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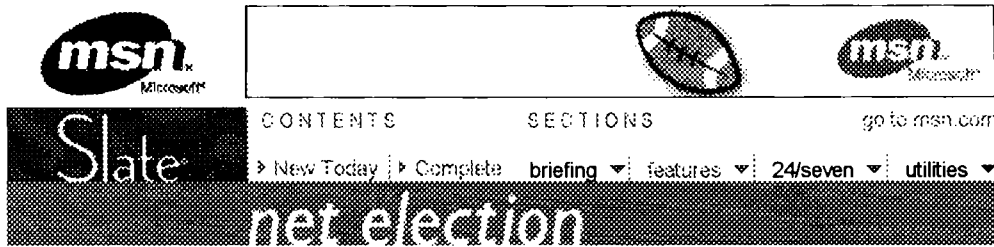
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Director of Marketing Development
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Analysis Division

**INDUSTRY STANDARD**

Slate and the Industry Standard join forces to examine the effect of the Internet on Campaign 2000.

Currently

A Fireless Chat

Gore's Internet Problem

More Net Election

TODAY IN SLATE

Bill Clinton Enters Chat Room

Microsoft's Worst Enemy (and It's Not the Feds)

Explainer: What's Going on in Armenia?

What Went

A Fireless Chat

By Jacob Weisberg

Posted Tuesday, Nov. 9, 1999, at 4:30 p.m. PT

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WASHINGTON, D.C.--History records that the first telephone conversation in 1876 was an urgent request for an in-person meeting. "Mr. Watson, come here, I want you," Alexander Graham Bell is supposed to have said to his assistant in the next room. Monday night, Bill Clinton participated in what was billed as the first presidential Internet chat, an event intended to showcase another epoch-making technology in a larval stage. Clinton was more patient than Bell. He resisted the urge to say what must have been on the mind of nearly everyone present at the 90-minute demonstration: Why don't we turn this damn thing off and have a real conversation?

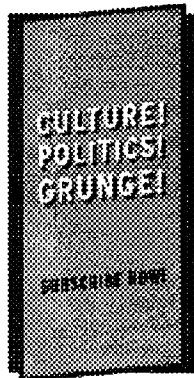
The idea for the Town Hall Chat, co-sponsored by the Democratic Leadership Council and Excite, was to demonstrate how the Net enables new forms of democratic communication. Here's how it worked: Clinton sat onstage in a small auditorium at George Washington University accompanied by Al From, the president of the DLC. Clinton and From

**Right in
Vietnam**

MSN links

Avoid endless
meetings: five
ways

Hubble
catches
galaxies
colliding



had a screen in front of them. From read aloud questions sent in by e-mail, and Clinton answered. Also wired in to the session were five other government officials in remote locations around the country and Mark Andreessen, the founder of Netscape. In theory, virtual participants could watch streaming video of the event, listen to an audio simulcast, or watch a scrolling text transcription, all over the Internet.

In practice, the technology was pretty clunky. Due to "network congestion," the voices of two of the officials didn't come through at all, and others were either time-delayed or so distorted as to be barely audible. At times, the town hall dissolved into a series of "Hello Watson, can you hear me?" exchanges. Clinton read his prepared opening remarks (in which he compared the event to one of FDR's fireside chats) from a teleprompter. If you were watching this on the Web, the herky-jerky streaming video of his head and torso represented a giant leap backward from the straightforward TV broadcast on C-SPAN. And the scrolling text, which was transcribed not by voice-recognition software but by human secretaries, was hardly a high-tech marvel. The overall effect was that of primitive video-conferencing. In a way, it made you marvel at how far we haven't come since FDR's day.

When the technology did work as intended, it merely made you wonder what good it is anyhow. Having a meeting over the Internet is still like walking to the mailbox in a 60-pound spacesuit. That it can be done--impressive. But why do it at

all, given that the quality of the interaction is so poor? As in all Internet "events" I've ever seen or participated in, the time lags and unfamiliarity of the basic structure sucked any spontaneity and most of the oxygen from the room.

