizens and is not restricted solely to selection by public officials.

For governments of broader jurisdictions -- the states and federal agencies -- selection of advisory committee members by citizen organizations is less common. However, it is a practice that should be encouraged.

Staff Units

Many governmental agencies have staff units to facilitate citizen participation. This shows their seriousness about achieving effective citizen participation.

City governments usually have a mayor's office of information and complaints (the precise name varies), and county governments have a counterpart. They relate mainly to service delivery and not to policy formation. Mayors, county executives, and city and county managers are more likely to have a separate staff to assist them in community relations.

Cities with neighborhood councils have a neighborhood liaison office to work with them. Sometimes this unit provides direct staff support to neighborhood councils through field offices. In other cases it gives funds to neighborhood councils so that they can hire their own staff or consultants.

Local public agencies that seek citizen input into project and program planning, such as city planning departments and community development agencies, may assign staff to facilitate this process.

Many state agencies also have staff assigned to working with citizens. Federal agencies likewise, with an interesting evolution.

After a ten-year growth of citizen participation requirements in federal grant programs, President Gerald Ford in April 1975 directed 17 executive departments and agencies to adopt "consumer representation plans" to ensure access and participation in governmental decision-making.

In the summer of 1976 federal personnel handling these plans and grant-in-aid citizen participation requirements formed an Interagency Council on Citizen Participation. The Carter Administration continued and expanded this approach with the White House Office of Consumer Affairs playing a leading role.

In the 1980s, though, the Reagan Administration discontinued the Interagency Council and

cut back on citizen participation in federal grant programs. Federal offices dealing with this matter tended to change their name to "public affairs".

The shifting nomenclature is significant because it reveals attitudes. The Ford and Carter Administration tended to look at citizens as consumers of governmental services. The Reagan Administration was more interested in public affairs, as in "public relations", that is, in selling programs to generate support, not engage in dialogue and achieve an advisory relationship. More recently in the 1992 presidential campaign Ross Perot kept talking about the people as the "owners" of the government. He stressed that government belongs to the people.

None of these terms is as good as plain and simple "citizen". Citizens in a representative democracy are sovereign. They choose who governs, and they play numerous roles in governance, as this book points out. They also have responsibilities to carry out: voting, maintaining ongoing relationships with public officials, and engaging in a variety of independent civic activities that undergird democracy. This dual role of ultimate controller and active participant in civic life characterizes the citizen. This is different than either a consumer or an owner, and widely at variance with an object of public relations.

Challenges

As we have seen, there are numerous ways citizens can interact with public officials. With this access citizens have opportunities to affect policy decisions as they are being formulated and before they are final. But two major challenges remain.

The first challenge is to achieve greater citizen participation in governmental jurisdictions where little is invited by elected and appointed officials.

Generally there is a correlation between size of area served and degree of participation. Small towns gain participation informally. Medium-size cities need more formal arrangements. Larger cities and suburban counties institute various processes and structures for citizen participation, but some do much better than others. State agencies have fewer arrangements, though there is considerable variation among the states. Federal agencies have the least amount of structured citizen involvement, especially following a dozen years of the Reagan and Bush Administrations that put aside gains of the previous 16 years.

It's up to citizens to push the laggards to achieve more openness and greater citizen participation. In addition, elected chief executives, department heads, and legislators can take initiatives to do a more thorough job of involving citizens.

The second challenge is to achieve greater involvement of poor people. Because of economic

mobility many leaders who arose in the '60s and '70s have moved out of the poorest neighborhoods. Cutbacks in funding for neighborhood organizing and services has removed a significant source of leadership recruitment and training. It's not that residents lack leaders with entrepreneurial capacity (note the intricate pattern of youth gangs and drug-selling operations). Rather public service resources have declined so that there are fewer opportunities for natural leaders to display and enhance their skills in public service activities. We need to invest more in developing civic leadership in left-out neighborhoods.

Partly it's a matter of values. We value honesty in government, so we spend considerable funds for financial auditing. We value public safety, so we spend vast sums on law enforcement. If we value democracy as much as we claim, we would be willing to invest much more in the enhancement of grassroots democracy. We would assign more public dollars to neighborhood councils and other methods of citizen participation. It would be a wise investment in the future of American democracy.

November 10, 1992

Chapter 19. Representative Participation

In addition to methods of citizen participation open to all -- hearings, town meetings, interactive television -- public agencies frequently establish arrangements that produce a kind of representative participation. A relative small number of citizens participate intensely. They represent the broader citizenry just as elected members of legislative bodies represent the broader electorate.

In some of these arrangements public officials appoint the citizen representatives, though often in consultation with leaders of citizen organizations. In other cases citizens choose their own representatives, either directly or through citizen organizations. Some arrangements have a combination of public official-appointed and citizen-selected membership.

In this manner the representative basis of government is expanded manifold. For instance, a city may have eleven members on city council but also a dozen citywide advisory committees for major operating departments, each with 15 members appointed by the department head, and 15 neighborhood councils, each with 21 members elected by residents. This brings over 500 citizens into an ongoing advisory relationship with city government.

County governments likewise make use of advisory bodies, though not many have officially recognized neighborhood councils. Advisory bodies are commonplace with state and federal agencies, and governors and the president appoint citizen commissions with specific assignments. Citizen-selected advisory bodies, however, are found less often in state and national government than in local government.

Appointed by Public Officials

City and county departments, state and federal agencies frequently set up advisory bodies in order to engage in dialogue with representatives of varied interests and to seek advice on particular issues. Some of them are permanent, and members are appointed for specified terms. Others are temporary and dissolve as soon as their assignment is completed. Some advisory bodies have full-time staff assigned to assist them while others meet with top officials but receive no staff support.

Most commonly they are called "advisory committees", reflecting that they offer advice but do not make official policy. Some are referred to as "task forces" or "working groups", indicating that they have a short-term assignment, perhaps of a technical nature. Members of such working groups tend to have practical knowledge of the subject matter.

Sometimes an body is designated "commission" with an assignment to grapple with a perplexing public problem or a controversial issue where a public consensus is lacking. Its membership is usually composed of well-known persons who represent major interests. Its recommendations receive considerable publicity while advisory committees and task forces usually function more internally and out of public sight.

From the viewpoint of effective citizen participation, advisory bodies display a wide range. Some are tightly controlled, manipulated by public officials, and serve to rubber stamp what the agency has already determined. Others achieve plentiful give-and-take among the participants and between members and public officials, and they have genuine input into public decisions. Some are

constituted with a limited membership drawn from a few special interests or community elite.

Others are diverse and broadly representative.

The most important variable producing these differences is the attitude of the agency head, or in some cases the elected chief executive. Many public officials have a sincere commitment to public participation in formulating agency policy and welcome the wisdom that advisory committee members offer. They also understand that members can serve as a buffer for controversial but necessary policy changes and can help build support for legislative approval of agency recommendations. Advisory committee members are willing to play these roles if their participation has been genuine.

In contrast some public officials want wholly captive advisory committees, expected to bless whatever the agency head wants to do without much input or debate. Other officials want none at all, but if circumstances dictate that they have one, they make it a pro forma operation. Voters can remember which is which at the next election.

An agency that wants to make effective use of advisory committees will take great care to achieve broad representation of diverse interests related to the subject of concern, including opposing viewpoints. Committee members will receive background information on issues and proposals prior to meetings. Meetings will be held with sufficient frequency and length to achieve full discussion. Committee recommendations will be forthcoming prior to the agency's decision on the issue at hand.

A second major variable is the attitude of the citizen participants. For an advisory committee to be effective its members must be willing to study the issues and be diligent in attendance.

Although members will want to articulate their views forcefully, they also need to listen carefully to other points of view and do their best to seek a consensus that may require compromises by different members. In some circumstances, a minority report may be in order, but as far as possible mutual accommodation is preferred. Bargaining rather than guerrilla warfare should be the mode.

Citizens need to understand that their role is advisory, that final decisions will be made by a public official or legislative body. An advisory committee isn't a form of citizen control, but it does place citizens within the governing coalition with access to ultimate decision makers. Furthermore, citizens retain their right of advocacy through lobbying and other methods of influence exercised beyond committee membership.

There are, however, some citizen boards that go beyond the advisory role and have full policy-making responsibility. They act as the governing board of an agency that deals with a particular governmental function. This is the case with boards of education, some of them elected, some appointed by an executive official. City and county planning commissions and boards of public health are other examples, and many state governments have commissions as the policy board for operating departments.

These policy boards and commissions have a much larger measure of control than the typical advisory committee, but they are usually under budgetary control of the chief executive and the legislative body. However, some school boards and governing bodies of special district have tax powers. Because of their policy-making authority, such boards themselves need to employ methods of citizen participation in their affairs. Some of them do in fact make use of advisory committees

and public hearings.

Chosen by Citizens

Advisory bodies appointed by public officials provide an indirect kind of representation. Those represented don't get to choose who represents them, though sometimes they are consulted and may even push for certain nominees. The other arrangement is for citizens and citizen organizations to choose their own representatives. This method has become a more common approach during the past thirty years.

The civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s was the major stimulus. As progress was made in voting rights and equal access to public accommodations, civil rights activists turned their attention to how government programs operated and who controlled them. This concern was reflected in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, which required that the Community Action Program achieve "maximum feasible participation of residents of areas and members of groups served." The Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) encouraged that at least one-third of community action agency (CAA) boards consist of representatives of the poor. Congress made this a part of the law in 1966. The following year Congress, reacting to pressure from mayors and county commissioners, added a requirement that at least one-third of CAA boards consist of local governmental officials but retained the requirement for representation for the poor.

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service resources have declined so that there are fewer opportunities for natural leaders to display and enhance their skills in public service activities. We need to invest more in developing civic leadership in left-out neighborhoods.

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May 27, 1993

Chapter 20. Continuity of Involvement in Local Decision-Making

Much of what citizens do to influence public policy is episodic. They write letters or make phone calls to express their views on specific issues. They contact public officials to state their grievances, and they ask their elected representatives for help in dealing with government. They attend meetings where officials are speaking, and occasionally they appear at public hearings. In doing these things citizens oftentimes act individually, but sometimes they join with others in advocacy organizations.

The focus of this kind of citizen involvement tends to be issues of the moment, or it relates to decision-making processes at particular points in time. Citizens and advocacy organizations decide for themselves when to get involved, when to offer views and present their own policy proposals. Public officials don't screen who may participate. Open opportunities for this kind of public involvement is essential in a democracy.

But governmental decision making is much more than a collection of episodes. Decisions are made through processes that occur through a series of connected stages, carried out over the course of weeks and months. Actors may differ from one stage to the next, but some public officials are likely to be involved throughout the process to provide coherence and insure continuity.

If citizens are to be involved meaningfully in such processes, they likewise need ways to achieve continuity of participation. This is most likely to happen through some variety of representative participation that can achieve sustained involvement.

There is a considerable body of experience of citizens and public officials working together systematically through successive stages of decision making. It might be a recurring process, such as budget making that occurs annually. It might be a task with regular sequences, such as producing a community plan or designing a public facility. It might consist of taking up a particular problem, analyzing causes, considering possible remedies, and coming to agreement on solutions.

Experience with practices of this sort is most common and strongest in local government, but some state and federal agencies also make use of such processes. To broaden our understanding let us review some approaches related to two endeavors: neighborhood planning and local budget-making. The principles embodied in these examples can have wider application.

Neighborhood Planning

Since the end of World War II most American cities have made concerted efforts to improve

the physical condition of their neighborhoods. To do so, they have produced neighborhood plans calling for one or more kinds of treatment: redevelopment (clearance and rebuilding), renewal (rehabilitating most of the housing stock, selective clearance and new construction, upgrading community facilities), and preservation (maintaining basically sound properties).

Fifty years ago neighborhood planning in most cities was handled by professional planners on the staff of the city planning commission. They demarcated neighborhood boundaries, collected data, defined problems, established goals and objectives, and laid out specific plans. At this stage they published the plan and presented it to neighborhood residents for their consideration. Some cities, however, involved a committee of residents in earlier planning stages. This practice has grown.

In the 1960s advocacy planning emerged in a few locales as an alternative approach. Trained planners helped residents draw up their own plan. The residents then presented it to city government, asserted pressure and bargained to have it adopted. Although such independent planning never became widespread, it showed the value of residents having expert assistance as they participated in neighborhood planning.

In the 1990s a middle-ground approach has become the preferred practice in most cities. A representative committee of residents works with city planners from the earliest stage, sometimes with the assistance of their own planner. In this manner they achieve continuity of participation until the plan is adopted and implementation commences.

A key to this approach is having a neighborhood planning committee that truly represents diverse viewpoints within the neighborhood. This can be accomplished through selection by a broad-based neighborhood association or by direct election by residents. If significant segments are omitted by this process, the initial committee can add other members. Selection in some manner by the residents is preferred to appointment by the mayor, city council, or other public official.¹

Today the neighborhood planning agenda is much broader than it was fifty years ago. It encompasses not only housing and other physical aspects of the neighborhood but also a variety of social and economic issues, such as jobs, business opportunities, crime, welfare, schools, and health care. The planning seeks to make a rational analysis of neighborhood problems and opportunities, based upon objective data and an understanding of people's feelings and neighborhood social patterns.

¹ For more on selection methods and other aspects of neighborhood planning, see William M. Rohe and Lauren G. Gates, *Planning with Neighborhoods* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985).

Details of neighborhood planning differ from place to place but are likely to include four steps:²

- Identify problems and issues
- Study problems
- Develop plans to solve problems
- Implement the plan

Problem identification is partly subjective, partly objective. Residents' perceptions are a crucial ingredient: what bothers them, what they would like their neighborhood to become, what obstacles they must overcome. There are also facts available on housing conditions, unemployment, welfare, school achievement, health, crime rates, traffic, and other matters. A neighborhood planning committee can deal with perceptions by holding public hearings, meeting with small groups, sending out questionnaires, and sponsoring door-to-door surveys. Simultaneously staff, whether city or neighborhood-based, can assemble relevant data.

Studying problems provides opportunities to broaden involvement in the planning process. Task forces on various issues can draw in persons with special knowledge and concern: merchants, employers, parents, teachers, youth leaders, youth themselves, seniors, field personnel of city departments, and others. Task force members can fan out to talk with other people. Task forces can sponsor public meetings open to anyone who wants to offer ideas on problems and their solutions.

Staff of public and private agency can feed in their own analyses and proposals to the neighborhood planning committee.

² Derived from Urban Systems Research & Engineering, Inc., *Neighborhood Planning Primer* (Washington: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1980).

As problems come into sharper focus and solutions begin to emerge, the neighborhood planning committee and the staff assisting it can begin to formulate the neighborhood plan, or plans for different components. The plan might encompass the following elements:³

- *Goals.* General statements of what the group wants to accomplish in each issue area.
- *Objectives.* Quantifiable goals to specify the level of accomplishment and target date.
- *Strategies.* The directions to take to reach the goals and objectives.
- *Projects and programs.* Specific activities to achieve the goals and who will be responsible.
- *Policies.* Guidelines or restrictions on activities that will be undertaken.
- *Priorities.* The relative emphasis placed on specific projects or goals.
- *Resources.* Funds, personnel (paid and volunteer), and material needed for projects and programs.

The neighborhood planning committee may want to hold a series of meetings to present the plan to residents, receive comments, and then make revisions. If public funding is expected, it is likely that the plan will have to go to one or more public bodies for consideration: planning commission, community development agency, budget bureau, mayor, city council. One or more of these bodies may be required to hold a public hearing. This will give the neighborhood committee, residents, and other interested persons to offer their view publicly.

In the process of reviewing the neighborhood plan, a public agency, the mayor, the manager, or city council officials may want to make modifications in matters where they have jurisdiction. Optimally they will do this in consultation with the neighborhood planning committee, perhaps through bargaining and consensus-seeking.

If the neighborhood planning process goes smoothly, there will be a lot of consultation at all stages: citizens consulting with public officials just as they expect public officials to consult with them. Give-and-take of this sort can produce adjustments and compromises that yields a plan with widespread support. Experience in numerous cities indicates that this is possible.

The planning process may be longer because of extensive participation, but adoption will be easier. Moreover, it's likely that the plan will be implemented quicker than occurs when citizens become aware of proposals late in the process and stir up a storm to block unwanted elements. Continuity of citizen participation from beginning to end enhances democracy and achieves better results in solving community problems. Citizens who have help draw up plans will be full and willing participants in its implementation.

Local Budget-Making

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 38.

The annual budget is probably the most important policy document adopted by governmental jurisdictions. By allocating resources it determines what various public agencies will do in the coming year. By indicating revenue sources it indicates who will pay for services, capital projects, and other governmental activities.

In most governmental units in the United States today, the budget is drawn up by the chief executive and adopted by the legislative body. The chief executive may be mayor, county executive, city or county manager, governor, president, superintendent of school, or chief administrator of a special district. The legislative body is city or county council, state legislature, Congress, school board, or special district commission. Usually the chief executive is assisted by a budget officer, who seeks requests from operating departments and draws them together into a comprehensive budget. The chief executive submits the budget to the legislative body and publishes it for public consideration. The legislative body holds public hearings for departmental representatives and citizens, makes revisions it deems appropriate, perhaps following negotiations with the chief executive, and then adopts the budget.

In this typical process citizen involvement usually doesn't occur until fairly late. After the budget is published, citizens analyze it, testify at public hearings of the legislative body, and lobby legislators to support certain items or to adopt particular amendments. However, sophisticated advocacy organizations may be involved much earlier by contacting specific departments and asking them to seek funding for a particular service or project in the departmental budget requests. They may even carry their advocacy to the chief executive.

In this pattern citizens may be able to affect certain aspects of the budget, but they have very little influence on overall budget priorities. Because most budgets have to balance expenditures and revenues (the federal government is an exception), it is difficult to make major changes after the budget has been published. An increased expenditure for one item has to be balanced by a decrease elsewhere, or revenue increases, and that's hard to accomplish that late in the budgetary process.

Several cities in the United States, however, are an exception to this typical pattern. They invite citizens to participate from the earliest stage as working partners, and indeed use public funds to make this possible. They include New York, Dayton, St. Paul, and Portland, Oregon. We can learn from their experience.

Several ingredients are common to the budgetary process in these cities. First, citizens have their own organizations to work out priorities and make budget recommendations. Most frequently these are neighborhood associations or district councils of neighborhood representatives, but sometimes citywide organizations and coalitions with a particular focus, such as social welfare, economic development, and environment also get involved. Second, these citizen organizations

usually have staff support. This might come from their own staff, consultants they hire, or personnel assigned by a public agency.

Third, city government has an office designated to receive citizen budgetary proposals, to transmit them to the budget office and city departments, to provide feedback to citizens on departmental response. This citizen liaison office sometimes provides technical assistance to citizen associations or allocates funds for their use. Fourth, city departments accept the idea of citizen input early in the budgetary process and work within that framework. Fifth, this process is scheduled over a sufficiently long period to allow time for meaningful citizen involvement to occur.