Part of the fault was not technical but human and political. In theory, the Internet allows for a vast range of queries from far and wide. In practice, questions for the president were so carefully vetted as to be far narrower in range than what he might have encountered from a small, homogenous, and friendly audience like the one in the hall. The questions were in fact, triple-screened: first by the Excite staff, which weeded out anything with the word "Monica" in it, then by the DLC staff, with a bias toward substance, and finally by From, who choose from among those culled for him. The messages that got passed on to Clinton were wonky and sincere, dealing in an unchallenging way with matters like free trade and health care. One of the few sparks of interest was a question about whether Clinton, if he didn't live in the White House, would put aside food for a possible Y2K catastrophe. The president said he wouldn't, because he doesn't anticipate any serious problems.

Before long, Clinton was pointing at questions drifting by on his screen, begging for more difficult ones. The event might have worked slightly better if he had been given a mouse to flag questions he wanted to answer or a keyboard to send messages back to the control room. But this too would have risked embarrassment, since Clinton is an acknowledged computer illiterate and can't type.

Nonetheless, he does appear to have gained a sense of how the Internet might someday be democratically useful. In his closing remarks, Clinton made a point about how isolated a president can become from the public despite his best intentions to keep in touch and how the new technology might help. Then he thanked everyone for coming to his "press conference."

Clinton is right that his successor, who will almost surely be an e-mail user, will have a real tool to maintain contact with ordinary people. It's too late for Clinton himself. He could have learned how to use a computer, of course, but I don't think electronic politics holds any appeal for him. You can't seduce a voter in an e-mail message. To Clinton, the political is the interpersonal: the hand on the shoulder, the intent gaze, the fleck of spittle in the eye. Even on television, he can provide a simulacrum of this human experience. But on the Internet, communication is far more abstract. E-mail bores him--and it showed. The most interesting part of last night's event was what happened after it ended, when you got to see Clinton doing what he does like no one else, schmoozing live people. I eavesdropped as he massaged the ego of Tom Jermoluk, the CEO of Excite. "I know this may have cost you arm and a leg, but I think you may have revolutionized politics," Clinton confided to him.

At the end of unsuccessful cyber-events, everyone always praises them as "historic." Perhaps so, though I think history will remember them as fumbling experiments that pointed in a different

direction. At this point, they testify mainly to the capacity of the Internet to take something interesting--like a discussion with President Clinton--and make it unbearably dull. But be patient: In five years or so, advances in technology may get us to the point where an Internet Town Meeting is almost as interesting as a Town Meeting without the Internet.

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*Jacob Weisberg is **Slate's** chief political correspondent. You can e-mail him at ballotbox@slate.com.*

*Illustration on the **Slate** Table of Contents by Mark Alan Stamaty.*

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 8, 1996

Mr. Tom W. Ryan
144 Willowleaf Drive
Littleton, Colorado 80127

Dear Tom:

Senator Bradley recently sent me your letter explaining your proposal to create a National Advisory Referendum. I appreciate your long-standing interest in this issue, and I'm glad to know of your deep commitment to strengthening our democracy. I have shared your letter with my Office of Scheduling to determine whether the meeting you requested will be possible.

I'm glad you took the time to write.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bill Clinton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

U. S. SENATOR...



JOHN F. KENNEDY
FOR PRESIDENT

★ ★ ★ ★

HEADQUARTERS • 1106 CONNECTICUT AVE., N.W. • WASHINGTON, D. C. • DISTRICT 7-1717

November 2, 1960

Mr. Tommy Ryan
114 North Elizabeth
Fergusson 35, Montana

Dear Tommy:

I was delighted to receive your thoughtful letter.

I am indeed pleased to know of your interest in the affairs of our country, and I am especially pleased that you are "in my corner" in this election.

I am proud to number you among my supporters.

Sincerely,

John F. Kennedy

PUBLIC OPINION POLLS DEMONSTRATE SUPPORT FOR EXPANDING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT DECISION-MAKING

1. The Los Angeles Times found in November 1995 that 69% of the people feel that “people like me have almost no say in the political system.”
2. In March of 1995 a Business Week/Harris Poll found that only 30% of the American people believed that the “government usually represents the interests of the American people” while 63% of the people believe that the government usually “represents special interests.”
3. A Gallup poll found in 1981 that people favored by a 2 to 1 margin a constitutional amendment to create a national citizen initiative right which would allow voters to place binding issues on the national ballot when 3% of eligible voters signed a petition.
4. A 1995 poll by the Americans Talk Issues Foundation, which was reported in the Washington Post, found that the public still favors binding national referendums by the same two thirds majority found by the Gallup poll in 1981.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 8, 1996

Mr. Tom W. Ryan
144 Willowleaf Drive
Littleton, Colorado 80127

Dear Tom:

Senator Bradley recently sent me your letter explaining your proposal to create a National Advisory Referendum. I appreciate your long-standing interest in this issue, and I'm glad to know of your deep commitment to strengthening our democracy. I have shared your letter with my Office of Scheduling to determine whether the meeting you requested will be possible.

I'm glad you took the time to write.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

Attached
IS the letter I sent to
Senator Bradley & asked him to
forward to the President.
When I met the President in
St. Louis at Geyhardt's
fundraiser in April 96
he remembered the
letter & we
talked about
it.

TOM W. RYAN
144 Willowleaf Dr.

Littleton, Colorado 80127
303-973-5077 (Fax) 303-932-6010

February 5, 1996

President Bill Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

In your recent State of the Union address, you said "We must go forward as one America" and "reach across the lines that divide us and try to find common ground." **You have the vision to lead us into a new era of democratic decision-making.** I have the plan to turn your vision into reality. I respectfully **request 30 minutes of your time** to present my ideas.

In 1816 **Thomas Jefferson** proposed an "**advisory referendum**" process so that "**the voice of the whole people** would be thus fairly, fully, and peaceably expressed, discussed, and decided by the common reason of society."

This powerful democratic idea has been lost to history for 180 years.

As the first President to bear **Jefferson's name** and one who **shares his vision** "to reform our politics, so that power and privilege no longer shout down the voice of the people" (President William Jefferson Clinton, Inaugural Address), **I urge you to turn Jefferson's idea for national consensus into reality. This one simple idea could change the course of history.**

In 1960 I wrote Senator John F. Kennedy offering my ideas to shape the country. **John Kennedy responded and inspired a boy of 10.** Today 36 years later I write you as President, offering you an idea to shape democracy for the next century. **You can respond and inspire an entire nation.** In 1980 I persuaded **Congressman Richard Gephardt** to introduce my proposal for a National Advisory Referendum in the Congress. The original

legislation required the Congress to put 1 to 3 issues on the ballot every general election for a non-binding advisory vote to create, in effect, a National Town Meeting. **My original proposal could be changed to give the President authority to call for a national referendum, a power recently given to the President of France.**

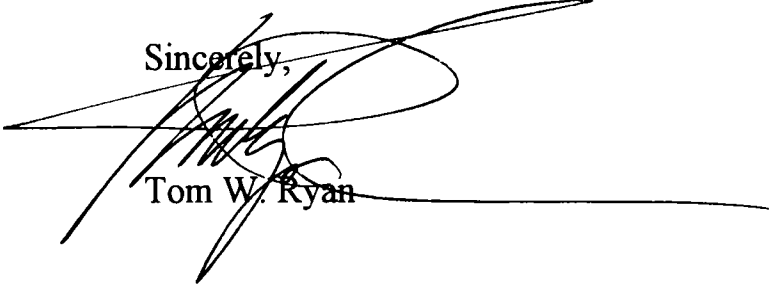
People have been crying out for such a **structural change** in the way we make decisions. Poll after poll, year after year, show large majorities who are alienated from the federal government. Today **69 percent** of the American people feel that "people like me have almost **no say** in the political system" (LA Times poll 11-5-95). **People want more than promises** of a responsive government. **They want guarantees** their voices, their desires, their interests will become integral parts in government decision-making. Poll after poll, year after year, **show 2 to 1 support** for a national referendum to give people a greater voice in government.