How it works can be illustrated by going through the stages of the budgetary process and indicating how neighborhood organizations are involved.

Stage One: Advance Preparation. The neighborhood organization either has a neighborhood plan upon which to base its recommendations or has a system to determine priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. This might occur through citizen surveys, neighborhood meetings, committee meetings, or a combination. Citizens are doing this at the same time that city departments are engaged in their own advanced preparations.

Stage Two: Departmental Requests. Just before city departments start working out their budget in detail, neighborhood organizations submit their proposals to the city liaison agency, which transmits them to the respective departments. In this manner city departments consider neighborhood proposals simultaneously with proposals from their own bureaus. Departments inform the citizen liaison office how they respond to neighborhood requests, and that office provides feedback to the neighborhood organizations.

Stage Three: Budget Office Review. While the budget office is reviewing departmental request, a citywide citizen advisory committee or a set of citizen task forces is also reviewing budget requests that have come from departments, neighborhood organizations, and other citizen organizations. The budget office takes into consideration comments and recommendations from the citizen advisory bodies.

Stage Four: Chief Executive Review. As the earlier stages have proceeded, the mayor or city manager is kept abreast of citizen recommendations as well as departmental requests and provides guidance to the budget office on how to respond. The chief executive takes into consideration these varied requests in making final decisions on the budget to submit to city council.

Stage Five: Council Determination. As in other cities, neighborhood organizations and other citizen groups send representatives to council hearings on the budget. But having been intimately involved during earlier stages, this is a less crucial moment for them. They are

likely to be supportive of the total budget even though not everything they requested is included, though sometimes they will propose adjustments and upon occasion oppose certain elements.

Stage Six: Implementation. Citizen organizations are less involved in the implementation stage, but a citywide advisory committee may be consulted about major proposed changes in big ticket items, such as capital improvement projects.

Stage Seven: Audit. Although citizen organizations usually don't get involved in the financial audit project, neighborhood organizations may have an evaluation system of their own to watch over the projects they proposed and provide feedback for the next budgetary cycle.

In cities providing roles for citizens throughout the budgetary process, there is constant interchange between citizens and public officials at all stages. Final decision-making authority remains with the chief executive and city council, but there is strong citizen input early in the process when it can be truly influential.

Benefits and Costs

These illustrations of citizen involvement in neighborhood planning and local budget-making could be expanded to encompass many other cases where citizens have achieved deep and steady participation in development of public policy. They include preparing community development plans, planning various capital projects, resident participation in community crime prevention, parental participation in individual public schools,

There are a number of benefits to this approach. By involving persons most affected, problems can be better defined. Citizens often have good ideas for solutions, and they can provide feedback on public agency proposals at an early stage when modifications can be made and unsound ideas dropped. The interchange provides opportunities for conflict resolution and consensus building. The process may broaden support for public policy while at the same time encouraging citizens to undertake their own, complementary activities. It is yet another way for achieving continuous, interactive consent of the governed.

Involvement in budget making and other citizen participation processes serve as a school for democracy. Many people persons gain their first opportunity for involvement in public life. They learn the give and take of decision making. New talent develops. Some move on to other civic activities, some run for public office, and others take appointive positions with government. In the last thirty years this has been a particularly important method for leadership development among African Americans, Hispanics, and recent immigrant groups.

There are costs. Decision making may take longer. There are expenses for staff, reports, and meeting facilities. Where public officials give only lip service to the process and ignore citizen views, alienation and distrust may increase.

The way around the time factor is to extend the planning schedule to allow sufficient time for participation. If done properly, widespread citizen support will develop for budgets and projects. In contrast, quite a few projects planned without participation are blocked by citizen opposition at a late stage and the whole planning expense is wasted.

November 10, 1992

Chapter 20. Continuity of Involvement in Local Decision-Making

Much of what citizens do to influence public policy is episodic. They write letters or make phone calls to express their views on specific issues. They contact public officials to state their grievances, and they ask their elected representatives for help in dealing with government. They attend meetings where officials are speaking, and occasionally they appear at public hearings. In doing these things citizens oftentimes act individually, but sometimes they join with others in advocacy organizations.

The focus of this kind of citizen involvement tends to be issues of the moment, or it relates to decision-making processes at particular points in time. Citizens and advocacy organizations decide for themselves when to get involved, when to offer views and present their own policy proposals. Public officials don't screen who may participate. Open opportunities for this kind of public involvement is essential in a democracy.

But governmental decision making is much more than a collection of episodes. Decisions are made through processes that occur through a series of connected stages, carried out over the course of weeks and months, as we discussed in chapter 12. Actors may differ from one stage to the next, but some public officials are likely to be involved throughout the process to provide coherence and insure continuity.

If citizens are to be involved meaningfully in such processes, they likewise need ways to achieve continuity of participation. This is most likely to happen through some variety of representative

participation that can achieve sustained involvement.

There is a considerable body of experience of citizens and public officials working together systematically through successive stages of decision making. It might be a recurring process, such as budget making that takes place annually. It might be a task with regular sequences, such as producing a community plan or designing a public facility. It might consist of taking up a particular problem, analyzing causes, considering possible remedies, and coming to agreement on solutions.

Experience with practices of this sort is most common and strongest in local government, but some state and federal agencies also make use of such processes. To broaden our understanding let us review some approaches related to two endeavors: neighborhood planning and local budget-making. The principles embodied in these examples can have wider application.

Neighborhood Planning

Since the end of World War II most American cities have made concerted efforts to improve the physical condition of their neighborhoods. To do so, they have produced neighborhood plans calling for one or more kinds of treatment: redevelopment (clearance and rebuilding), renewal (rehabilitating most of the housing stock, selective clearance and new construction, upgrading community facilities), and preservation (maintaining basically sound properties).

Fifty years ago neighborhood planning in most cities was handled by professional planners on the staff of the city planning commission. They demarcated neighborhood boundaries, collected data, defined problems, established goals and objectives, and laid out specific plans. At this stage they published the plan and presented it to neighborhood residents for their consideration. Some

cities, however, involved a committee of residents in early planning stages. This practice has grown.

In the 1960s advocacy planning emerged in a few locales as an alternative approach.

Trained planners helped residents draw up their own plan. The residents then presented their plan to city government, asserted pressure and bargained to have it adopted. Although such independent planning never became widespread, it showed the value of residents having expert assistance as they participated in neighborhood planning.

In the 1990s a middle-ground approach has become the preferred practice in most cities. A representative committee of residents works with city planners from the earliest stage, sometimes with the assistance of their own planner. In this manner they achieve continuity of participation until the plan is adopted and implementation commences.

A key to this approach is having a neighborhood planning committee that truly represents diverse viewpoints within the neighborhood. This can be accomplished through appointment by the official neighborhood council, selection by a broad-based neighborhood coalition, or direct election by residents. If significant segments are omitted by this process, the initial committee can add other members. Selection in some manner by the residents is preferred to appointment by the mayor, city council, or other public official.¹

Today the neighborhood planning agenda is much broader than it was fifty years ago. It encompasses not only housing and other physical aspects of the neighborhood but also a variety of

¹ For more on selection methods and other aspects of neighborhood planning, see William M. Rohe and Lauren G. Gates, *Planning with Neighborhoods* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985).

social and economic issues, such as jobs, business opportunities, crime, welfare, schools, and health care. The planning seeks to make a rational analysis of neighborhood problems and opportunities, based upon objective data and an understanding of people's feelings and neighborhood social patterns.

Details of neighborhood planning differ from place to place but are likely to include four steps:²

- Identify problems and issues
- Study problems
- Develop plans to solve problems
- Implement the plan

Problem identification is partly subjective, partly objective. Residents' perceptions are a crucial ingredient: what bothers them, what they would like their neighborhood to become, what obstacles they must overcome. There are also facts available on housing conditions, unemployment, welfare, school achievement, health, crime rates, traffic, and other matters. A neighborhood planning committee can deal with perceptions by holding public hearings, meeting with small groups, sending out questionnaires, and sponsoring door-to-door surveys. Simultaneously staff, whether city or neighborhood-based, can assemble relevant data.

Studying problems provides opportunities to broaden involvement in the planning process. Task forces on various issues can draw in persons with special knowledge and concern: merchants, employers, parents, teachers, youth leaders, youth themselves, seniors, field personnel of city

² Derived from Urban Systems Research & Engineering, Inc., *Neighborhood Planning Primer* (Washington: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1980).

departments, and others. Task force members can fan out to talk with other people. Task forces can sponsor public meetings open to anyone who wants to offer ideas on problems and their solutions.

Staff of public and private agency can feed in their own analyses and proposals to the neighborhood planning committee.

As problems come into sharper focus and solutions begin to emerge, the neighborhood planning committee and the staff assisting it can begin to formulate the neighborhood plan, or plans for different components. The plan might encompass the following elements:³

- *Goals.* General statements of what the group wants to accomplish in each issue area.
- *Objectives.* Quantifiable goals to specify the level of accomplishment and target date.
- *Strategies.* The directions to take to reach the goals and objectives.
- *Projects and programs.* Specific activities to achieve the goals and who will be responsible.
- *Policies.* Guidelines or restrictions on activities that will be undertaken.
- *Priorities.* The relative emphasis placed on specific projects or goals.
- *Resources.* Funds, personnel (paid and volunteer), and material needed for projects and programs.

The neighborhood planning committee may want to hold a series of meetings to present the plan to residents, receive comments, and then make revisions. If public funding is expected, it is likely that the plan will have to go to one or more public bodies for consideration: planning commission, community development agency, budget bureau, mayor, city council. One or more of

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 38.

these bodies may be required to hold a public hearing. This will give the neighborhood committee, residents, and other interested persons to offer their view publicly.

In the process of reviewing the neighborhood plan, a public agency, the mayor, the manager, or city council officials may want to make modifications in matters where they have jurisdiction. Optimally they will do this in consultation with the neighborhood planning committee, perhaps through bargaining and consensus-seeking.

If the neighborhood planning process goes smoothly, there will be a lot of consultation at all stages: citizens consulting with public officials just as they expect public officials to consult with them.

Give-and-take of this sort can produce adjustments and compromises that yield a plan with widespread support. Experience in numerous cities indicates that this is possible.

The planning process may be longer because of extensive participation, but adoption will be easier. Moreover, it's likely that the plan will be implemented quicker than occurs when citizens become aware of proposals late in the process and stir up a storm to block unwanted elements. Continuity of citizen participation from beginning to end enhances democracy and achieves better results in solving community problems. Citizens who have help draw up plans will be full and willing participants in its implementation.

Local Budget-Making

The annual budget is probably the most important policy document adopted by governmental jurisdictions. By allocating resources it determines what various public agencies will do in the coming year. By indicating revenue sources it indicates who will pay for services, capital projects,

and other governmental activities.

In most governmental units in the United States today, the budget is drawn up by the chief executive and adopted by the legislative body. The chief executive may be mayor, county executive, city or county manager, governor, president, superintendent of school, or chief administrator of a special district. The legislative body is city or county council, state legislature, Congress, school board, or special district commission. Usually the chief executive is assisted by a budget officer, who seeks requests from operating departments and draws them together into a comprehensive budget.

The chief executive submits the budget to the legislative body and publishes it for public consideration.

The legislative body holds public hearings for departmental representatives and citizens, makes revisions it deems appropriate, perhaps following negotiations with the chief executive, and then adopts the budget.

In this typical process citizen involvement usually doesn't occur until fairly late. After the budget is published, citizens analyze it, testify at public hearings of the legislative body, and lobby legislators to support certain items or to adopt particular amendments. However, sophisticated advocacy organizations may be involved much earlier by contacting specific departments and asking them to seek funding for a particular service or project in the departmental budget requests. They may even carry their advocacy to the chief executive.

In this pattern citizens may be able to affect certain aspects of the budget, but they have very little influence on overall budget priorities. Because most budgets have to balance expenditures and revenues (the federal government is an exception), it is difficult to make major changes after the

budget has been published. An increased expenditure for one item has to be balanced by a decrease elsewhere, or revenue increases, and that's hard to accomplish that late in the budgetary process.

Several cities in the United States, however, are an exception to this typical pattern. They invite citizens to participate from the earliest stage as working partners, and indeed use public funds to make this possible. They include New York, Dayton, St.Paul, and Portland, Oregon. We can learn from their experience.

Several ingredients are common to the budgetary process in these cities. First, citizens have their own organizations to work out priorities and make budget recommendations. Most frequently these are neighborhood associations or district councils of neighborhood representatives, but sometimes citywide organizations and coalitions with a particular focus, such as social welfare, economic development, and environment also get involved. Second, these citizen organizations usually have staff support. This might come from their own staff, consultants they hire, or personnel assigned by a public agency.

Third, city government has an office designated to receive citizen budgetary proposals, to transmit them to the budget office and city departments, to provide feedback to citizens on departmental response. This citizen liaison office sometimes provides technical assistance to citizen associations or allocates funds for their use. Fourth, city departments accept the idea of citizen input early in the budgetary process and work within that framework. Fifth, this process is scheduled over a sufficiently long period to allow time for meaningful citizen involvement to occur.

How it works can be illustrated by going through the stages of the budgetary process and

indicating how neighborhood organizations are involved.

Stage One: Advance Preparation. The neighborhood organization either has a neighborhood plan upon which to base its recommendations or has a system to determine priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. This might occur through citizen surveys, neighborhood meetings, committee meetings, or a combination. Citizens are doing this at the same time that city departments are engaged in their own advanced preparations.

Stage Two: Departmental Requests. Just before city departments start working out their budget in detail, neighborhood organizations submit their proposals to the city liaison agency, which transmits them to the respective departments. In this manner city departments consider neighborhood proposals simultaneously with proposals from their own bureaus. Departments inform the citizen liaison office how they respond to neighborhood requests, and that office provides feedback to the neighborhood organizations.

Stage Three: Budget Office Review. While the budget office is reviewing departmental request, a citywide citizen advisory committee or a set of citizen task forces is also reviewing budget requests that have come from departments, neighborhood organizations, and other citizen organizations. The budget office takes into consideration comments and recommendations from the citizen advisory bodies.

Stage Four: Chief Executive Review. As the earlier stages have proceeded, the mayor or city manager is kept abreast of citizen recommendations as well as departmental requests and provides guidance to the budget office on how to respond. The chief executive takes into

consideration these varied requests in making final decisions on the budget to submit to city council.

Stage Five: Council Determination. As in other cities, neighborhood organizations and other citizen groups send representatives to council hearings on the budget. But having been intimately involved during earlier stages, this is a less crucial moment for them. They are likely to be supportive of the total budget even though not everything they requested is included, though sometimes they will propose adjustments and upon occasion oppose certain elements.

Stage Six: Implementation. Citizen organizations are less involved in the implementation stage, but a citywide advisory committee may be consulted about major proposed changes in big ticket items, such as capital improvement projects.

Stage Seven: Audit. Although citizen organizations usually don't get involved in the financial audit project, neighborhood organizations may have an evaluation system of their own to watch over the projects they proposed and to provide feedback for the next budgetary cycle.

In cities providing roles for citizens throughout the budgetary process, there is constant interchange between citizens and public officials at all stages. Final decision-making authority remains with the chief executive and city council, but there is strong citizen input early in the process when it can be truly influential.

Benefits and Costs

These illustrations of citizen involvement in neighborhood planning and local budget-making

could be expanded to encompass many other cases where citizens have achieved deep and steady participation in development of public policy. They include preparing community development plans, planning various capital projects, resident participation in community crime prevention, parental participation in individual public schools, water resources planning.

There are a number of benefits to this approach. By involving persons most affected, problems can be better defined. Citizens often have good ideas for solutions, and they can provide feedback on public agency proposals at an early stage when modifications can be made and unsound ideas dropped. The interchange provides opportunities for conflict resolution and consensus building.

The process may broaden support for public policy while at the same time encouraging citizens to undertake their own, complementary activities. It is yet another way for achieving continuous, interactive consent of the governed.

Involvement in budget making and other citizen participation processes serve as a school for democracy. Many persons gain their first opportunity for involvement in public life. They learn the give and take of decision making. New talent develops. Some move on to other civic activities, some run for public office, and others take appointive positions with government. In the last thirty years this has been a particularly important method for leadership development among African Americans, Hispanics, and recent immigrant groups.

There are costs. Decision making may take longer. There are expenses for staff, reports, and meeting facilities. Where public officials give only lip service to the process and ignore citizen views, alienation and distrust may increase.

The way around the time factor is to extend the planning schedule to allow sufficient time for participation. If done properly, widespread citizen support will develop for budgets and projects. In contrast, quite a few projects planned without participation are blocked by citizen opposition at a late stage and the whole planning expense is wasted.

May 27, 1993

Chapter 21. Achieving Greater Involvement in State and Federal Decision-Making

By and large the further a government is away from the people the less citizen involvement in decision-making. Partly this is a matter of geographic spread and population size, but it's also a matter of attitude. Many governors and the last two U.S. presidents haven't placed citizen participants high on their agenda. Nor have heads of numerous state and federal agencies. There are exceptions but for the most part citizen involvement in state and federal operations has been downplayed in the last dozen years.

In the 1990s we need to develop new approaches to citizen involvement in state and federal decision-making. Let's look at a couple of possibilities for the national government. The same ideas are relevant for the states.

Citizen Input into Federal Budget

The federal budget is one of the most important policy documents considered and adopted each year. Yet its development is one of the most secretive, least participatory processes found in government today.

The process starts in summertime about fifteen months prior to the fiscal year that begins October 1 of the following year. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issues guidelines to federal departments and lays out a schedule for submission of requests. Departmental proposals go to OMB in the fall. Working under guidance from the president, OMB makes cuts (rarely increases). Cabinet members have the right to appeal to the president but use this right sparingly.

By December the budget is nearly complete. A few leading supporters of the president in Congress may be kept informed on some aspects of the emerging budget, but most members of Congress are in the dark on details. Final adjustments are made in January, including economic projections and decisions on revenue measures. The president submits the budget to Congress toward the end of January.

Each house of Congress has a budget committee. They hold hearings in February and March, inviting witnesses from the administration, some outside economists, a small number of other experts, but hardly anyone from advocacy organizations. By mid-April or early May Congress adopts the budget resolution, which establishes spending levels for xx major categories and outlines the revenue package to pay for the budget.

By then two sets of committees are active in both houses. Authorization committees, each

dealing with major sets of programs, such as armed forces, agriculture, education and labor, start holding hearings on what expenditures to authorize for the coming fiscal year. Meanwhile subcommittees of the two appropriations committees begin hearings on how much money to appropriate. These committees and subcommittees hear both government and civilian experts, generally with a broader range of witnesses than the budget committees, but they usually don't bring in many representatives of membership-based, citizen advocacy organizations. Nevertheless, advocacy organizations busily undertake direct lobbying and mount grassroots lobbying campaigns to influence decisions of authorization and appropriations committees. Only at this advanced stage is citizen input very strong.

This whole process could be significantly improved through much earlier citizen involvement in preparation of the president's budget and fuller opportunity for a wider range of views to be heard in congressional hearings.