In 1993 Ross Perot held what he called "The First National Referendum" on television complete with a ballot in *TV Guide* and has proposed electronic voting to give people a greater voice. Even the conservative *Wall Street Journal* has given support to the national referendum concept. **Yet the only official national vote we have had has been to determine what Elvis stamp we wanted.** What does this say to the American people? We are trusted to voice our views on stamp policy, but not health care policy.

The time has come to let the people have **a clear voice in shaping public policy.** The time has come for the government to recognize its obligation to **forge a public consensus for public policies.** The American people do not want to be passive pawns of special interest groups or government itself. The people **want to help decide the very direction of this nation.** The time has come to give the people a direct voice in decision-making. **The time has come to establish a National Advisory Referendum for the 21st century.**

I respectfully request an opportunity to meet with you about this idea.

Sincerely,



Tom W. Ryan

U. S. SENATOR...



JOHN F. KENNEDY
FOR PRESIDENT
★ ★ ★ ★

HEADQUARTERS • 1106 CONNECTICUT AVE., N.W. • WASHINGTON, D. C. • DISTRICT 7-1717

November 2, 1960

Mr. Tommy Ryan
114 North Elizabeth
Fergusson 35, Montana

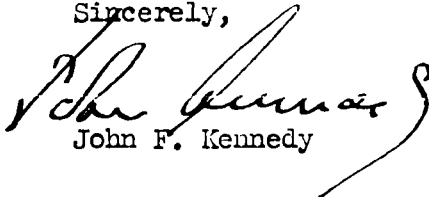
Dear Tommy:

I was delighted to receive your thoughtful letter.

I am indeed pleased to know of your interest in the affairs of our country, and I am especially pleased that you are "in my corner" in this election.

I am proud to number you among my supporters.

Sincerely,


John F. Kennedy

Bill Clinton FOR PRESIDENT

April 27, 1992

Tom Ryan
8280A West Laurel Place
Littleton, CO 80123

Dear Tom:

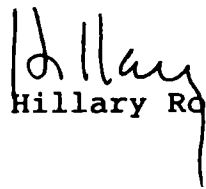
Thank you for your thoughtful letter. Due to our rigorous campaign schedule, I am just now getting to read and respond to my correspondence.

I want you to know how much I personally appreciate your support and interest in Bill's candidacy. As you are aware, our task is enormous and challenging and we need informed suggestions such as yours.

Thank you for sharing your ideas about Bill's campaign. I have forwarded them to our issues department. Also, you may forward copies of the Buckley and Bellotti decisions to the issues department.

As we travel, I am very encouraged by the overwhelmingly positive responses we've received from around the country. We welcome your participation in this great endeavor.

Sincerely yours,



Hillary Rodham Clinton

*Thanks for your interest -
Bill agrees with
opening up the airwaves
and conditioning license.*

Statements of President Bill Clinton

“We must reform the political process, reducing the influence of special interest and give more power to the people like you here tonight.”

**President-elect Clinton
Little Rock, Arkansas
November 3, 1992**

“Jefferson was associated with the populism of his day and so we chose him as a symbol of the populism of our campaign.” Jefferson was “the most brilliant President” who “believed in the power of ideas which made this country great.” He believed that we need to “periodically revolutionize the country to keep people in control.”

**President-elect Clinton
Monticello
January 17, 1993**

“So I say to all of you here, let us resolve to reform our politics, so that power and privilege no longer shout down the voice of the people.”

**President Clinton
Inaugural Address
January 1993**

“Once in a generation we are called upon to redefine the public interest and the common good.”

**President Clinton
Washington, DC
January 20, 1993**

“We have to find a way to come together. If we do, there is no stopping us.”

**President Clinton
Des Moines, Iowa
October 20, 1995**

Thomas Jefferson on Direct Democracy

"Divide the counties into wards of such size as that every citizen can attend, when called on, and act in person...."