Thus, in September and October when the departments are working on their budgets, the cabinet secretaries should hold public hearings so that a cross-section of interests can offer recommendations for the departmental budget. Regional directors should conduct similar hearings around the country. The president should also hold several public hearings that focus on overall budgetary issues, such as deficit reduction and taxation. Witnesses before the president could include representatives of governors, mayors, county commissioners, business, labor, social welfare, environmentalists, and other broad interests.

At these executive budget hearings the president, cabinet secretaries, and regional directors should ask all witnesses to respond to three questions:

- What expenditures do you want included in the budget?
- If you recommend increased spending, what expenditure reductions elsewhere in the budget will you publicly support?
- What revenue measures will you publicly support to get the federal deficit under control?

This approach would not only provide citizen input early in the federal budgetary process, but it would also encourage persons representing various interests to broaden their horizon and look at the total picture. It would seek to develop support for difficult measures needed to achieve deficit reduction.

The congressional budget committees, when their turn comes, should hear from a broader range of witnesses. This can be accomplished not only through conventional hearings in Washington but also by satellite television linkage with witnesses situated in other locales around the nation. All witnesses should be asked the three key questions: what expenditures do you propose, what expenditure reductions and revenue increase do you favor to pay for it? Citizens should be asked

not only to make recommendations on expenditure cuts and revenue measures, but also to pledge to support these measures, no matter how unpopular.

State governments could embark upon a similar process for early citizen involvement in budget making. Governors, department heads, and district directors could hold hearings well in advance of finalization of the governor's budget. State legislative committees could hear from a wider range of witnesses than they do now, could use television linkage to hear from witnesses scattered around the state, and could conduct field hearings.

Nationwide Study of Big Issues

We also need to find ways of achieving more widespread citizen participation in working out solutions to some of the big issues our nation faces. In a pluralistic society with many conflicting interests this is no easy task. Because we the people are divided, the president of the United States and major blocs within the U.S. Congress often espouse different solutions to major national problems. What appears as gridlock is a reflection that we the people haven't worked out a sufficient consensus to enable our representatives to come to an agreement. That being the case we need to participate more fully in the search for agreement.

Take, for example, the issue of health care financing. Total health care costs nationally are accelerating enormously. Because health insurance arrangements are highly diverse and in some respects duplicative, administrative expenses are high. Yet millions of people lack health insurance and do not have personal financial resources to pay for medical care.

A variety of remedies have been proposed, ranging from entirely private health insurance to totally governmental. They tend to cluster into three or four major sets of alternatives. Each has powerful advocates who represent different interests: doctors, hospitals, private health insurance companies, consumer groups, and governmental agencies. So far none of these interests or coalition of interests has been able to prevail. Hence the deadlock.

As a way of bringing a larger segment of the public into the search for solution, there could be a process designed to achieve extensive, in-depth study and discussion by a wide segment of the population. Citizen opinion would then feed in the president and members of Congress. It might work as follows:

- Have a nonpartisan body, such as a unit of the National Academy of the Scientists, prepare a study guide that outlines the major alternatives for health care financing. The guide would relate the best case for each alternative as offered by their respective advocates. It would also provide an objective analysis of costs and benefits of each, of advantages and disadvantages, and of possible trade-offs. This study guide should be written in clear

language that high school graduates can understand, making use of charts and graphs as appropriate.

- Publish the study guide in tabloid form and distribute it for sale in supermarkets, drug stores, and other easily accessible outlets. Existing private distribution networks could be used.
- Through a wide variety of citizen networks encourage the formation of local study groups, community forums, and interactive radio and television discussion. Groups which meet weekly or monthly, such as service clubs, neighborhood associations, other civic organizations, study groups in churches, synagogues, and mosques could schedule one or more sessions to talk about alternatives for health care financing. Local organizations with rival positions could come together to stage a debate. Both broadcast and cable television could organize forums with panelists representing the different sides and could give the viewing audience opportunity to call in questions and to vote. Local newspapers could print and receive ballots on the major alternatives and publish the results.
- After an appropriate period of local discussion, have members of the U.S. House of Representatives hold informal hearings and appear at community meetings in their districts to hear feedback from the various citizen study groups. Emphasis should be upon consensus building and exploration of possible compromises. U.S. senators could attend some of the district forums in order to listen to citizen opinion first hand.
- Develop ways for local conclusions to reach the White House and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources in a systematic manner. This would enable the executive branch to reconsider its own proposals in the search for an acceptable national approach to health care financing.

Ultimately the Congress with presidential approval will have to adopt legislation to deal with health care financing. Widespread citizen education and public discussion could strengthen the determination to find solutions and help develop a consensus. Of course, the process could merely reinforce present division and add to the stalemate. But it's worth a try.

The same approach could be taken to other major national problems, such as the federal deficit, unemployment, drug abuse, and others. This would require discipline in selection of topics so as not to overburden the participatory process. Maybe only one or two issues could be taken up each year for in depth consideration. A resolute commitment to fairness in preparing study material would be essential. Respect for the wisdom of the people by elected officials would be indispensable.

Summation

American democracy is founded upon faith that a well-informed, fully-involved citizenry has the capacity to make wise choices on controversial issues. This faith is buttressed by a commitment that what government does must be based upon the consent of the governed. Experience teaches that this consent is best obtained through full citizen participation in important matters.

If interaction between citizens and the public officials they choose is to be effective, it must relate to real decisions on significant issues. Continuity of participation is essential, starting with early involvement in goal setting and problem defining. Citizens require a full supply of readily-accessible information. More often than not citizens need some kind of organizational base so that they can study problems and work out their own views on solutions.

Governmental agencies should be organized in ways that facilitate citizen involvement. Regularized processes are helpful. This facilitates a steady flow of citizen input and provides for feedback from public officials to the participating citizens.

Citizen participation processes do not replace other features of representative government, such as elections and the legislative process. Rather the numerous ways for achieving fuller citizen involvement and more intensive interaction between citizens and public officials enhance democracy by enriching and providing greater continuity to the consent-giving process.

November 10, 1992

Chapter 21. Achieving Greater Involvement in State and Federal Decision-Making

By and large the further a government is away from the people the less citizen involvement in decision-making. Partly this is a matter of geographic spread and population size, but it's also a matter of attitude. The last two U.S. presidents (Ronald Reagan and George Bush) didn't place citizen participation high on their agenda, and most governors haven't either. Nor have most heads of state and federal agencies. There are exceptions but for the most part citizen involvement in state and federal operations has been downplayed in the last dozen years.

In the 1990s we need to develop new approaches to citizen involvement in state and federal decision-making. Let's look at a couple of possibilities for the national government. The same ideas are relevant for the states.

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Each house of Congress has a budget committee. They hold hearings in February and March, inviting witnesses from the administration, some outside economists, a small number of other experts, but hardly anyone from advocacy organizations. By mid-April or early May Congress adopts the budget resolution, which establishes spending levels for xx major categories and outlines the revenue package to pay for the budget.

By then two sets of committees are active in both houses. Authorization committees, each dealing with major sets of programs, such as (Armed Forces, Agriculture, Education and Labor), start holding hearings on what expenditures to authorize for the coming fiscal year. Meanwhile subcommittees of the two appropriations committees begin hearings on how much money to appropriate. These committees and subcommittees hear both government and civilian experts, generally with a broader range of witnesses than the budget committees, but they usually don't bring in many representatives of membership-based, citizen advocacy organizations. Nevertheless, advocacy organizations busily undertake direct lobbying and mount grassroots lobbying campaigns to influence decisions of authorization and appropriations committees. Only at this advanced stage is citizen input very strong.

This whole process could be significantly improved through much earlier citizen involvement in preparation of the president's budget and fuller opportunity for a wider range of views to be heard in congressional hearings.

Thus, in September and October when the departments are working on their budgets, the cabinet secretaries should hold public hearings so that a cross-section of interests can offer recommendations for the departmental budget. Regional directors should conduct similar hearings around the country. The president should also hold several public hearings that focus on overall budgetary issues, such as deficit reduction and taxation. Witnesses before the president could include representatives of governors, mayors, county commissioners, business, labor, social welfare, environmentalists, and other broad interests.

At these executive budget hearings the president, cabinet secretaries, and regional directors should ask all witnesses to respond to three questions:

- *What expenditures do you want included in the budget?*
- *If you recommend increased spending, what expenditure reductions elsewhere in the budget will you publicly support?*
- *What revenue measures will you publicly support to get the federal deficit under control?*

This approach would not only provide citizen input early in the federal budgetary process, but it would also encourage persons representing various interests to broaden their horizon and look at the total picture. It would seek to develop support for difficult measures needed to achieve deficit reduction.

The congressional budget committees, when their turn comes, should hear from a broader

range of witnesses. This can be accomplished not only through conventional hearings in Washington but also by satellite television linkage with witnesses situated in other locales around the nation. All witnesses should be asked the three key questions: what expenditures do you propose, what expenditure reductions and revenue increase do you favor to pay for it? Citizens should be asked not only to make recommendations on expenditure cuts and revenue measures, but also to pledge to support these measures, no matter how unpopular.

State governments could embark upon a similar process for early citizen involvement in budget making. Governors, department heads, and district directors could hold hearings well in advance of finalization of the governor's budget. State legislative committees could hear from a wider range of witnesses than they do now, could use television linkage to hear from witnesses scattered around the state, and could conduct field hearings.

Nationwide Study of Big Issues

We also need to find ways of achieving more widespread citizen participation in working out solutions to some of the big issues our nation faces. In a pluralistic society with many conflicting interests this is no easy task. Because we the people are divided, the president of the United States and major blocs within the U.S. Congress often espouse different solutions to major national problems.

What appears as gridlock is a reflection that we the people haven't worked out a sufficient consensus to enable our representatives to come to an agreement. That being the case we need to participate more fully in the search for agreement.

Take, for example, the matter of welfare reform. There is a broad consensus that the present

welfare system isn't working well but no consensus on the best solution. Most people, including numerous welfare recipients, believe that work is a better alternative than cash welfare payments. However, to get all welfare recipients into jobs would require an expensive training and counseling program, extensive day care service, and assurance of health care benefits. Because presently there aren't enough jobs for all who want to work, more jobs would have to be created in private enterprises and in the nonprofit and public sectors. This would require both national stimulation and local action, with the possibility of public service employment and sheltered work for persons who can't find jobs in the regular job market.

Consideration of a complex solution of this sort generates many views, considerable conflict among various interests and ideologies, and numerous disagreements. Partly the solution depends upon drastic changes in health care financing, which itself is a very controversial issue. Discussion of alternative methods of job creation also produces heated debate.

As a way of bringing a larger segment of the public into the search for the best approach to welfare reform, there could be a process designed to achieve extensive, in-depth study and discussion by a wide segment of the population. Citizen opinion would then feed in the president and members of Congress. It might work as follows:

- Have a nonpartisan body, such as a unit of the National Academy of the Scientists, prepare a study guide that outlines the major alternatives for welfare reform. The guide would relate the best case for each alternative as offered by their respective advocates. It would also provide an objective analysis of costs and benefits of each, of advantages and

disadvantages, and of possible trade-offs. This study guide should be written in clear language that high school graduates can understand, making use of charts and graphs as appropriate.

- Publish the study guide in tabloid form and distribute it for sale in supermarkets, drug stores, and other easily accessible outlets. Existing private distribution networks could be used.
- Through a wide variety of citizen networks encourage the formation of local study groups, community forums, and interactive radio and television discussion. Groups which meet weekly or monthly, such as service clubs, neighborhood associations, other civic organizations, study groups in churches, synagogues, and mosques could schedule one or more sessions to talk about alternatives for welfare reform. Local organizations with rival positions could come together to stage a debate. Both broadcast and cable television could organize forums with panelists representing the different sides and could give the viewing audience opportunity to call in questions and to vote. Local newspapers could print and receive ballots on the major alternatives and publish the results.
- After an appropriate period of local discussion, have members of the U.S. House of Representatives hold informal hearings and appear at community meetings in their districts to hear feedback from the various citizen study groups. Emphasis should be upon consensus building and exploration of possible compromises. U.S. senators could attend some of the district forums in order to listen to citizen opinion first hand.

- *Develop ways for local conclusions to reach the White House, the Department of Health and Human Resources, and the Department of Labor in a systematic manner. This would enable the executive branch to formulate its own proposals in the search for an acceptable approach to welfare reform.*

Ultimately the Congress with presidential approval will have to adopt legislation to change the welfare system and create more jobs. Widespread citizen education and public discussion could strengthen the determination to find solutions and help develop a consensus. Of course, the process could merely reinforce present division and add to the stalemate. But it's worth a try.

The same approach could be taken to other major national problems, such as the federal deficit, lack of sufficient affordable housing, drug abuse, and others concerns. This would require discipline in selection of topics so as not to overburden the participatory process. Maybe only one or two issues could be taken up each year for in depth consideration. A resolute commitment to fairness in preparing study material would be essential. Respect for the wisdom of the people by elected officials would be indispensable.

Summation

American democracy is founded upon faith that a well-informed, fully-involved citizenry has the capacity to make wise choices on controversial issues. This faith is buttressed by a commitment that what government does must be based upon the consent of the governed. Experience teaches that this consent is best obtained through full citizen participation in important matters.

If interaction between citizens and the public officials they choose is to be effective, it must

relate to real decisions on significant issues. Continuity of participation is essential, starting with early involvement in goal setting and problem defining. Citizens require a full supply of readily-accessible information. More often than not citizens need some kind of organizational base so that they can study problems and work out their own views on solutions.

Governmental agencies should be organized in ways that facilitate citizen involvement.

Regularized processes are helpful. This facilitates a steady flow of citizen input and provides for feedback from public officials to the participating citizens.

Citizen participation processes do not replace other features of representative government, such as elections and the legislative process. Rather the numerous ways for achieving fuller citizen involvement and more intensive interaction between citizens and public officials enhance democracy by enriching and providing greater continuity to the consent-giving process.

May 27, 1993

PART ONE. REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY IN A PARTICIPATORY MODE

Chapter 1. Consent of the Governed: Continuous and Interactive

O.K., you've sent a message. Now what?

In recent years millions of Americans have called or written their elected representatives -- particularly members of Congress -- to complain or protest about this and that: congressional pay raises, proposed tax increases, abortion policies, nominations to the Supreme Court and the president's cabinet. Radio and television talk show hosts have played a combined role of coach and cheerleader. Phone calls have overwhelmed the Capitol switchboard. Bags of mail have inundated congressional offices.

In the 1992 presidential election nearly 20 million voters sent a message by voting for Ross Perot. Focusing on the federal budget deficit, Perot framed his campaign as a protest against the status quo in Washington. As opinion polls revealed that he had virtually no chance to win, his supporters stuck with him in order to express dissatisfaction with established leadership.

In 1992 voters in a dozen states considered ballot issues to place limits on the number of terms members of Congress may serve. All passed. Two other states preceded them, and proponents are pushing for similar referendums in more states in 1994. Although leading advocates of term limits seem to be motivated primarily by a desire to displace incumbents they cannot defeat at the polls, numerous voters have supported term limits as a means of sending a message.

Every year hundreds of thousands of Americans journey to Washington, D.C. to take part in protest rallies, picket the White House, march along Pennsylvania Avenue. There were ___ such demonstrations in 1991 and ___ in 1992. In joining them citizens are exercising the right guaranteed under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution "to assemble peaceably, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

It's wonderful that the Constitution guarantees this right. It's great that we have referendums so that citizens can vote directly on important issues. It's marvelous that independent and third party candidates can run for public office. It's terrific that citizens can freely communicate their views to elected officials. This is democracy in action!

Sending a Message Is Not Enough

Yet, as important as these acts of citizenship are, sending a message is not enough. Democracy requires much fuller participation of citizens in a much more continuous manner with far

greater positive orientation.

It's well and good to get excited about the qualifications of Supreme Court nominees, such as Robert Bork, David Ginsburg, Clarence Thomas, and cabinet nominees, such as Zoe Baird. But while a few nominees receive lots of attention, thousands of others are appointed and confirmed through a process that attracts very little attention except from particular interest groups.

It's fine to protest a vote-in-the-night to raise congressional salaries and to mobilize against specific tax increases. But at the same time most of the details of the \$__ trillion federal budget are formulated and adopted with very little public participation.

It's a relief to express one's frustration by voting for an independent candidate. But this has does little to change the two major parties, which supply most of our elected office holders. It may be satisfying to vote for a ballot measure that limits terms or places other restrictions on government. But this does almost nothing to alter ongoing governmental operations.

Sending a message is like a blast of wind across a broad, flowing river. The wind makes ripples and sometimes creates waves vigorous enough to swamp a small boat. But "ole man river, he jest keeps rollin' along."

The rudder that steers the ship of state and the propellers that move it along operate beneath the surface. The engines driving the propellers are in the depth of the ship. Although the captain and the helmsman are topside on the bridge, they are totally dependent on the crew stationed throughout the ship.

When a strong wind arises, the captain will steer the ship into the wind to absorb the storm's blows and then return to the previous course when the wind dies down. The distant owners may send radio messages to the captain, but they can't compel him to change course. Only when the ship returns to homeport can they replace the captain. A rebellious crew can stop the ship, but it can't make it go unless it takes control in an orderly manner or bargains with the captain and works out a compromise.

So it is with government in a democracy. There are many ways to send messages, to create waves. This has an effect, for most elective officials are sensitive to what they hear from their constituents. Occasional gusts, like afternoon thunderstorms, attract attention, but more influential is steady pressure from concerned citizens, like the prairie wind that never ceases. Persons who are continuously involved in the political process usually make the greatest impact.

Continuous Involvement

Here we have the clue for making democracy more effective: continuous involvement by the citizenry. This is the lesson of more than 200 years of experience with democracy in the United States of America. We have taken an ideal expressed in the Declaration of Independence -- that the just powers of government are derive from the consent of the governed -- and developed numerous ways for achieving consent.

In American democracy we citizens are not merely customers receiving governmental services. We are far more than stockholders choosing a board of directors, selecting a management team, and letting them run the business. We are persons who first decide who shall govern, and then we constantly interact with our legislators, our elected executives, and those whom they appoint.

We citizens are not content to sit back and wait for the next election to give our consent once again or elect somebody else. As individuals, we lobby elected and appointed officials to influence their decisions. We form advocacy organizations to provide collective strength to lobbying efforts. Sometimes we assemble with like-minded people to express our grievances.

Formal patterns of interaction between citizens and public officials are built into governmental operations. Public hearings and advisory committees are widespread. Citizen participation in community planning is commonplace. Citizens are involved in implementation of numerous public programs and often undertake parallel civic activities.

Our participation is a continuous process, not merely a series of disconnected episodes. Consent-giving events, such as periodic elections of public officials and votes-by-ballot on constitutional amendments and referendums, are preceded by months of campaigning. Soon after election many incumbents begin to think ahead toward the next election, and this affects their relations with constituents. Persons positioning themselves to run for public office also establish relationships with the electorate. Lobbying and other forms of citizen advocacy go on throughout the year. So do formalized processes of citizen participation in public decision making.