In commenting on New England Town Meetings, Jefferson said, "These wards, called townships in New England, are the vital principle of their governments, and have proved themselves the wisest invention ever devised by the wit of man for the perfect exercise of self-government, and for its preservation. ...And the whole is cemented by giving to every citizen, personally, a part in the administration of the public affairs."

In commenting on gathering the collective voice of the people on an important issue, Jefferson put forth a plan to let the citizens directly vote on the issues: "The mayor of every ward, on a question like the present, would call his ward together, take the simple yea or nay of its members, convey these to the county court, who would hand on those of all its wards to the proper general authority; and the voice of the whole people would be thus fairly, fully, and peaceably expressed, discussed, and decided by the common reason of society."

The above quotes come from a letter Thomas Jefferson wrote to Samuel Kercheval on July 12, 1816.

Through television and a **National Advisory Referendum** we can create a National Town Meeting which Jefferson envisioned for the United States of America.

CANADA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER

THE GLOBE AND MAIL

The subject who is truly loyal to the Chief Magistrate 8-2-95
will neither advise nor submit to arbitrary measures. JUNIUS

Democracy by referendum

THIS week the legislators of France met at Versailles and amended the national constitution to allow the president to make wider use of referendums on social and economic questions. Perhaps it was the symbolism of Versailles — once the seat of French absolutism — which prompted the critics to call this a dangerous expansion of presidential power. The truth is quite the opposite: this is an affirmation of democracy.

What worries the Socialists and Communists, the self-styled tribunes of the people, is that referendums will weaken popular representation by empowering the president to circumvent parliament and go directly to the voters. "You do not strengthen parliament by reducing its powers," said one critic. His reservation, however, raises the question: Whose power is it, anyway? *

All politicians serve at the pleasure of the people, who pass judgment on their performance at fixed intervals. The purpose of the new referendum authority in France is to break an impasse between the executive and the legislature on questions of policy (not, as now, only to ratify treaties). The people are free to reject the proposition. Where, then, is the threat to democracy?

There is none, provided that referendums are not abused. A referendum is prospectively a divisive, incendiary instrument of government. It should be used sparingly and carefully, on issues of consequence, to win popular legitimacy. In other words, a referendum might be justified on the constitution or conscription, as they were in Canada,

but not, probably, on jaywalking or bicycle helmets.

The assumption in limiting referendums is that representatives are elected to represent. They are asked to immerse themselves in fact and argument, examine all sides of the issue, and vote accordingly. If constituents do not agree with their representatives, they can throw them out. The system, though, rests on a sense of faith: that lawmakers have judgment and expertise to make the right decision. If representative government isn't what we want any more, we could adopt direct, push-button democracy, or government by referendum. But no one has seriously suggested that yet, even if technology makes it possible. There is a broad appreciation that elected representatives enrich the democratic decision-making process.

Referendums, in France or anywhere else, come with responsibility. Campaigns should allow a fair hearing of both sides of the issue. The power to call a referendum should not rest with the government alone; there should be a mechanism, as proposed by the Reform Party in Canada, to allow enough electors, having gathered enough demonstrable support, to demand one.

The critics have got it wrong. Referendums are not a licence to autocracy; they are, ideally, a check on it. It is worth noting that if Jacques Chirac had used his new authority to call a referendum on nuclear testing, the polls suggest that he would have lost the vote. Given its importance, there might indeed have been a referendum on that.

The Only National Referendum Ever Held In The US Involved The Elvis Stamp Decision

OK, Elvis fans, today you'll know

A proud and mighty nation holds its collective breath, awaiting the electorate's decision on the compelling issue of the decade, nay, the century: Elvis, the stamp.



Priscilla Presley, the King's ex, returns to Memphis, Tenn., and her old stomping grounds Graceland for today's 4:36 a.m. unveiling of the winning design — sneering young rocker vs. caped Vegas crooner — a bit of history that will be duly captured by all three network morning news shows. "It's just like the Oscars. Nobody will know until it's opened," a Graceland spokesman said.

The Elvis-lovin' public cast 1,128,923 ballots.