Thus, we can say that after 200 years of American democracy **consent of the governed in the United States has become a continuous, interactive process.** Not perfect, for full involvement of the citizenry is incomplete. But we've come a long ways since 1776.

Timing Is Essential

Citizen participation in governmental affairs must be continuous because the decision-making processes of government are continuous. Some of the consent-giving processes are tied to the calendar, especially elections. Others have stages occurring in regular sequence, such as adoption of legislation, preparing budgets, and drawing up community plans.

by a conference committee. The bill then goes back to the two houses for final action before going to the president or governor.

Skilled lobbyists are involved in all stages. They may offer a draft bill or look over what legislators and administrative officials have drafted. They help line up sponsors within the legislative body. They testify at public hearings and confer with committee members. They mobilize grassroots support. Sometimes they push for floor amendments. They urge the chief executive to approve or veto the legislation.

In contrast, many citizens concerned about a particular bill do not become involved until legislation is ready for a floor vote. They may urge approval or defeat of particular amendments, but the fundamental shape of the legislation is rarely altered at this late stage.

Community Planning. In planning improvement projects public officials are aware that the adopted plan is the result of many months of study and design. For a neighborhood plan, to be adopted by the city planning commission and city council, the process is as follows:

DEVELOPING PLAN

Define problem ----> Set goals & objectives ----> Delineate land use & specify projects ----> Approval by planning director

GAINING APPROVAL

Planning board hearing -----> Planning board approval -----> Council hearing -----> Council approval

The final plan is greatly influenced by how the problem is defined and what objectives are established. Citizens who wait until the public hearing to offer their views may discover that options they preferred have already been precluded.

In contrast, where there are official arrangements for citizen participation, citizens can get involved in all the stages of community planning and work cooperatively with public officials. Where a unit of government is weak in citizen participation, citizens to be influential must assert themselves and offer their views at the early stages, long before the formal public hearing.

Commitment

Thus we see that effective citizen participation in public policy formulation requires meaningful involvement from the earliest stage until final, formal decisions occur. This is true for elections, enactment of legislation, adoption of plans, and other major public decisions. In this manner consent of the governed gains full expression. The result is **representative government in a**

participatory mode.

For this to happen, public officials must have a strong commitment to full participation by the citizenry, and numerous citizens must be actively engaged in continuous interaction with public officials. Democracy of this sort isn't easy to obtain and sustain, but it's worth it.

It can result in a high quality of public decisions, based upon intimate knowledge of what the people want and will support. And it can yield a nation of citizens who have trust and confidence that their governments are functioning in a manner they desire.

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March 11, 1993

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Thus, we can say that after 200 years of American democracy **consent of the governed in the United States has become a continuous, interactive process.** Not perfect, for full involvement of the citizenry is incomplete. But we've come a long ways since 1776.

Timeliness and Persistence Are Essential

Citizen participation in governmental affairs must be continuous because the decision-making processes of government are continuous. Some of the consent-giving processes are tied to the calendar, especially elections. Others have stages occurring in regular sequence, such as adoption of legislation, preparing budgets, and drawing up community plans.

Politicians and lobbyists understand this. They focus not merely on specific decisions but rather on the entire decision-making process from beginning to end. They know when and how to exercise their influence. They are persistent.

Citizen activists likewise need to realize that to be influential their involvement must have longevity and also must be timely and properly directed. This can be seen in three very common sets of decisions in American democracy: elections, legislation, and community planning.

Elections. In the electoral process politicians understand that election day is but a culmination of months of positioning and campaigning that goes through several major stages.

PRELIMINARIES

Positioning -----> Lining up support -----> Announcement of candidacy

SEEKING NOMINATION (several patterns)

For local & state offices and Congress in some states:

Primary campaigning -----> Primary election

For local & state offices and Congress in other states:

Party convention + option of -----> Challenge primary election

For U.S. president:

State primaries, caucuses, conventions -----> National convention

GENERAL ELECTION

Campaigning -----> Voting

Well before the deadline for filing nominating petitions, potential candidates obtain commitments for support, political leaders form alliances, and some potential candidates fall by the wayside. Interaction between candidates and the electorate begins during the positioning period. Promises made by potential candidates then and during the formal campaign will affect policy decisions made months later if they are elected to office.

Legislation. In the enactment of legislation lobbyists know that a new law is the product of a months-long process. In unicameral legislative bodies, such as most city and county councils and the Nebraska legislature, the major steps are these:

Drafting --> Introduction --> Committee --> Floor --> Approval by
bill consideration action chief executive

In bicameral bodies, such as the U.S. Congress and 49 state legislatures, a bill passed by one house goes to the other house for committee consideration and floor action. Then differences are resolved by a conference committee. The bill then goes back to the two houses for final action before going to the president or governor.

Skilled lobbyists are involved in all stages. They may offer a draft bill or look over what legislators and administrative officials have drafted. They help line up sponsors within the legislative body. They testify at public hearings and confer with committee members. They mobilize grassroots support. Sometimes they push for floor amendments. They urge the chief executive to approve or veto the legislation.

In contrast, many citizens concerned about a particular bill do not become involved until legislation is ready for a floor vote. They may urge approval or defeat of particular amendments, but the fundamental shape of the legislation is rarely altered at this late stage.

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In contrast, where there are official arrangements for citizen participation, citizens can get involved in all the stages of community planning and work cooperatively with public officials. Where a unit of government is weak in citizen participation, citizens to be influential must assert themselves and offer their views at the early stages, long before the formal public hearing.

Steadfast Commitment Is Required

Thus we see that effective citizen participation in public policy formulation requires meaningful involvement from the earliest stage until final, formal decisions occur. This is true for elections, enactment of legislation, adoption of plans, and other major public decisions. In this manner consent of the governed gains full expression. The result is **representative government in a participatory mode.**

For this to happen, public officials must have a strong commitment to full participation by the citizenry, and numerous citizens must be vigorously engaged in continuous interaction with public officials. **Democracy of this sort isn't easy to obtain and sustain, but it's worth it.**

It can result in a high quality of public decisions, based upon intimate knowledge of what the people want and will support. And it can yield a nation of citizens who have trust and confidence that their governments are functioning in a manner they desire.

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April 5, 1993

Chapter 5. Keeping Incumbents Alert

Based upon past experience, it is safe to predict that in the United States a majority of today's incumbents in elective office will seek reelection. Those who can't run for reelection because of term limits or who are retiring for other reasons are a minority.

This means that most incumbents have their eye on the next election while they are performing their present duties. They position themselves to run for reelection, and this influences their conduct in office. Although some persons might deplore this practice as being too political, in fact it is very desirable for American democracy because it enhances the accountability of elected officials. This is true for both legislative and executive officials.

LEGISLATORS

Outlook of Legislators

Actions of legislators -- members of Congress, state legislatures, county and municipal councils, township boards -- stem from a variety of motivations. They want to serve the needs of their district; affect public policy (often in behalf of particular causes); gain power and influence within the legislative body; achieve ego fulfillment, career advancement, and, for a small minority, economic gain. Most of them want to get reelected. For individual legislators these motivations occur in different combinations and varying degrees of emphasis.

Relationships with constituents is a central factor in the life of most legislators. Voters elected them in the first place and will determine whether they will be reelected. Therefore, most legislators pay a lot of attention to their constituents.

When political scientist Richard Fenno spent considerable time with a number of U.S. representatives in their home districts in the early 1970s, he discovered that "Each member of Congress perceives four concentric constituencies: geographic, reelection, primary, and personal."¹ His findings remain valid 20 years later and apply to state legislators and members of municipal and county councils.

Figure 5-1 express this perception as a conical field of vision of a typical legislator looking outward. Close at hand she or he has a small, intimate circle of friends and close associates with whom she or he can relax, get advice, and receive emotional support. The next circle contains strong supporters who form the core constituency for the primary election, make financial

¹ Richard Fenno, *Home Style: House Members in Their Districts*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1978. p. 29

contributions, and work in the campaign. Then comes a larger circle of persons needed to provide a winning vote in the general election. The outermost circle encompasses the entire congressional district, including opponents, swing voters, and apathetic citizens who seldom or never vote.

Figure 5-1. How Members of Congress View Their Constituents



For an incumbent seeking reelection, the first task is to maintain the loyalty of strong supporters within her or his political party so as to scare off potential primary opponents, and if challenged, to have a solid base for winning. The second task is to develop and maintain trust and support from a wider range of voters, including independents and perhaps some from the other party, in order to win the next general election. A third task is to be the representative of everyone in the district whether or not they voted for her or him in the last election or will do so in the next.

What Citizens Expect

We citizens bring our own expectations to our relationships with members of Congress, state legislatures, city and county councils, and township boards.

We would prefer them to vote on legislative matters as we would vote if we were a member of the legislative body. We realize that this won't always happen, but at least we expect them to reflect majority opinion in the district they represent. We certainly don't want them to be beholden

to a political boss (unless, perhaps, we are an intimate part of the political machine) or to any special interest (unless it is ours).

Even if we voted for another candidate or even if we differ from our representative's stated position on an issue, we want her or him to give consideration to our viewpoint, to read our letters, to meet with us upon request.

We want our representative to keep us informed about legislative issues, to attend meetings in the district, to participate in local events. We expect her or him to meet with reporters and appear on radio and television talk shows so that their views on policy issues are publicized.

We want our representative to work on matters that help our district. We want her or him to assist us in our dealings with government. Sometimes we do this after frustrating experience with the bureaucracy, knowing that our representative may have some clout. At other times we don't know where else to turn to solve some problem. Although we are aware of broader concerns that our representative must deal with, we feel that we need someone to look after our specific needs and interests in the course of legislation and program administration.

How Legislators Act

Members of Congress, state legislators, city and county council members respond to our expectations in a variety of ways. Members of Congress, using printing allocations and free postage of their mailing frank, regularly send out newsletters to every household in their district or state. For many the first issue each year contains a questionnaire on important matters that will come up during the legislative session, and constituents are asked to reply. State legislators and local council members, lacking the frank, tend to send out fewer newsletters, but they find other ways to communicate with people in their district.

Legislators at all levels of government regularly send news releases to newspapers, radio and television stations serving their district. They hold news conferences within the district.

The U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate maintain television and radio studios so that members can make live or taped broadcast to local stations. They send out radio "actualities" -- taped statements that are transmitted via telephone lines to local radio stations for insertion into news programs. They use satellite linkage to transmit videotaped statements or excerpts from floor speeches and committee testimony. Sometimes through these linkages they grant live interviews to local TV reporters.

Although state legislatures and local councils rarely have their own radio and television production facilities, their members constantly seek opportunities to be heard and seen on broadcast

media. They make themselves available to television reporters and are usually quite willing to appear on call-in talk shows. Because the listening and viewing audience of many radio and television stations encompass a number of state legislative and local council districts, legislators and council members compete among themselves for access. To get attention they sometimes create newsworthy events.

Legislators at all levels assign staff to handle constituency response and service. All mail is read by staff and usually tabulated by issue and opinion. Local council members and state legislators are likely to read all their mail. Some U.S. representatives do, too, but for many and for most U.S. senators the volume is too heavy for them to read every letter. Instead they receive a summary prepared by staff and read a sample, including correspondence from key supporters, state and local officials, and other influential citizens.

For the most part legislators answer their mail, except for postcards arriving in mass. Sometimes their reply is quite general: "Thank you for your letter. I always like to hear from my constituents." Etc. But often the response is tailored to the issue addressed, for the advent of computers has made it possible to easily combine stock paragraphs into a seemingly personal letter. The response is likely to be more specific when the legislator shares the constituent's viewpoint and is fuzzier when the legislator is in disagreement or uncommitted on the issue. Computers also permit legislative offices to build mailing lists of constituents interested in particular issues so that later they can be sent statements and reports on legislative votes.

Most legislative offices are organized to perform "case work", that is, to help constituents deal with the bureaucracy and other kinds of problems. Much of this is unrelated to particular legislation, although certain patterns may reveal problems with legislative remedies. In this sense legislators serve as ombudsmen, that is, troubleshooters and overseers of bureaucratic performance.

In Washington, D.C. the majority of staff time of a typical congressional office is spent on dealings with constituents rather than legislation (but committee staff is available on legislative matters). Moreover, U.S. representatives and senators have district and state offices that provide further linkages with constituents. Staffs of state legislators and local council members devote a lot of time to constituent service.

On legislative issues most members of Congress, state legislators, and local council members keep careful track of opinion in the district they represent. They have previously taken stands on particular issues during the election campaign, and they have the position of their political party to uphold. At the same time they are usually careful not to stray too far from what seems to be majority opinion on particular issues. Or if they do on some issues, they try to counterbalance this by sticking with prevalent district opinion on many other issues. They do this both out of respect for their responsibility to represent their district and because they want to be reelected. Even legislators

who garnered 70 percent or more of the vote in the previous election are cautious about casting wrong votes that could cause a drastic turnaround in the next election.

In short, most of the things that legislators do are things we want them to do. Whether their motivation is solely a desire to stay in office or is derived from a genuine commitment to be a true representative, the result is constant interaction between legislators and their constituents.

Contacting Legislators within their District

The natural desire of legislators to keep in touch with their constituents provides natural opportunities for citizens to initiate their own contacts with legislators. If incumbents are perpetually positioning themselves to run for reelection, then voters should position themselves to influence the incumbent positioners. If legislators constantly seek to know citizens' opinions, then citizens can systematically make their views known.

In the jet age most U.S. representatives return to their home district nearly every weekend or least two or three times a month. Most U.S. senators return to their home states with almost as much frequency. Both houses of Congress schedule light workloads on Mondays and Fridays most of the session to facilitate members' travel. They also have ten day recesses several times a year, called "district work period" by the House of Representatives. Similarly state legislators go home on weekends. City and council members are around all the time.

A legislator seeks visibility within the district. Therefore, she or he will attend various events, speak at service clubs, visit community facilities, attend church, go to wakes and funerals. Sometimes the legislator will be available at a district office at particular hours for anyone who wants to drop in, or will organize a series of town meetings to which anyone can come and speak.

As noted earlier, legislators tend to perceive their constituents in several circles: close advisors, primary election supporters, general election supporters, and general population of the district. The closer citizens are to the center the easier their access to and rapport with the legislator. Therefore, citizen activists often find it useful to become strong supporters of their legislators, make campaign contributions, and work in their behalf first in the primary election and then in the general election. Legislators remember who have supported them and are more amenable to meeting with them and listening to what they have to say.

But even without this kind of easy access, individuals and organizations with policy concerns can take advantage of their legislator's visits to the home district. When the legislator makes public appearances, citizens can raise their concerns and present their views. Some organizations "birddog" legislators by getting different persons to go to various appearances and bring up the organization's key issues. Where an organization sets up a town meeting rather than the legislator, it can control

the agenda and be certain that the legislator deals with all of its concerns. Sometimes coalitions set up meetings in which representatives of member organizations have an opportunity to state their positions and then ask the legislator to respond.

When a legislator is appearing on a radio or television call-in show, individuals can call in their questions. Organizations can alert members so that they can place calls.

Advocacy organizations desiring to reach legislators in these ways will need to know the legislative schedule of recesses and the legislators' itinerary during visits to the home district. Although there may be some groups a legislator would prefer to avoid, most legislators are willing to be widely accessible on these occasions.

To influence legislators on specific legislation, there are variety of lobbying techniques that we'll consider in chapters 15 and 16. An advocacy organization can use these techniques to influence specific legislative votes. In lobbying it may be useful to let the legislator know that the organization is following her or his voting record and will be publicizing it during the next election campaign. This reflects an understanding that throughout the legislative session, the legislator is positioning herself or himself for reelection. Strong citizen advocacy can influence the position she or he takes on legislative issues.

Impact of Fundraising

One further activity absorbs a lot of time of legislators beyond their legislative duties, particularly for members of Congress. It is fundraising for the next election campaign or for paying off debts from the last campaign. For many legislators this a heavy burden because the advent of television has made election campaigns much more expensive. This is especially true in states and congressional districts with multiple viewing areas.

Campaign finance records reveal that incumbents have a distinct advantage in raising funds from interest groups and individual contributors. This occurs because interest groups are concerned about legislative votes in the current session as well as in the future. They don't buy votes directly, but they do achieve greater access to present their views and have them listened to.

The superior fundraising capacity of incumbents is one source of discontent that has led to the term limit movement. Term limit advocates deplore the fact that many local, state, and national legislators keep getting reelected. They attribute this to the unfair advantage that incumbents have in fundraising and, in the case of members of Congress, with the mailing frank. Not seeing a way to alter this advantage, those who want to displace incumbents who can't be defeated at the polls have turned to the term limit remedy.

As chapter 11 discusses in greater detail, term limits are anti-democratic because they restrict the choice of voters in each district to select their own representative. However, the concern for incumbent advantage in campaign fundraising is valid for two reasons. First, it tends to give moneyed interests an unfair advantage in gaining greater access to elected officials than the average citizen can achieve. Second, it absorbs a lot of time of legislators, thereby detracting them from their legislative duties. The best remedy is campaign finance reform, a subject we'll take up in chapter 9, not term limits.

EXECUTIVE OFFICIALS

Like legislators, mayors, county executives, governors, the president of the United States, and other elected executive officials often want to be reelected if they are eligible for another term. (Historically term limits have been more common for chief executives than legislators, especially for governors). So they position themselves for reelection as they go about their duties.

Usually an elected chief executive has a distinct advantage over legislators in gaining publicity. A city has only one mayor, a state only one governor, the nation only one president whereas city councils, state legislatures, and Congress have many members. The same pattern prevails in counties with an elected executive and county council, compared to the older pattern of a board of county commissioners. In these situations the chief executive is a central focus of media attention while legislative leadership is much more spread out. Moreover, the executive process is more action-oriented than the deliberative processes of legislative bodies, and this generates greater publicity.

Even so elected chief executives do many of the same things legislators do to communicate with their constituents and stay in touch with them: issue news releases, hold press conferences, grant interviews to print and broadcast journalists, appear on radio and television shows, speak at community meetings and conventions, appear at public events, attend funerals. In addition, the chief executive can call upon a host of appointed officials to perform similar outreach. In the process they are in touch with a variety of group constituencies, who are told how the chief executive shares their concerns.

Citizens who want to influence chief executives can take advantage of these opportunities: invite them to meetings, catch them when they are making public appearances, call in when they are on radio and television shows. When cabinet members and department heads appear instead of the chief executive, citizens can send messages to the chief executive through them.

Lobbying executive officials is different than lobbying legislators, for executive policy-making processes are usually not as open and ordinarily don't follow a set procedure and timetable. There are no bills or proposed ordinance to study, support, oppose, or propose amendments, although chief

executives often develop legislative proposals (commonly out of public view). Nevertheless, some key policy processes take place regularly, the most important being the annual operating budget. Vacancies in top appointive positions occur, and who gets the job affects future policy decisions in the particular department. So there are matters on which citizens can lobby chief executives. In several chapters of Part III, we'll examine in greater detail different methods citizens can use to influence executive officials.

Citizen advocacy can occur whether or not the chief executive is seeking reelection. But if the mayor, county executive, governor, or president is positioning himself or herself for reelection, citizens can recognize the positioning process and take advantage of it in their efforts to influence executive policy decisions. In this manner citizens can keep executive officials constantly alert and thereby more accountable to the public they were elected to serve.

June 1, 1993

Chapter 6. Infusing Political Parties

For the last 20 years we have heard pundits describe the decline and possible demise of American political parties. They are wrong. Political parties are alive and flourishing today as vital instruments of American democracy. They play important roles in achieving the consent of the governed.

Political parties provide the framework for nominating candidates for public office and campaigning for their election. Political party affiliation is a major factor in organizing legislative bodies, in making executive appointments, and in selecting judges. Both in elections and governance the two major parties, Democratic and Republican, are overwhelmingly dominant.

Look at the facts. All but one of the 535 members of Congress are affiliated with the Democratic or the Republican party. All but 10 of the 7,412 state legislators chosen in partisan elections belong to the two major parties (this excludes the 49 members of Nebraska's unicameral, nonpartisan legislature). [1992 data; update] There are ___ city council members elected in partisan elections, and virtually all of them are Democrats or Republicans. More than 80 percent of the counties hold partisan elections for their governing body, and most winners come from the two major parties.

Congress, state legislatures, and city councils chosen in partisan elections divide into majority and minority blocs on the basis of party affiliation. Ordinarily the majority determines the content of bills reported out of committee and controls the consideration of legislation on the floor. The minority serves as a vocal, in-house opposition.

Every U.S. president since George Washington was a member of one of the two major parties of his time. Forty-eight of the 50 governors are currently either a Democrat or a Republican, and most of the time all of them are. Almost all mayors and county executives chosen in partisan elections are Democrats or Republicans.

Elected chief executives look mostly to their own party in making appointments of cabinet officers, members of regulatory boards, and judges. Where persons from the same party control both the executive and legislative branches, they have a bond to facilitate cooperative relationships. Where they are from different parties, policy competition is likely to be greater, and sometimes gridlock ensues.

The influence of party affiliation in governance stems from the significant roles that political parties play in the electoral process. In partisan elections, candidates run as nominees of particular parties. This means that initial competition occurs during party primaries, caucuses, and conventions. Then parties help to organize, finance, and carry out campaigns in the general election.

Even when the campaign is dominated by candidates, as many are these days, party loyalists ordinarily form a solid core of political workers.

Accordingly, persons with political ambition usually must attach themselves to one of the two major parties if they want to get elected to public office. To a considerable extent the same is true for persons seeking appointment to high-level, policy-making positions. Although independent candidates and nominees of small parties serve a useful function as an outlet for voters' frustrations

with the major parties and as a means of focusing attention on particular concerns, they rarely win.¹

For citizens not seeking public office but wanting to influence who is elected and the policies they adopt, involvement with a political party can be an useful endeavor. Persons so inclined will discover that political parties are for the most part remarkably open to citizens who want to partake in their activities. You don't have to have an invitation to participate, but you do need to know how political parties are organized, how they function, when and how best to get involved. With this knowledge and a strong commitment you can help make the party of your choice a more effective instrument of democracy.

Pluralistic Endeavors

The Democratic Party and the Republican Party are highly pluralistic endeavors. They are amalgamations that enable persons sharing common political values to work together in election campaigns and governance. Neither is a cohesive monolith with a unified, top-down hierarchy. Rather each of them is composed of mostly autonomous local and state units which come together in a loose-knit, national federation.

Neither the Democratic nor the Republican party maintains ideological purity. In neither of

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Neither party has formal membership requiring strict creedal adherence or payment of dues. The closest you come to joining is by stating your party preference in voter registration or at the primary polling place, and at that in only three-fourths of the states. Mainly it is a matter of personal identity.

Democrats and Republicans range from persons who merely identify with the party label but do little to support the party to those who hold party jobs and run for public office on the party ticket. At the core are party stalwarts, strong Democrats and strong Republicans, who usually vote the straight ticket. At the outer edge are weak Democrats and weak Republicans who are willing to split their ticket and vote for candidates from another party or independent candidates.

Depth of Involvement

Persons who identify with the Democratic and Republican parties extend from those on the outer edge who claim party identity but don't even vote to an inner core of public officials elected as party nominees. In this sense party identity can be visualized as a set of circles within circles, as

shown in Figure 6-1. These circles divide Democrats and Republicans into several bands, based upon depth of party involvement. Citizens becoming more involved in party activities can move from the outside toward the inside.

Marginal involvement. The outermost portion of Band One contains persons who identify with the party but do little or nothing beyond voting. Sometimes they don't even vote. They are passive identifiers who oftentimes vote a split ticket at the polls. Where their party identity is known, as occurs in states where voter registration and primary voting reveals party affiliation, party

Figure 6-1. Affiliates of Major Political Parties

*Independents Leaning
toward Party*

*Weak
Party Identifiers
Strong*

Active Volunteers

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Candidates

*Office
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workers can seek them out, encourage them to come to the polls and vote for the party ticket, and urge them to get involved in party activities.

Millions of identifiers do participate in politics to some extent. They almost always vote in the general election and often in competitive party primaries. They wear candidate buttons, display bumper stickers, put out yard signs, make financial contributions, attend coffees for candidates, go to rallies. Mostly they are active just before an election rather than year round. However, they form a pool of volunteers who candidates can recruit to work in their behalf prior to the primary election or nominating convention. They also serve as a reserve corps of persons who party officials can enlist in a variety of activities necessary to sustain the party.

Active volunteers. Band Two consists of party identifiers who devote time to work for the party or particular candidates. Party volunteers help with multiple tasks required to keep the organization going: answering phones, record keeping, fundraising, telephone polling, door-to-door canvassing, voter registration, holding coffees, organizing rallies, getting out the vote, and other campaign activities. Volunteers for candidates do many of the same things, but their loyalty is more toward their candidate than the party as a whole. A gradation occurs between candidate and party volunteers, for many of the former are drawn from the latter and are likely to work for the whole ticket in the general election.

Citizens who want to get more involved in the electoral process will find that volunteering for party or candidate support activities is an excellent place to start. Most campaign organizations welcome volunteers with open arms, though sometimes they use them poorly or show insufficient

appreciation. For persons who want to become a party officer or the party's candidate for a public office, volunteering is often the place to begin. You become known. You get the feel of politics and learn the lay of the land. You meet people who may become your supporters. You support other officeseekers this year with the hope that they will support you in future years.

Party Structure

Band Three contains persons holding party offices. In structure the two parties are built from bottom-up, but some party operations work top-down. Form and selection processes for local and state party organizations differ among the states and in many states are codified in state law. No one knows for sure how many serve as party officers and convention delegates, but perhaps between them the Democratic and Republican parties have close to half a million. Thus, there are lots of opportunities for interested citizens.

Precinct offices. The base for both parties is the approximately 190,000 local voting districts, often called "precincts", sometimes "divisions" or some other name. Each has a precinct leader (or a similar title). Depending upon the state, they are chosen by party members voting in the primary or general election, by party caucus, or through appointment by a city or county party official.

Precinct leaders recruit and direct the activities of block workers and other volunteers. These precinct workers are the field force of the Democratic and Republican parties. They reach out to voters in their precinct, distribute campaign literature, collect funds, and get out the vote.

In some localities precinct leaders come together in ward committees. In many states they play a role in selecting members of city, county, and state party committees and in choosing

convention delegations. For that reason organizations with a strong concern for a particular issue, such as abortion, equal rights, or with a definitive political orientation, such as "left", "right", encourage and assist their members to become precinct officers. Individuals looking for a career in politics can also start at this level.

A 19__ survey found that __ percent of all precinct positions were filled, which meant that __ were vacant. Filling vacancies can therefore be a place to begin, and then as periodic elections are held for precinct offices, they can be contested.

Local committees. Local party committees are built upon the precinct foundation. The Democratic and Republican parties have committees in virtually all of the 3,042 counties in the United States and in a large number of cities, New England towns, and township with strong governmental powers.

Typically county and city committees are composed of all precinct leaders. They elect the chairperson, who directs local party activities and may represent the county on the state committee. Thus, a county chairperson is an important figure in party politics.

Local party committees usually operate under rules specified by the state central committee or state law, but in their operations they are basically autonomous. In primary elections some of them offer a slate of candidates for state and local offices, sometimes even for Congress. A more common pattern nowadays is let candidates compete and then support the winners in the general election.

Local committees are free to take positions on public issues on their own. They cannot be forced to follow a party line issued by the state committee or national committee, but more often

than not they are loyal to these broader entities. If local party officials don't like the candidates offered by their party's state or national unit, they usually sit on their hands rather than oppose them outright.

Where a state legislative district or a congressional district encompasses more than one local governmental jurisdiction, local party committees come together in the nominating process. In some states they hold nominating conventions to select the party's candidate. In other states the candidate is chosen in a primary election, and the aggregate of local committees supports her or him in the general election.

State committees. Because each state may establish its own political party structure, state party committees vary greatly around the nation. They range in size from fairly small to quite large. Most commonly state committee members are elected at the primary election or by local party conventions, but in some states county chairpersons form the state committee. The committee formally elects the state chairperson, but in many instances the governor or the last gubernatorial candidate determines who it will be.

Many state committees play a prominent role in selection of party nominees for state office: governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, and other elected executive officers. In yesteryears party leaders in a number of states decided their party's nominee and got it ratified by the state convention or in the party primary election. This happens less frequently now because candidates usually come forth as self-starters, but sometimes party leaders have a hand in recruiting who they think will be a strong candidate and then issue an endorsement. In __ states the state committee is

responsible for organizing and conducting a nominating convention for state offices.

Like local committees, state party committees are autonomous and are not directed what to do by the national committee. However, during the past 20 years many state committees have received technical assistance and financial contributions from their national committee. They in turn have offered assistance to local party committees, such as computerized lists of registered voters, training for candidates, and sometimes financial donations.

National committee. The national committees of the Democratic and Republican parties are composed of Usually the party's presidential nominee selects the national chairperson.

The central task of the national committee is to organize and run the quadrennial national convention to nominate the party's candidate for president. As an extension of this responsibility, the national committee establishes rules for selection of delegates from the states, such as when state primaries may be held and the gender composition of delegates. Court rulings have affirmed the right of the national committee to adopt binding requirements that state party organizations must observe even if it means changing state laws.

The actual presidential nominating process is, though, highly decentralized. For the Democratic Party delegation selection in 1992 occurred in primary elections in 33 states, in caucuses in 16 states, and a combination in one state. The Republican Party relied on primaries in 26 states, caucuses in 22 states, a combination in one state, and by district committees in one.

The national convention selects the party's nominee for president and vice president and adopts a party platform. Since 1956 [check] Republican and Democratic nominees for president

have had the nomination sewn up before the convention opened, and therefore their representatives have had a strong influence on the platform but not unchecked control. The platform, though, is not legally binding on the party's presidential and vice-presidential candidates, on the party's representatives in Congress, or on state and local party committees. Nor can the national committee tell party members in Congress what legislation to enact.

Although national party committees cannot command state and local committees, they may get involved in state and local party affairs by making financial contributions to candidates, offering technical assistance and training to party officials and candidates, and in some instances helping to obtain a strong candidate to run for an open seat in Congress or against an incumbent of the other party.

Convention delegates. Precinct officials and members of local, state, and party committees serve for specific terms. Delegates to party conventions are chosen just for that event (though many hold other party positions). In 1992 the Democratic National Convention had 4,287 voting delegates, and the Republican National Convention had 2,209. In one cycle of local and state nominating conventions for local and state office, approximately _____ persons serve as delegates.

Party members often seek election as a convention delegate in order to support a particular candidate or slate of candidates. The candidates themselves often decide who may run in their behalf for delegate positions.

Candidates and Elected Officials

Candidates. Band Four of the circle of circles describing the two major political parties is

composed of candidates for public office. In previous chapters we have noted that most of them initiate their own quest for office rather than being sought out and slated by party committees or core leadership groups. They position themselves to run. Once in office they position themselves to achieve reelection. We'll look at how they campaign in the next chapter.

Elected officials. The inner circle of the Democratic and Republican parties holds public officials elected on the party ticket. It is a multinucleated circle, for elected officials are as varied as the party whose label they carry. Within one unit of government -- local, state, national -- legislators and the elected chief executive often form separate nuclei for party activities. So much so that political scientists speak of the "presidential party" and the "congressional party", with similar division in state and local arenas.

Legislative units. Political parties form the basis for organizing the U.S. Congress, the state legislatures except Nebraska which has a nonpartisan unicameral body, and many city and county councils. This occurs as persons from the same political party join together to choose legislative officers and work out a party agenda. Ordinarily the majority party chooses the presiding officer, except where the vice president or lieutenant governor presides over the senate. Committee chairs may be chosen by the legislative committees themselves with the majority party prevailing, by the party caucus, or by the party's elected leader (speaker of the house, majority leader of the senate, chair of city or county council). Party identity is also the basis for organizing the minority in legislative bodies.

By and large the legislative party is independent of the national, state, or local party

committee and the elected chief executive, even if the latter is from the same party. Although they have the same party identity, these different units function as co-equals. Exceptions occur in localities and states with a tight party structure, sometimes referred to as a political machine. In such cases the political boss or a small oligarchy of leaders instructs legislators how to vote on particular bills.

Chief executive. It is customary for the president of the United States to be the dominant person in his (someday her) party. He chooses the national party chairperson, and the national committee works under guidance, sometimes tight control, of the White House. But even if the president is nominal party leader, he still must deal collegially with members of his party in Congress.

When they are from the same party, sometimes the relationship is cooperative, at other times prickly. When the president is of one party and Congress (or at least one its houses) is of the opposite party, party division is an important factor in executive-congressional relationships.

A similar pattern prevails in many states and in local governmental units with partisan elections. The governor, mayor, and county executive may dominate the party machinery, but party members in the state legislature, city and county council act independently. In some states, however, party organization is cohesive enough (perhaps descendent of an old-time machine) that the governor can play a more dominant role over the legislature. And in some localities the mayor or county executive can assert similar control. This happens most frequently where the chief executive has control of a sizable number of jobs and can use patronage as an instrument of dominance.

Conclusion

In recent years millions of Americans have expressed dissatisfaction with the Democratic and Republican parties and their candidates. As an outlet for their frustration, they have voted for Ross Perot, other independents, and third party candidates. This is quite appropriate, especially to send a message. Nonetheless, dissatisfied citizens may be able to achieve greater long-lasting results by infusing the two major political parties.

After all, office holders affiliated with the two major parties hold most of legislative and elected executive positions in national and state governments and in the _____ units of local general government with partisan elections. They are nominated in party primaries, caucuses, and conventions, and the parties work for their election. While office holders in the American system are not bound by a party line on policy issues, a good deal of public policy development occurs in a party setting, especially in legislative bodies.

As we have seen, selection of party committees is bottom-up: party members choose precincts officials who select local committee members, local committees elect members of the state committee, and state committees select members of the national committee. Also, individual legislators elect their party leaders within the legislative body. This same bottom-up process operates in selecting delegates to state and national nominating conventions. This being the nature of the Democratic and Republican parties, citizens who want to get involved in party politics will find that their best entree is in their home community. Organizations desiring to infuse political parties with their ideas and their people will do best with a grassroots strategy. From this base they will be able to influence who serves on state and national party committees, who will be delegates to nominating

conventions, the party platforms adopted there, and who is nominated for various elective offices.

Political parties, renewed through grassroots infusion, can continue to play important roles as essential instruments of American democracy.

June 1, 1993

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Persons who identify with the Democratic and Republican parties extend from those on the outer edge who claim party identity but don't even vote to an inner core of public officials elected as party nominees. In this sense party identity can be visualized as a set of circles within circles, as

shown in Figure 6-1. These circles divide Democrats and Republicans into several bands, based upon depth of party involvement. Citizens becoming more involved in party activities can move from the outside toward the inside.

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than not they are loyal to these broader entities. If local party officials don't like the candidates offered by their party's state or national unit, they usually sit on their hands rather than oppose them outright.

Where a state legislative district or a congressional district encompasses more than one local governmental jurisdiction, local party committees come together in the nominating process. In some states they hold nominating conventions to select the party's candidate. In other states the candidate is chosen in a primary election, and the aggregate of local committees supports her or him in the general election.

State committees. Because each state may establish its own political party structure, state party committees vary greatly around the nation. They range in size from fairly small to quite large. Most commonly state committee members are elected at the primary election or by local party conventions, but in some states county chairpersons form the state committee. The committee formally elects the state chairperson, but in many instances the governor or the last gubernatorial candidate determines who it will be.

Many state committees play a prominent role in selection of party nominees for state office: governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, and other elected executive officers. In yesteryears party leaders in a number of states decided their party's nominee and got it ratified by the state convention or in the party primary election. This happens less frequently now because candidates usually come forth as self-starters, but sometimes party leaders have a hand in recruiting who they think will be a strong candidate and then issue an endorsement. In __ states the state committee is

responsible for organizing and conducting a nominating convention for state offices.

Like local committees, state party committees are autonomous and are not directed what to do by the national committee. However, during the past 20 years many state committees have received technical assistance and financial contributions from their national committee. They in turn have offered assistance to local party committees, such as computerized lists of registered voters, training for candidates, and sometimes financial donations.

National committee. The national committees of the Democratic and Republican parties are composed of Usually the party's presidential nominee selects the national chairperson.

The central task of the national committee is to organize and run the quadrennial national convention to nominate the party's candidate for president. As an extension of this responsibility, the national committee establishes rules for selection of delegates from the states, such as when state primaries may be held and the gender composition of delegates. Court rulings have affirmed the right of the national committee to adopt binding requirements that state party organizations must observe even if it means changing state laws.

The actual presidential nominating process is, though, highly decentralized. For the Democratic Party delegation selection in 1992 occurred in primary elections in 33 states, in caucuses in 16 states, and a combination in one state. The Republican Party relied on primaries in 26 states, caucuses in 22 states, a combination in one state, and by district committees in one.

The national convention selects the party's nominee for president and vice president and adopts a party platform. Since 1956 [check] Republican and Democratic nominees for president

have had the nomination sewn up before the convention opened, and therefore their representatives have had a strong influence on the platform but not unchecked control. The platform, though, is not legally binding on the party's presidential and vice-presidential candidates, on the party's representatives in Congress, or on state and local party committees. Nor can the national committee tell party members in Congress what legislation to enact.

Although national party committees cannot command state and local committees, they may get involved in state and local party affairs by making financial contributions to candidates, offering technical assistance and training to party officials and candidates, and in some instances helping to obtain a strong candidate to run for an open seat in Congress or against an incumbent of the other party.