Gephardt urges national advisory referendums

National advisory referendums on significant issues would be presented to voters at each general election under a bill to be introduced in Congress Wednesday by U.S. Rep. Richard A. Gephardt, D-St. Louis.

Gephardt says an advisory referendum would help counter "a growing feeling among the American people that their votes no longer count, that politicians fail to respond to legitimate concerns and that they have little or no impact on policy decisions.



Richard A. Gephardt

IN A STATEMENT, he said, "People are frustrated. Voters stay home on election day and yearn for a clear choice on issues. When people are given clear choices, the evidence points to increased participation in the democratic process.

"A national referendum will provide the vehicle for the re-expression of public sentiment for or against critical issues facing the nation."

Under the bill, a Joint Congressional Committee on the National Advisory Referendum would be created to develop propositions to be presented to the voters at each election. The committee would receive and

consider suggestions and comments from as many public sources as possible in deciding issues to be presented to the voters. By Jan. 1 each year, the committee would identify the issues and Congress would determine one to three issues to be placed on the ballot after a series of public hearings around the country.

The Congressional Research Service would publish a voters' guide providing the public with information and arguments for and against the issues.

GEPHARDT SAID results of the referendums would be advisory only. However, issues not acted on by Congress would be resubmitted to the voters within a reasonable period of time, he said.

"A referendum provides much more than an instantaneous reading of the public's mood on an issue as a poll does," he said. "The forums, debates, research and dinner-table discussions preceding the vote will give people an opportunity to participate in the free give and take of ideas, with an understanding that their vote will count and be heard."

A Cambridge Survey Research poll in 1978 reported 74 percent of those surveyed said they would be more inclined to vote if they could vote on issues as well as candidates. Another 77 percent agreed with the statement that allowing votes on issues would make elected officials more responsible to the public interest.

Gephardt also said the referendum "would give government officials a means of assessing public opinion on issues of national importance and respond to the voters."

97TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1395

To provide that an advisory referendum be conducted as part of each general election to give voters an opportunity to express their views on certain issues of national importance.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 28, 1981

Mr. GEPHARDT introduced the following bill; which was referred jointly to the Committees on House Administration and Rules

A BILL

To provide that an advisory referendum be conducted as part of each general election to give voters an opportunity to express their views on certain issues of national importance.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
3 That advisory referendum procedures are established under
4 this Act for the purpose of—

5 (1) providing voters with a means by which—

6 (A) to express their views on certain issues
7 of national importance, and

St. Louis Globe-Democrat Mon. Jan. 14, 1980

Gephardt urges voter referendum on national issues

A bill calling for a national referendum on significant issues to be submitted to voters at each general election will be introduced in the U.S. House by Rep. Richard A. Gephardt, D-St. Louis.

Gephardt said the proposed National Advisory Referendum, which would be held every two years, would encourage public participation and interest in government.

"So many times in Congress we face issues and the only groups that are heard are the small special-interest groups," Gephardt said at a press conference here Saturday.

THE PROPOSAL, developed by the Missouri Public Interest Research Group (MoPIRG), would create an advisory committee of 14 congressmen and the vice president to recommend issues to be put to the voters, subject to congressional approval.

A similar plan is to be introduced in the Missouri General Assembly by State Rep. Thomas Villa, D-St. Louis.

Gephardt said the national referendum would function much as the 1978 Meramec Dam referendum in which Missouri voters were asked whether the federal project should be completed. After the dam was rejected at the polls, the state's congressional delegation worked to terminate its construction.

"**EXPERIENCE** with referendums on the state level has been good," Gephardt said. "When issues appear on the ballot, voter interest, participation and knowledge increases substantially."

When the Meramec Dam referendum appeared on the state's primary election ballot, voter turnout increased from 27 percent of those registered to 40 percent, he said.

Villa said, "I see it as a step in the right direction in terms of getting people more involved in government without a great deal more cost to them. No matter how hard you try to stay in touch with your constituents . . . , you still don't have a genuine pulse on what all of them are thinking and caring."