Convention delegates. Precinct officials and members of local, state, and party committees serve for specific terms. Delegates to party conventions are chosen just for that event (though many hold other party positions). In 1992 the Democratic National Convention had 4,287 voting delegates, and the Republican National Convention had 2,209. In one cycle of local and state nominating conventions for local and state office, approximately _____ persons serve as delegates.

Party members often seek election as a convention delegate in order to support a particular candidate or slate of candidates. The candidates themselves often decide who may run in their behalf for delegate positions.

Candidates and Elected Officials

Candidates. Band Four of the circle of circles describing the two major political parties is

composed of candidates for public office. In previous chapters we have noted that most of them initiate their own quest for office rather than being sought out and slated by party committees or core leadership groups. They position themselves to run. Once in office they position themselves to achieve reelection. We'll look at how they campaign in the next chapter.

Elected officials. The inner circle of the Democratic and Republican parties holds public officials elected on the party ticket. It is a multinucleated circle, for elected officials are as varied as the party whose label they carry. Within one unit of government -- local, state, national -- legislators and the elected chief executive often form separate nuclei for party activities. So much so that political scientists speak of the "presidential party" and the "congressional party", with similar division in state and local arenas.

Legislative units. Political parties form the basis for organizing the U.S. Congress, the state legislatures except Nebraska which has a nonpartisan unicameral body, and many city and county councils. This occurs as persons from the same political party join together to choose legislative officers and work out a party agenda. Ordinarily the majority party chooses the presiding officer, except where the vice president or lieutenant governor presides over the senate. Committee chairs may be chosen by the legislative committees themselves with the majority party prevailing, by the party caucus, or by the party's elected leader (speaker of the house, majority leader of the senate, chair of city or county council). Party identity is also the basis for organizing the minority in legislative bodies.

By and large the legislative party is independent of the national, state, or local party

committee and the elected chief executive, even if the latter is from the same party. Although they have the same party identity, these different units function as co-equals. Exceptions occur in localities and states with a tight party structure, sometimes referred to as a political machine. In such cases the political boss or a small oligarchy of leaders instructs legislators how to vote on particular bills.

Chief executive. It is customary for the president of the United States to be the dominant person in his (someday her) party. He chooses the national party chairperson, and the national committee works under guidance, sometimes tight control, of the White House. But even if the president is nominal party leader, he still must deal collegially with members of his party in Congress.

When they are from the same party, sometimes the relationship is cooperative, at other times prickly. When the president is of one party and Congress (or at least one its houses) is of the opposite party, party division is an important factor in executive-congressional relationships.

A similar pattern prevails in many states and in local governmental units with partisan elections. The governor, mayor, and county executive may dominate the party machinery, but party members in the state legislature, city and county council act independently. In some states, however, party organization is cohesive enough (perhaps descendent of an old-time machine) that the governor can play a more dominant role over the legislature. And in some localities the mayor or county executive can assert similar control. This happens most frequently where the chief executive has control of a sizable number of jobs and can use patronage as an instrument of dominance.

Conclusion

In recent years millions of Americans have expressed dissatisfaction with the Democratic and Republican parties and their candidates. As an outlet for their frustration, they have voted for Ross Perot, other independents, and third party candidates. This is quite appropriate, especially to send a message. Nonetheless, dissatisfied citizens may be able to achieve greater long-lasting results by infusing the two major political parties.

After all, office holders affiliated with the two major parties hold most of legislative and elected executive positions in national and state governments and in the _____ units of local general government with partisan elections. They are nominated in party primaries, caucuses, and conventions, and the parties work for their election. While office holders in the American system are not bound by a party line on policy issues, a good deal of public policy development occurs in a party setting, especially in legislative bodies.

As we have seen, selection of party committees is bottom-up: party members choose precincts officials who select local committee members, local committees elect members of the state committee, and state committees select members of the national committee. Also, individual legislators elect their party leaders within the legislative body. This same bottom-up process operates in selecting delegates to state and national nominating conventions. This being the nature of the Democratic and Republican parties, citizens who want to get involved in party politics will find that their best entree is in their home community. Organizations desiring to infuse political parties with their ideas and their people will do best with a grassroots strategy. From this base they will be able to influence who serves on state and national party committees, who will be delegates to nominating

conventions, the party platforms adopted there, and who is nominated for various elective offices.

Political parties, renewed through grassroots infusion, can continue to play important roles as essential instruments of American democracy.

June 1, 1993

PART THREE. INFLUENCING PUBLIC POLICY

Chapter 12. Processes of Governmental Decision-Making

We voters in the United States elect 497,155 public officials. In that manner we provide our basic consent for them to govern. But that doesn't end the consent process. We continue to interact with them throughout their terms in office as they make public policy, and also with persons who they appoint to policy-making positions. If we are to be effective in this relationship, we need to thoroughly understand how governmental decisions are made.

In a strictly legal sense legislative bodies and executive officials make final decisions on public policies: Congress, state legislatures, county, city and township councils enacting statutes and ordinances, adopting budgets, making appropriations, levying taxes; the president, governors, county executives, mayors, township commissioners making decisions on a host of executive matters.

In practice, however, almost always these formal decisions are the end product of processes involving a variety of persons inside and outside government and extending through weeks, months, and sometimes years. Rarely does an elective chief executive act without consulting others, though he or she may sometimes make decisions contrary to advice received or in face of certain opposition. Legislative decisions are always a group process even though some legislators have more power and influence than others.

In this kind of pluralistic decision-making, interpersonal relationships loom large. In particular, three sets of relationships are important.

The first set occurs among persons holding governmental positions: executive, legislative, and judicial. Within the executive branch elected officials interact with those who they appoint in formulating policy. Legislators interact with one another as bills move through the legislative process. The judicial appeal process brings layers of courts into relationship, and judges in multi-member appellate courts deal with one another in make their decisions. Executive officials and legislators continuously interact. And judges deal with governmental executives and legislators in certain legal cases.

A second set consists of relationships between public officials and citizens, acting individually and organized into interest groups and political parties. Varied manifestations occur: public officials providing information; citizens offering views and comments on proposed policies and initiating their own proposals; direct and grassroots lobbying; public hearings; advisory committees; other participation processes; media campaigns; and protest demonstrations. Political party leaders have a special relationship with legislators and executive officials from their party.

A third set involves relationships among individual citizens, within and between interest groups and political parties. Citizens get together to formulate their views and work out strategies for dealing with government. Groups come together in coalitions. Interest groups with opposing views compete in their efforts to influence governmental policies.

Indeed, relationships hold the key to understanding democracy (really, any form of government). To be sure, constitutions, statutes, and operating procedures provide the framework. The organizational structure of government identifies officials in policy-making positions and charts their

formal ranking. But the key variable is ever-changing relationships among influential persons within and outside government.

These are dynamic relationships, but many of the processes follow a predictable sequence. Some processes observe a regular calendar schedule. Accordingly, the time dimension is a constant factor in governmental decision-making.

To be influential, citizens therefore need to understand the decision-making processes, who the real decision-makers are, and how citizens can best relate to them and get involved in governmental decision-making. It is through this kind of interaction that consent of the governed achieves its continuity.

Enacting Legislation

Public decisions occurring through relationships that extend through time can be illustrated by the legislative process. It flows through a regular sequence of events that may consume three to nine months. The primary relationship is among legislators themselves: members of city and county councils, state legislatures, and the U.S. Congress. These legislators also have ongoing relationships with the elected chief executive (mayor, county executive, governor, president), other executive officials, representatives of interest groups, and political party leaders.

This is illustrated in Figure 12-1, which shows the main stages of the legislative pipeline used by a typical city council. Like most city and county councils and the Nebraska legislature, it is unicameral, that is, has only one chamber.

Figure 12-1. Legislative Process of a Typical City Council

Executive Branch

<i>City Council</i>	<i>Drafting bill</i>	<i>Public hearing</i>	<i>Committee action</i>	<i>Floor action</i>	<i>Approval</i>	<i>Mayor</i>
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Interest Groups, Political Parties

Time

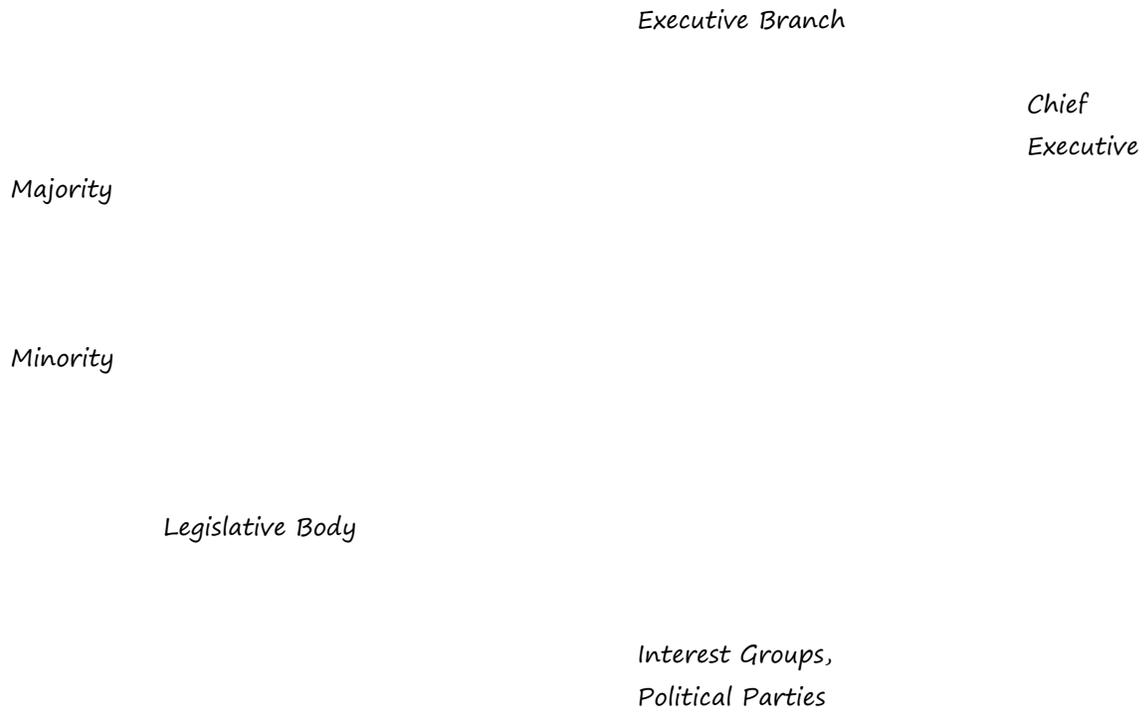
In the legislative process city council members are obviously involved in each stage. Often they are divided into majority and minority blocs. Other participants are also in the picture from beginning to end. Bill drafting may have input from council staff, executive officials, and interest group representatives. City department representatives and citizen witnesses appear at public hearings. Although direct relationships among council members is the key ingredient in committee consideration and floor action, the mayor, department heads, interest group lobbyists, political party leaders, and ordinary citizens make their views known and exert their influence.

After the bill comes out of committee, citizens lobby council members to pass, reject, or modify it. The mayor may seek changes and may even threaten a veto if the bill is not amended in a certain way. As these outside influences press in on them, council members continue their bargaining with one another. When legislation goes to the mayor for approval, interest groups may push for approval or veto. The council majority may also urge the mayor to sign the bill, and the council minority may lobby for a veto.

During this process participants look back to past promises and look ahead to matters that will come up later. Thus, past, present, and future enter into passage of particular legislation.

A cross-section of these relationships is shown in Figure 12-2. Bargaining occurs within majority and minority blocs of the legislative body, between the two blocs, and within committees. The mayor presides over other executive officials who have an input into legislative proposals and who sometimes have their own direct contacts with council members. Interest groups form alliances and compete. Political parties get involved.

Figure 12-2. Cross Section of Relationships in Legislative Process



In the U.S. Congress and the 49 bicameral state legislatures the process is more than twice as complicated because a bill has to go through these steps in each chamber (most commonly called the House of Representatives and the Senate), next to a conference committee drawn from the two bodies, and back to each house for passage. This adds relationships between House and the Senate to the process. This is shown in Figure 12-3.

Figure 12-3. Legislative Process in Bicameral Bodies

Senate

House

Drafting bill	Public hearing	Committee action	Floor action	Conference committee	Floor action	Executive approval
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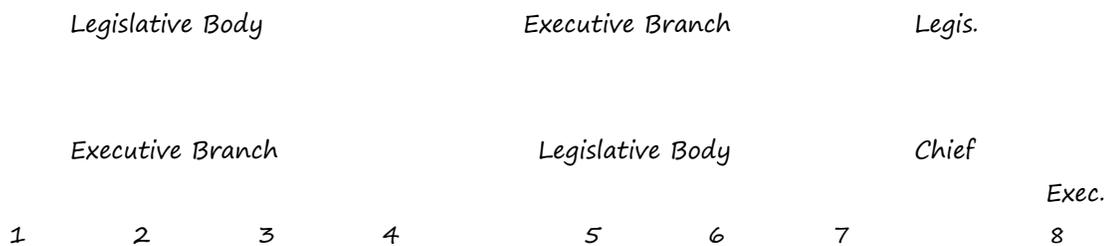
In Congress and many state legislatures subcommittees generally hold the hearings and "mark up" the bill before it goes to the full committee, which can make further amendments. Usually the majority leadership or its policy committee schedules the bills for floor consideration. In the U.S. House of Representatives this function is handled by the Rules Committee.

Throughout the legislative process in bicameral bodies, the chief executive, department heads, interest groups, political parties, and individual citizens make their views known to members of both houses and exert pressures on them.

Budget-Making

In a similar manner sets of relationships extending through time occur in the budget-making. This is a significant process because the annual budget of a governmental unit determines priorities for public spending and indicates sources of revenue. In most governmental units in the United States the chief executive develops the budget and proposes it to the legislative body for consideration and adoption. Working from the outside, interest groups try to influence budget decisions at various stages. The budget pipeline is shown in Figure 12-4.

Figure 12-4. Budget-making Process in Governmental Units in United States



Interest Groups

Stages

- 1 Advanced preparation*
- 2 Departmental requests*
- 3 Budget office review*
- 4 Chief executive decisions*
- 5 Public hearings*
- 6 Committee action*
- 7 Floor action*
- 8 Chief executive approval*

During the preparatory period governmental agencies begin considering what they want to request, and the budget office prepares instructions to guide agency submissions. Agency requests are based upon these guidelines, though sometimes they go beyond what the budget office suggests. Moreover, agency heads may appeal directly to the chief executive. The budget office reviews agency requests, makes adjustments (conferring with the chief executive on important issues), and puts together the total budget with expenditures related to anticipated revenues.

The chief executive gets more and more into the process as it goes along, makes major policy decisions on spending priorities and revenue measures, and then formally transmits the budget to the legislative body. At that time the complete budget is published for citizen review.

In mayor-council cities the city council holds public hearings with agency representatives and citizens, modifies the budget as it chooses, and adopts it. In most cities the mayor has authority to veto the budget as adopted council, and in some places may veto specific items. Council can override, usually with a "super" majority of three-fifths or two-thirds required.

In council-manager cities the manager submits the budget, and there usually isn't a mayor with veto authority. Counties might have an elected executive and a council, a council and an appointed administrator, or a commission that combines legislative and executive functions.

Budgetary processes vary according to form.

The federal budgetary process is much more complicated because Congress has four stages of consideration: first, an overall budget resolution to set the general framework of spending and taxation; second, authorization of expenditures; third, appropriation of funds; and fourth, tax

legislation.

Adoption of the budget resolution occurs after consideration by House and Senate budget committees, approved by each house separately, then a House-Senate conference committee to reconcile differences, and final passage by the two houses. Authorization of expenditures goes through a set of authorizing committees, divided among major functions (such as Agriculture, Armed Services, Education and Labor, and others) with a conference committees on each function.

The House and Senate appropriations committees are organized into subcommittees dealing with each function. They make the first determination, followed by review and possibly amendments by the full committees. The committees report separate appropriations bills for each function rather than a single, all-encompassing appropriations for the entire government. Next comes floor action where amendments are possible, then reconciliation of differences between the two houses by a conference committee, final passage by the entire Congress, and approval by the president. If the president vetoes an appropriations bill, Congress may override by a two-thirds majority in each house, but if unsuccessful, Congress must modify the bill to satisfy the president.

While this is going on the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee are developing tax legislation, which goes to the floor of each house, then to a conference committee, back to each house for final action, and finally to the president.

The federal budgetary process takes about 15 months from the start of departmental preparation to appropriations of funds by Congress and approval by the president.

State budgetary processes fall between local government and the federal budget in their

complexity. All state legislatures except Nebraska's are bicameral so that the budget has to go through both houses, a conference committee, and back to the two houses for final action. Some divide appropriations and tax legislation, but the process is as not complicated as that of the U.S. Congress. Even so a state budget is likely to take nine to twelve months from the beginning of departmental preparations to final approval by the governor.

In most governmental jurisdictions in the United States, budget-making is primarily an internal operation until the complete budget is published upon submission to the legislative body. Even so, some interest groups seek to influence agency requests on particular items during the stage of departmental preparation. As an exception to the general pattern, a few cities have a much fuller process for citizen participation in budget-making, beginning in the earliest stage, as we'll review in chapter 20.

Key Issues

Numerous other governmental decisions are made through processes involving many actors inside and outside government and stretching out over weeks and months. Citizens who want to influence these decisions must be aware of these processes, the sequences they follow, the best moments to achieve meaningful input, and who the key decision-makers are at each stage.

There are many ways for early citizen involvement to occur. Such as: Advocacy organizations conferring with legislators and their staffs in drafting bills. Citizens offering their ideas to departmental officials as the departments begin to prepare their budget requests. Neighborhood residents involved in defining problems during the initial stage of neighborhood planning. We'll

consider these approaches in greater depth in later chapters.

In anticipation of such discussion, here is a checklist for citizens to analyze governmental decision-making:

- *What is the process followed by governmental officials?*
- *Who is involved, officially and unofficially?*
- *How can one's interests be represented among these decision-makers?*
- *At what stages do citizens have easy access?*
- *When do citizens have to be assertive to be heard?*
- *What is the best way to gain access in these circumstances?*

Timing is crucial. One can be too early -- advocating a specific position before official decision-makers are thinking about the issue; or too late -- recommending a particular action after concrete decisions have been made. More often citizens are too late than too early.

Conceptually consent of the governed in American is a continuous, interactive process. In practicality it occurs in specific situations at definite times and is accomplished by particular persons.

To be effectively involved, citizens must know who, when, and how. With this knowledge they are in a position to interact with public officials in a timely manner. They can even gain representation within the ranks of decision-makers.

May 27, 1993

Reconciliation through Forgiveness

by Howard W. Hallman

Many years ago I read about a literature professor who gave his class an exam that began by asking them to list the books they had read which they disliked the most. The students responded with great enthusiasm.

*If we were asked a similar question about people we dislike the most, no doubt most of us could make quite a list. Like Martin Luther wrote in the 16th century, "we live in the world among people who sorely vex us and give us occasion for impatience, anger, revenge, and so on." Like the Lord High Executioner in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Mikado*, we could put together a list of "society offenders who never would be missed."*

For most of us there are whole groups of people, defined by race, gender, religion, or ethnicity, who annoy, irritate, and anger us or whom we distrust or consider to be inferior. If you think this doesn't apply to you, try a silent exercise in free association by completing these sentences:

Blacks are _____. Whites are _____. Men are _____. Women are _____. Jews are _____.
Born-again Christians are _____. Catholics are _____. Latinos are _____.
Arab-Americans are _____. Koreans are _____. Rich people are _____. Poor people are _____.

For most of us some negative words are likely to flash through our minds for some of these groups, even though we check our tongues and don't utter them. These group stereotypes underlie much of today's social anger.

What can we do about it? We can start with ourselves. We can ask ourselves the same question the literature professor asked his students about the books they disliked the most: to what shortcoming in your self do you attribute this dislike? To what personal shortcomings do we attribute our own distrust of other people, our anger, our fear and hatred?

Clearly we weren't born with fear, anger, and hatred directed toward particular groups. Rather its like the song in the 1949 Broadway musical,

South Pacific.

You've got to be taught to hate and fear,
You've got to be taught from year to year,
It's got to be drummed in your dear little ear,
You've got to be carefully taught.

You've got to be taught to be afraid
of people whose eyes are oddly made,
And people whose skin is a different shade,
You've got to be carefully taught.

You've got to be taught before it's too late,
Before you are six or seven or eight,
To hate all the people your relatives hate,
You've got to be carefully taught!

The redeeming side of this conclusion is that hate is not innate. We learn it. Whom we have learned to hate, we can learn not to hate. We can change our attitudes toward other people. We can modify our conduct as we relate to them.

We can deal with our fears and cope with adversity without creating personal enemies or encompassing an entire social group in animosity.

And we can be careful not to pass on to our children our own fears and

hatreds.

Above all we can seek and offer forgiveness, for this makes reconciliation possible. In doing so we can note that Martin Luther's observation about people sorely vexing us comes from his exposition of the petition addressed to God in the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

Luther pointed out that this petition "is concerned with our poor, miserable conduct." Because people irritate us and we become impatient and angry, "we stumble every day and overstep our bounds." But it is not they who are angry and vengeful. It is we ourselves. Therefore, we need to ask God's forgiveness. As Luther explained:

in case anyone insists on his own goodness and despises others,...let him look into himself when this petition confronts him. He will find that he is no better than others and that in the presence of God everyone one must duck his head and come into the joy of forgiveness only through the low door of humility.

Having God's forgiveness for our own shortcomings, we are then in a

position to forgive those who trespass against us. Thus, Luther instructed us:

"So we also must constantly forgive our neighbor who does us harm, violence, and injustice, treats us with abominably shabby tricks, and the like." Following the teaching of Jesus, who gave us the Lord's Prayer in the first place, we can also forgive our enemy who does such things to us.

Martin Luther King, Jr., a 20th century namesake of the Protestant reformer, picked up this theme in a sermon on "Loving Your Enemies", written in a Georgia jail. King indicated: "He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love." He further stated:

Forgiveness does not mean ignoring what has been done or putting a false label on an evil act. It means, rather, that the evil act no longer remains as a barrier to the relationship. Forgiveness is a catalyst creating the atmosphere for a fresh start and a new beginning....Forgiveness means reconciliation, a coming together again.

If we in the United States are to come together again as one nation indivisible, we must ask forgiveness for our own anger and hatred,

regardless of who or what caused it. We must then forgive those who harm us or seem to threaten us. We can resist injustice perpetrated against us, but we ought not hate the perpetrators. As the apostle Paul taught: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Through better understanding of other groups, through acceptance of diversity, and through forgiveness we can bring about the reconciliation that is necessary for achieving the kind of friendly and supportive society we all seek. In doing so we can follow the wise counsel that Abraham Lincoln offered in his second inaugural address, following the bloody and divisive Civil War:

With malice toward none,
with charity for all,
With firmness in the right
as God gives us to see the right,
Let us strive on
to finish the work we are in,
to bind the nation's wounds,...
To do all which may achieve and cherish
a just and lasting peace

among ourselves and with all nations.

*Howard W. Hallman is president of the Civic Action Institute. This article is derived from a book he is writing, *American Democracy and the Civic Spirit*.*

*6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817*

(301) 897-3668

May 20, 1992

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
(301) 897-3668

May 20, 1992

My Turn Editor
Newsweek
444 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10002

Dear Editor:

I am submitting for your consideration as a "My Turn" article a piece entitled "Reconciliation through Forgiveness." It addresses the anger, hatred, and divisiveness that is widespread in the United States today. It suggests that a place to start in working toward reconciliation is to first ask God's forgiveness for our own expressions of anger and group stereotyping and then to forgive others.

By way of identity I hold two positions: president of the Civic Action Institute, which works on issues of grassroots democracy, and executive director of Methodists United for Peace with Justice, a national association of laity and clergy working for nuclear disarmament and shifts in federal budget priorities. This article is derived from a chapter of a book I am writing entitled *American Democracy and the Civic Spirit*.

If you decide not to use my article, please return it to me in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

YOU CAN'T VOTE IN OTHER PEOPLE'S DISTRICTS Why Term Limits Are Anti-Democratic

by Howard W. Hallman¹

A fellow of conservative persuasion said to me not last year, "I wish I could vote in other districts." He was expressing his frustration with the workings of American government and with the make-up of the U.S. Congress and state legislatures. He wanted to change other people's representatives to persons holding his own views.

Of course, you can't legally vote in any district except your own. So if you don't like who voters in other districts are electing, what do you do? You try to limit their choice. You advocate limitations on how many terms individuals can serve in a legislative body.

And so it is that the term limit movement has arisen in the United States. Its leaders are primarily conservatives who have been unable to produce candidates and programs that gain majority support in numerous congressional and state legislative districts. They are mostly outsiders who want to limit the choice of voters in districts they can't control. They are joined by others, including some liberals, who have backed losing candidates in their own district -- some call them "sore losers" -- and want to change the rules to nullify competition.

¹ Howard W. Hallman is president of the Civic Action Institute, a nonprofit organization based in Bethesda, Maryland. He is author of nine books on neighborhoods, metropolitan governance, and employment programs, including *Neighborhoods: Their Place in Urban Life* (Sage Publications, 1984).

Stemming from a motivation to displace incumbents they can't defeat at the polls, term limit advocates have tapped into voter dissatisfaction with government. They place blame on long-term incumbents. So far they have persuaded voters in 15 states to pass measures limiting the number of terms members of Congress and their state legislature may serve. Three more have term limits only for state legislators.

In spite of this popular appeal, the term-limit movement is basically anti-democratic both in spirit and intent.

Democracy is sovereignty of the people. Where members of legislative bodies are chosen by districts, it is up to the people of that district, and they alone, to decide who they want to represent them. If they are satisfied with an incumbent, they should be entitled to reelect her or him as many times as they choose. If they are dissatisfied, they can vote her or him out of office. The only limit should be length of term, not number of terms.

Founders' Intent

This reflects the intent of the founders of the United States of America. They had more than enough of outsiders telling them what they could do or couldn't do. They were tired of the king and a distant Parliament in which they had no representation making laws for them and levying taxes.

The founders insisted that the people are sovereign and must be able to choose their own representatives. They declared independence, stressing the importance of "the consent of the governed". Then they adopted their own constitution.

The framers of the U.S. Constitution realized that direct democracy, as

epitomized by the New England town meeting, was unworkable for a large territory, so they established a system of representative democracy (which they referred to as a "republic"). Such a government, James Madison explained in *The Federalist* No. 39,

is administered by persons holding their offices during pleasure, for a limited period, or during good behavior.

Then he insisted:

It is essential to such a government that it be derived from the general body of the society, not from an inconsiderable proportion, or a favored class of it.²

Based upon this reasoning, the framers limited *length* of terms an incumbent could serve. Thus, the U.S. Constitution specifies a two year term for U.S. representatives, a four year term for the president of the United States, and a six year term for U.S. senators. Federal judges have life tenure in order to assure an independent judiciary.

The framers considered limiting the *number* of terms an incumbent could serve but rejected this idea. This arrangement stood for 164 years until ratification of the 22nd Amendment in 1951 to limit the president to two terms.

In circumstances similar to today's term-limit movement, conservatives were upset because they couldn't defeat Franklin D. Roosevelt

² *The Federalist*, No. 39. New York: The Modern Library, 1937. pp. 243-44.

in four successive presidential elections. Although Roosevelt was dead, their reprisal was the 22nd Amendment. (Ironically the only two presidents since then who served two full terms and might have gone for a third were Republicans Dwight D. Eisenhower and Ronald Reagan.)

In the most relevant legal case on this matter, *Powell v. McCormack*, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled in a 7-1 decision that Congress itself cannot add qualifications beyond the three specified in the Constitution: 25 years of age, seven years of citizenship, and residing in the state to be represented. This nullified refusal by the House of Representatives in January 1967 to seat Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., a Democrat representing Harlem in New York City, for another term because of alleged misuse of committee funds in the previous Congress and other alleged offenses. While the case was pending, the voters in Harlem in 1968 re-elected Powell to his 12th term as a tribute to his long championing of civil rights and in defiance of outsiders restricting their choice. But after the Supreme Court ruled in Powell's favor in June 1969, the Harlem voters in the 1970 election chose Charles B. Rangel to replace him in Congress.³

Desire to Change the Rules

In our own era conservatives, joined here and there by some liberal "sore losers", are trying to change the rules of the game to bring about a result that they cannot achieve in competitive politics. They seek to limit the number of terms that incumbents may serve. In doing so, they are attempting to short-circuit the democratic process by passing laws that take away the voters' choice. Such laws would limit not only the choice of

³ 1991 CQ Almanac. Washington: CQ Press, 1992. pp. 13-A to 14-A

today's voters but also the right of voters in future years to reelect incumbents who they want to remain in office.

Though mostly unspoken, there is also an element of racism. Many long-term state legislators and U.S. representatives are African Americans and Hispanics who have risen to top positions in state legislatures and Congress. They have power based upon seniority. Term-limit advocates want them dislodged. It's another case of white anglos wanting to limit the opportunity of African Americans and Hispanics to choose their own representatives.

Changing the rules by enacting term limits is like deciding during a baseball game, when the opposing pitcher hasn't allowed a hit, that no pitcher may pitch more than six innings. Or it's like saying that no player can play more than 100 consecutive games so that other players may have a chance. Tell that to Cal Ripken with his streak of over 1,800 consecutive game at the end of June 1993.

It really makes no sense to arbitrarily remove someone from a position solely on the basis of years served. As long as Kareem Abdul Jabbar could play good basketball, the Los Angeles Lakers had a place for him. The Lakers wanted Magic Johnson to keep playing until he voluntarily retired due to the HIV virus, and the Boston Celtics retained Larry Byrd until his bad back caused him to quit. Babe Ruth and Hank Aaron were hitting homeruns when most baseball players their age had retired, and Nolan Ryan was still pitching and throwing no-hitters in his forties. And notice how popular Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus, and Lee Trevino are on the senior golf circuit.

Ability to perform is the key, not number of years of service. For the

occasional representative who gets reelected while too frail to serve adequately or who is proven to be corrupt and still gets reelected, there are thousands more whose long experience is a treasure for American democracy.

Better Remedies

To be sure, a lot of people are frustrated with governmental performance these days. They include many who have not been politically active but are awakening and want to overcome their neglect. Term-limit advocates are seeking to channel this frustration into blame for long-time office holders.

Such frustration is understandable because government isn't doing too well in solving some seemingly intractable problems. But this failure is not necessarily the fault of persons who have held legislative office for a long time. Newcomers to state legislatures and Congress share responsibility. So do governors, many with limited terms, and the president of the United States, who is limited to two terms. Also many governmental bureaucracies, like those of numerous other large organizations, are bogged down in redtape and are too unresponsive to citizen concerns. Another contributing factor is that we citizens lack consensus on some crucial issues and therefore do not give our representatives clear instructions for what we want done.

There are better remedies than limiting the number of terms. The most readily available is to change incumbents district by district. This happened in the 1992 election season for 110 seats out of the 435 of the U.S. House of Representatives because of retirement or defeat at the polls, the highest turnover in 44 years. Many state legislatures had higher than

average turnover, too.

While waiting for the next election, citizens can and should concentrate on keeping incumbents alert to what they the citizenry expects of them. Citizens can do this by letters, fax messages, phone calls, delegations, attending meetings where their representative are appearing. Making views know to our elected representatives is a significant civic responsibility along with voting at every election.

In 1994 voters will have another opportunity to replace other congressional incumbents if they are dissatisfied. Or to reelect them.

There is an ancient political adage that you can't beat somebody with nobody. Therefore, change advocates should enter the political fray at the early stage when potential candidates are positioning themselves to run and during the primary campaign. That's when nominees are determined.

Voter choice in the general election comes mainly through the nominees of the Democratic and Republican parties. Independent and third party candidates are a safety valve for letting off steam, but almost never produce a legislative majority. Therefore, involvement with the two main political parties is essential for persons who want to determine the composition of Congress and state legislatures.

This is democracy the old-fashion way. You compete. You work hard in election campaigns and earn your results. You don't restrain voter choice.

The People's Choice: District by District

Although using the rhetoric of democracy, the term-limit movement

at its core is undemocratic. It reflects a deep distrust of the citizenry by restricting people's choice of whom to represent them. In effect term-limit advocates want to vote in districts other than their own. This is contrary to democracy as the sovereignty of the people, a concept applicable district by district, state by state.

"Throw the rascals out" is, of course, an ancient sentiment in American democracy. But in our own district, we often realize that the incumbent is "our rascal" and we like him or her. Our representative has helped us when we have had problems with the bureaucracy. The longer he or she has been in office, the more clout he or she has.

Moreover, over the years our representative has honed his or her policy positions to reflect majority opinion in the district. If he or she strays too far from district opinion, we'll replace him or her. This is consent of the governed in action. It's our consent to give or take away, not what some outsiders want. Every two years (four or six for some offices) we can terminate an incumbent's office-holding, or we can choose to continue his or her service for another term.

This is applied sovereignty of the people, which term-limit advocates want to take away. By having limits on length of individual terms, but not on the total number, voters have a regular opportunity to determine how long elected officials will serve. The choice rests with the people in each district, not what some outsiders determine. That's the way it should be in a representative democracy.

Let's stick with democracy!

Howard W. Hallman
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817

June 24, 1993

Mon-Thurs: (301) 694-2859

Fri-Sat: (301) 897-3668

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
(301) 897-3668

August 6, 1991

Ms. Carol Randolph
Goldfarb, Kaufman & O'Toole
918 16th Street, NW, #503
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Ms. Randolph:

I am working on a book entitled *American Democracy and the Civic Spirit: Preparing for the New Century* and am seeking an agent to help me market it with a trade publisher. Would your firm be interested in doing so on a commission basis?

I started writing in response to the lack of forthright ideas by political leaders, both Democratic and Republican, as we head into another presidential election season. My first title was "Let's Talk Sense to the American People" with a subtitle "Speeches I Would Give If I Were a Candidate for President, Which I'm Not". The title borrowed from Adlai Stevenson's 1952 acceptance speech, in which he added, "Let's tell them the truth that there are no gains without pains." As my ideas developed, I realized that I want to deal with fundamental ideas of American democracy and civic participation, as well as dealing with contemporary issues. So I changed the title, though it is still open for further modification based upon marketing advice.

Enclosed are the table of contents, a synopsis, a couple of sample chapters,

and a copy of *Peace Leaf*, the bulletin of Methodists United for Peace with Justice, which I serve as executive director. The latter contains some of the ideas I will develop in chapter 18 on "Internationalism without Militarism", especially the section on "Instruments for Peace" (pp.8-9, 11). The enclosed vita summarizes my educational and employment experience and lists my nine previously published books.

So far I have written drafts of seven chapters (a couple of them with some gaps to be filled). My thoughts are well-developed on most of the remaining chapters. If I could obtain an advance to enable me to devote most of my time to writing, I could complete the manuscript by the end of the year. My work with Methodists United is in effect part time because of lack of funds for a full time salary. Much of that work focuses on congressional legislation, which demands more time during the first half of the year. This gives me time to write at the moment.

If you would like to see drafts of other chapters or need any other information, please let me know. If you decline my request to serve as my agent, please return my material in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
(301) 897-3668

August 6, 1991

Ms. Audrey Adler Wolf
1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, #1210
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Ms. Wolf:

I am working on a book entitled *American Democracy and the Civic Spirit: Preparing for the New Century* and am seeking an agent to help me market it with a trade publisher. Would you be interested in taking on this assignment?

I started writing in response to the lack of forthright ideas by political leaders, both Democratic and Republican, as we head into another presidential election season. My first title was "Let's Talk Sense to the American People" with a subtitle "Speeches I Would Give If I Were a Candidate for President, Which I'm Not". The title borrowed from Adlai Stevenson's 1952 acceptance speech, in which he added, "Let's tell them the truth that there are no gains without pains." As my ideas developed, I realized that I want to deal with fundamental ideas of American democracy and civic participation, as well as dealing with contemporary issues. So I changed the title, though it is still open for further modification based upon marketing advice.

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If you would like to see drafts of other chapters or need any other information, please let me know. If you decline my request to serve as my agent, please return my material in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
(301) 897-3668

August 6, 1991

Mr. John A. Ware
392 Central Park West
New York, NY 10025

Dear Mr. Ware:

I am working on a book entitled *American Democracy and the Civic Spirit: Preparing for the New Century* and am seeking an agent to help me market it with a trade publisher. Would you be interested in taking on this assignment?

I started writing in response to the lack of forthright ideas by political leaders, both Democratic and Republican, as we head into another presidential election season. My first title was "Let's Talk Sense to the American People" with a subtitle "Speeches I Would Give If I Were a Candidate for President, Which I'm Not". The title borrowed from Adlai Stevenson's 1952 acceptance speech, in which he added, "Let's tell them the truth that there are no gains without pains." As my ideas developed, I realized that I want to deal with fundamental ideas of American democracy and civic participation, as well as dealing with contemporary issues. So I changed the title, though it is still open for further modification based upon marketing advice.

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If you would like to see drafts of other chapters or need any other information, please let me know. If you decline my request to serve as my agent, please return my material in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
(301) 897-3668

January 25, 1992

Sterling Lord Literistic, Inc.
One Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10010

Dear Friends:

I am working on a book entitled *American Democracy and the Civic Spirit: Preparing for the New Century* and am seeking an agent to help me market it with a trade publisher. Would your firm be interested in taking on this assignment?

I am writing out of concern for the faltering faith in our political system by a sizable portion of the American public. Interestingly, though, a recent study by the Kettering Foundation found that many people are fully involved in civic endeavors in their own community but don't make a connection with national politics. My intent is to reaffirm our basic civic foundation, to highlight major functions of democratic government, and to indicate how we citizens can increase our participation. With this established the book will address a set of public issues in the context of a decade-long effort to prepare for the next century.

Enclosed are the table of contents, a synopsis, and several sample chapters. These are first drafts and are subject to revision, but they represent a fair sample of my writing style and my approach to the subject. The enclosed vita summarizes my educational and employment experience and lists my

nine previously published books.

In addition to the enclosed chapters, I am well along with three other chapters. I can send you these when completed if you are interested. My thoughts are well-developed on the remaining chapters, and I have outlines for most of them. If I could obtain an advance, I could complete the book in about six months.

If you need any other information, please let me know. If you decline my request to serve as my agent, please return my material in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
(301) 897-3668

January 25, 1992

The Balkan Agency
850 W. 176th Street
New York, NY 10033

Dear Friends:

I am working on a book entitled *American Democracy and the Civic Spirit: Preparing for the New Century* and am seeking an agent to help me market it with a trade publisher. Would your firm be interested in taking on this assignment?

I am writing out of concern for the faltering faith in our political system by a sizable portion of the American public. Interestingly, though, a recent study by the Kettering Foundation found that many people are fully involved in civic endeavors in their own community but don't make a connection with national politics. My intent is to reaffirm our basic civic foundation, to highlight major functions of democratic government, and to indicate how we citizens can increase our participation. With this established the book will address a set of public issues in the context of a decade-long effort to prepare for the next century.

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If you need any other information, please let me know. If you decline my request to serve as my agent, please return my material in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
(301) 897-3668

January 25, 1992

Ms. Audrey Adler Wolf
1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, #1210
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Ms. Wolf:

On August 6, 1991 I wrote you to inquire whether you would be interested in serving as my agent for a book entitled *American Democracy and the Civic Spirit: Preparing for the New Century*. I talked with you on the phone on September 23 when you were, I believe, in Martha's Vineyard, and then sent a duplicate of my inquiry letter to your Washington office.

For a while I was working on other projects but am now getting back to work on this book. Thus, I am picking up my quest for an agent.

Since I have heard nothing from you, I assume that you are not interested in handling my book. Therefore, I am withdrawing my request for you to serve as my agent. Would you please return to me the synopsis and sample chapters I sent you, using the stamped, self-addressed envelope that I supplied.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
(301) 897-3668

February 13, 1992

Ms. Muriel G. Nellis, Ms. Jane F. Roberts
Literary & Creative Artists Agency
3539 Albemarle Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Ms. Nellis and Ms. Roberts:

I am working on a book entitled *American Democracy and the Civic Spirit: Preparing for the New Century* and am seeking an agent to help me market it with a trade publisher. Would your firm be interested in taking on this assignment?

I am writing out of concern for the faltering faith in our political system by a sizable portion of the American public. Interestingly, though, a recent study by the Kettering Foundation found that many people are fully involved in civic endeavors in their own community but don't make a connection with national politics. My intent is to reaffirm our basic civic foundation, to highlight major functions of democratic government, and to indicate how we citizens can increase our participation. With this established the book will address a set of public issues in the context of a decade-long effort to prepare for the next century.

Enclosed are the table of contents, a synopsis of chapters, and my vita, including a listing of my nine previously published books. I have available first drafts of five chapters if you would like to see them. I am willing for

you to have exclusive review for a reasonable period.

If I can obtain a publishing contract, I can finish the manuscript within six months. This means that the book would be published in early 1993. This would occur at the beginning of a new presidential term following a campaign that may leave more matters of American democracy unsettled rather than resolved. Thus, I believe that there will be a ready market for a restatement of democratic faith, the idea of civic participation, and application of these ideas to some urgent problems facing our nation. Some, but not all, of the ideas I am dealing with are now being discussed, such as diversity, fairness, civic responsibility, and political participation. But my approach is broader in scope and has a comprehensiveness that ties together many elements of democracy and civic life.

If you want to read the completed chapters or need any other information, please let me know. If you decline my request to serve as my agent, please return my material in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
(301) 897-3668

February 19, 1992

Ms. Jane F. Roberts
Literary and Creative Artists Agency
3539 Albemarle Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Ms. Roberts:

As you requested, I am sending five draft chapters of a book entitled *American Democracy and the Civic Spirit: Preparing for the New Century*. Although likely these chapters will be polished further and adjusted to fit yet-complete chapters, they are far enough along to give a fair idea of the subject matter and my writing style.

I am offering these to you for your exclusive review. If you decide not to represent me as agent, please return these chapters in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
(301) 897-3668

March 21, 1992

Ms. Muriel G. Nellis, Ms. Jane F. Roberts
Literary & Creative Artists Agency
3539 Albemarle Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Ms. Nellis and Ms. Roberts:

On February 19, 1992 I sent you five draft chapters of a book entitled *American Democracy and the Civic Spirit: Preparing for the New Century*. I offered you exclusive review of this material so that you could determine whether you have an interest in representing me in marketing this book. I have not heard from you in writing and was unable to reach you by telephone.

I believe that this is sufficient time for exclusive review. Therefore, I am withdrawing my request effective Friday, March 27, 1992 if I have not received a positive response from you by then.

I am now working on a couple of other projects that will be completed by mid-May. At that time I want to return to my work on *American Democracy and the Civic Spirit*. By then I want to have an agent who has found a publisher or at least is working on this quest. Therefore, I want to look elsewhere for an agent if you are not interested.

If you do not go ahead with me, please return my material in the stamped

envelopes have previously supplied.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
(301) 897-3668

April 9, 1992

Mr. Bill Adler, Jr.
Adler & Robin Books, Inc.
2755 Ordway Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Mr. Adler:

I am working on a book entitled *American Democracy and the Civic Spirit: Preparing for the New Century* and am seeking an agent to help me market it with a trade publisher. Would you be interested in taking on this assignment?

I am writing out of concern for the faltering faith in our political system by a sizable portion of the American public. This is especially revealed by the current presidential campaign. Yet at the same time there remains a strong commitment to civic endeavors in neighborhoods and local communities. There is a renewed effort of civics education in the public schools, and college students are increasing their involvement in volunteer activities (see enclosed clippings).

My intent is to reaffirm our basic civic foundation, to highlight major functions of democratic government, and to indicate how we citizens can increase our participation. With this established the book will address a set of public issues in the context of a decade-long effort to prepare for the next century.

Enclosed are the table of contents, a synopsis of chapters, and my vita,

including a listing of my nine previously published books. I have available first drafts of five chapters if you would like to see them.

At the moment I am preparing to host six persons from Poland who are coming to the United States to study citizen participation in local government. I will complete this project in mid-May and pick up on related endeavors in the fall. If I can obtain a publishing contract, I will mostly complete the book manuscript during the summer. Editing and polishing can be accomplished in the fall so that the book could be published in early 1993. This would occur at the beginning of a new presidential term following a campaign that may leave more matters of American democracy unsettled rather than resolved.

At that time I believe that there will be a ready market for a restatement of democratic faith, the idea of civic participation, and application of these ideas to some urgent problems facing our nation. Some, but not all, of the ideas I am dealing with are now being discussed, such as diversity, fairness, civic responsibility, and political participation. But my approach is broader in scope and has a comprehensiveness that ties together many elements of democracy and civic life. I know of no other book on the market that does this.

If you want to read the completed chapters or need any other information, please let me know. If you decline my request to serve as my agent, please return my material in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
(301) 897-3668

June 8, 1992

Ms. Gail Ross
Lichtman, Trister, Singer, & Ross
1666 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Ms. Ross:

As I mentioned on the phone, I am working on a book entitled *American Democracy and the Civic Spirit: Preparing for the New Century* and am seeking an agent to help me market it with a trade publisher. Would you be interested in taking on this assignment?

My intent in this book is to lay out the basic civic foundation of American life, to review essential elements of democratic government, and to indicate how we citizens can increase our participation. With this established the book will address a set of public issues in the context of a decade-long effort to prepare for the next century. My approach is indicated in the enclosed table of contents and synopsis of chapters. First drafts of five chapters illustrate my style and provide a sample of the book's content. My vita includes a listing of my nine previously published books.

I am writing with hope for publication in early 1993 after this year's presidential election campaign is over. At that time I believe that there will be a ready market for a restatement of democratic faith, the idea of civic participation, and application of these ideas to some urgent problems facing our nation.

It's my view that the present turmoil of the presidential campaign reveals the health of our political system. The response to Ross Perot, whether or not he is elected president, is a force of renewal that can have beneficial effects. Moreover, in spite of expressions of anti-politics rhetoric, millions of Americans retain a strong commitment to civic endeavors in their neighborhoods and local communities. Moreover, there is a renewed effort of civics education in the public schools, and college students are increasing their involvement in volunteer activities,

Some, but not all, of the ideas I am dealing with are now being discussed, such as diversity, fairness, civic responsibility, and political participation. But my approach is broader in scope and has a comprehensiveness that ties together many elements of democracy and civic life. Moreover, one of my major themes offers a fresh idea: that the consent of the governed is a continuous process, not just episodic events, such as elections.

If you would like to discuss my proposal, please call me at (301) 897-3668. If you decline my request to serve as my agent, please return my material in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817

July 27, 1992

Mr. Ronald Goldfarb
918 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ron:

It was good to talk to you on the phone after only indirect contact for many years. As I mentioned, I am working on a book entitled *American Democracy and the Civic Spirit: Preparing for the New Century* and am seeking an agent to help me market it with a trade publisher. Would you be interested in taking on this assignment?

My intent in this book is to lay out the basic civic foundation of American life, to review essential elements of democratic government, and to indicate how we citizens can increase our participation. With this established the book will address a set of public issues in the context of a decade-long effort to prepare for the next century.

Enclosed is the table of contents, a synopsis by chapter, and four sample chapters. Of the latter "Prologue: A Call for Participation" provides my basic orientation. The chapter on "Reconciliation" illustrates my approach to the civic spirit. "Credo" states basic principles of American democracy, and "Citizen Advocacy" deals with one application of the consent of the governed. My enclosed vita includes a listing of my nine previously published books and other writings related to this new book.

I am writing with hope for publication in early 1993 after this year's presidential election campaign is over. At that time I believe that there will be a strong market for a restatement of democratic faith, the idea of

civic participation, and application of these ideas to some urgent problems facing our nation. Clearly the response to Ross Perot's aborted candidacy reveals a craving for political and civic renewal. Moreover, in spite of expressions of anti-politics rhetoric that we are hearing, millions of Americans retain a strong commitment to civic endeavors in their neighborhoods and local communities. They need suggestions on how to cross the bridge to political participation. Moreover, there is a renewed effort of civics education in the public schools, and college students are increasing their involvement in volunteer activities,

Some of my ideas are a restatement of traditional ideas of civic and political participation, but I hope with a fresh expression and a creative synthesis. One of my major themes is innovative: that the consent of the governed is a continuous, interactive process, not just episodic events, such as elections (see "Credo"). Altogether I am seeking comprehensiveness that ties together many elements of democracy and civic life.

If you would like to discuss my proposal on the phone, you can reach me on Monday-Thursday at 1-301-694-2859 (my wife's parsonage near Frederick) or on Friday at (301) 897-3668 (our house in Bethesda). If you decline my request to serve as my agent, please return my material in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
(301) 897-3668

July 28, 1992

Mr. Ronald Goldfarb
918 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ron:

I was straightening my desk after I sent you sample chapters of my book, *American Democracy and the Civic Spirit: Preparing for the New Century*, and I found the enclosed pages. I'm not sure whether they are extra or an omission from chapter 2. If the latter, please add them. If they are duplicative, you can discard them.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
(301) 897-3668

August 24, 1992

Ms. Nina Grayhill
Ronald Goldfarb & Associates
918 Sixteenth Street NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Ms. Grayhill:

Thanks for reviewing my proposal for a book entitled "American Democracy and the Civic Spirit."

I am not interested in retaining your firm on an hourly basis. Therefore, please return the material to me.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817

September 28, 1992

Mr. Thomas J. McCormack
Editorial Director, Trade Division
St. Martin's Press
175 5th Avenue
New York, NY 10010

Dear Mr. McCormack:

I want to inquire if St. Martin's Press would be interested in considering the publication of a book I am writing entitled *DEMOCRACY ISN'T EASY -- BUT IT'S WORTH IT: A Grassroots Perspective*. For your perusal I am submitting the table of contents, a synopsis, and some sample chapters. This would be my tenth book, as shown in the enclosed vita. Previous ones were published by social science and university presses.

My book is aimed particularly at millions of Americans who are dissatisfied with the course of politics and government in the United States and who want to do something about it. Many of them have been attracted to Ross Perot, who seemed like an alternative to "none of the above." Many are being drawn into the Concord Coalition, sponsored by Senator Warren Rudman and former Senator Paul Tsongas, to deal with the enormous federal deficit. From these initial efforts, many are likely to become more deeply involved in politics in a continuous manner. There are also signs that numerous college students and other young adults are beginning to take politics more seriously. My book is intended to offer them practical advice.

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If you want to review additional chapters, I have several others that are nearly completed. If you want to reach me by telephone, on Monday to Thursday I am usually at (301) 694-2859 and on Friday and Saturday at (301) 897-3668. But if you decide that you do not want to consider publishing my book, please return the sample chapters in the enclosed, self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN

6508 Wilmett Road

Bethesda, MD 20817

September 28, 1992

Mr. Lauren Bryant, Senior Editor

Beacon Press

25 Beacon Street

Boston, MA 02109

Dear Mr. Bryant:

I want to inquire if Beacon Press would be interested in considering the publication of a book I am writing entitled *DEMOCRACY ISN'T EASY -- BUT IT'S WORTH IT: A Grassroots Perspective*. For your perusal I am submitting the table of contents, a synopsis, and some sample chapters. This would be my tenth book, as shown in the enclosed vita. Previous ones were published by social science and university presses.

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Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817

September 28, 1992

Mr. Jason Epstein, Editorial Director
Random House Adult Books
201 E. 50th Street, 11th Floor
New York, NY 10022

Dear Mr. Epstein:

I want to inquire if Random House Adult Books, or some other division of Random House, would be interested in considering the publication of a book I am writing entitled *DEMOCRACY ISN'T EASY -- BUT IT'S WORTH IT: A Grassroots Perspective*. For your perusal I am submitting the table of contents, a synopsis, and some sample chapters. This would be my tenth book, as shown in the enclosed vita. Previous ones were published by social science and university presses.

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Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN

6508 Wilmett Road

Bethesda, MD 20817

September 28, 1992

Ms. Liz Malcolm, Editor

W.W. Norton, Inc.

500 5th Avenue

New York, New York 10110

Dear Ms. Malcolm:

I want to inquire if W.W. Norton, Inc. would be interested in considering the publication of a book I am writing entitled *DEMOCRACY ISN'T EASY -- BUT IT'S WORTH IT: A Grassroots Perspective*. For your perusal I am submitting the table of contents, a synopsis, and some sample chapters. This would be my tenth book, as shown in the enclosed vita. Previous ones were published by social science and university presses.

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Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817

September 28, 1992

Editorial Department, Trade Division
Little Brown & Company
34 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Friends:

I want to inquire if Little Brown & Company would be interested in considering the publication of a book I am writing entitled *DEMOCRACY ISN'T EASY -- BUT IT'S WORTH IT: A Grassroots Perspective*. For your perusal I am submitting the table of contents, a synopsis, and some sample chapters. This would be my tenth book, as shown in the enclosed vita. Previous ones were published by social science and university presses.

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Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN

6508 Wilmett Road

Bethesda, MD 20817

September 28, 1992

Trade Books Division

William Morrow & Co.

1350 Avenue of the Americas

New York, NY 10019

Dear Friends:

I want to inquire if William Morrow & Company would be interested in considering the publication of a book I am writing entitled *DEMOCRACY ISN'T EASY -- BUT IT'S WORTH IT: A Grassroots Perspective*. For your perusal I am submitting the table of contents, a synopsis, and one sample chapter. This would be my tenth book, as shown in the enclosed vita. Previous ones were published by social science and university presses.

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Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817

September 28, 1992

Trade Books Division
Simon and Schuster
1230 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10020

Dear Friends:

I want to inquire if Simon and Schuster would be interested in considering the publication of a book I am writing entitled *DEMOCRACY ISN'T EASY -- BUT IT'S WORTH IT: A Grassroots Perspective*. For your perusal I am submitting the table of contents, a synopsis, and one sample chapter. This would be my tenth book, as shown in the enclosed vita. Previous ones were published by social science and university presses.

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Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817

September 28, 1992

Ms. Janice Harvey, Submissions Editor
Adult Trade Division
Houghton Mifflin Co.
2 Park Street
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Ms. Harvey:

I want to inquire if Houghton Mifflin Co. would be interested in considering the publication of a book I am writing entitled *DEMOCRACY ISN'T EASY -- BUT IT'S WORTH IT: A Grassroots Perspective*. For your perusal I am submitting the table of contents, a synopsis, and one sample chapter. This would be my tenth book, as shown in the enclosed vita. Previous ones were published by social science and university presses.

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Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817

November 12, 1992

Mr. Matthew Shear, Vice President
Bantam Books
666 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10103

Dear Mr. Shear:

I want to inquire if Bantam Books would be interested in considering the publication of a book I am writing entitled *DEMOCRACY ISN'T EASY -- BUT IT'S WORTH IT!* For your perusal I am submitting the table of contents, a synopsis, and sample chapters. This would be my tenth book, as shown in the enclosed vita. Previous ones were published by social science and university presses.

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My book is aimed particularly at millions of Americans who renewed their political activity during the recent election campaign. Sixty-two percent voted for change in the presidency, including 19 percent who supported the independent candidacy of Ross Perot. They revealed that they are

dissatisfied with the course of politics and government in the United States and want to do something about it. Many of them are now likely to become more deeply involved in politics, both electoral and policy-making. There are also signs that numerous college students and other young adults are beginning to take politics more seriously. My book is intended to offer them practical advice.

I have been working on these ideas for over a year. After the election I recast the enclosed sample chapters, which constitute about half the book. I am on course to finish a draft of the remaining chapters by the end of December with the hope that the book could be published during the first half of 1993 while interest in political action remains high.

I would welcome an opportunity to go to New York to confer with one of your editors and discuss my approach in greater depth. At your request I can send drafts of other chapters as they are completed. However, if you decide that you are not interested in publishing my book, please return the sample chapters in the enclosed, self-addressed envelope.

Sincerely yours,

Howard W. Hallman

Telephone: Mon-Thurs at (301) 694-2859; Fri-Sat at (301) 897-3668

HOWARD W. HALLMAN
6508 Wilmett Road
Bethesda, MD 20817

November 12, 1992

Mr. Steve Wasserman, Editor
Times Books
201 E. 50th Street
New York, NY 10022

Dear Mr. Wasserman:

I want to inquire if Times Books would be interested in considering the publication of a book I am writing entitled *DEMOCRACY ISN'T EASY -- BUT IT'S WORTH IT!* For your perusal I am submitting the table of contents, a synopsis, and sample chapters. This would be my tenth book, as shown in the enclosed vita. Previous ones were published by social science and university presses.

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