TOM RYAN, a MoPIRG director, said the referendum is designed to reverse public dissatisfaction with government and the belief that voters have no say in policy decisions, although legislators would not be bound to referendum results.

The Value of Referendums

Rep. Richard A. Gephardt's bill proposing national advisory referendums on significant issues has merit. It deserves serious consideration to determine whether the benefits would outweigh the costs and mechanics of implementing such a plan.

Gephardt's proposal is not altogether original. The concept has been advanced for several years by the Missouri Public Interest Research Group (MOPIRG). The group contends that voter participation would swell if people were permitted to express their preferences on issues as well as candidates in general elections.

Some issues that the public probably would be eager to vote on are: a constitutional amendment to prohibit abortion, the Equal Rights Amendment, revival of a military draft, forced school busing, national health insurance, capital punishment, collective bargaining by public employees and gun control.

Referendums could be more satisfying than public opinion polls which sample people's expressed preferences.

With the understanding that results would not be binding, congressmen and senators would nonetheless be put on the spot if they claimed to vote their consciences in direct opposition to the wishes of their constituents. The Panama

Canal treaties would have been a good test to determine whether elected representatives can be persuaded to feel they should be more responsive to constituents.

Under Gephardt's bill a joint congressional committee would develop propositions after hearing recommendations from as many public sources as possible. The committee would define the issues and Congress would select from one to three of them to be placed on the ballot in general election years.

The Congressional Research Service would publish a voters' guide providing the public with arguments for and against the issue, according to Gephardt's plan. It might be well to ask voters at the outset if they favored this arrangement or whether they felt it would be too costly to them, the taxpayers, and too susceptible to government propaganda abuses. The news media and interested groups should be able to inform the public adequately on issues if they do their jobs properly.

St. Louis' Rep. Gephardt, one of the brightest young members of Congress, deserves appreciation for trying to make Capitol Hill more responsive to the people back home.

The Gallup Poll

Americans Eager to Cast Ballots on National Issues

By George Gallup

PRINCETON, N.J. — If Americans could vote on major issues facing the nation, as well as candidates, voter turnout in national elections — now the worst of any major democracy in the world — could improve substantially, a recent Gallup Poll indicates.

This conclusion is based on the results of a poll in which national samples of those who voted in the 1980 presidential election and those who did not were questioned about the related proposals that have been offered as ways of increasing turnout in national elections.

When non-voters were asked if they would be more likely or less likely to vote in national elections if they could vote on important national issues as well as candidates, as many as half (48 percent) said they would be more likely to do so.

The implications of these findings are far-reaching: If half the non-voters who say they would be more likely to vote actually did so turnout would increase to almost 80 percent, a level equal to that found in other major democratic nations.

Turnout in the 1980 presidential election was the lowest in 32 years. In fact, only 54 percent of those eligible took the trouble to vote in November.

As the survey results indicate, measures that would provide the public with avenues for direct expression of their views might well enhance their participation in candidate elections. This may have particular application in election years similar to 1980, when many prospective voters were less than enthusiastic about the major party nominees.

Further evidence of the appeal of voting on issues as well as for candidates is seen in the results of a question on a constitutional amendment, described by its sponsors as the Voter Initiative Amendment. According to this amendment, a national referendum would be held on any issue when 3 percent of all voters in the previous presidential election signed petitions demanding such a vote.

This amendment is favored by 2 to 1 among all persons interviewed, with voters and non-voters in last fall's election holding similar views.

A recent report by the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate indicated that most conventional proposals for increasing voter turnout have had little effect. Participa-

tion was not notably higher in states that used postcard registration or allowed voters to register at the polls on Election Day.

The current survey results lend support to the view of proponents of the initiative and referendum that offering citizens an opportunity to vote on major issues of the day would encourage greater participation.

The latest results are based on in-person interviews with 1,553 adults, 18 and over, conducted in more than 300 scientifically selected localities across the nation during the period April 10-13. For results based on a sample of this size, one can say with 95 percent confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects could be 3 percentage points in either direction.

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Better poll than Pero's says voters want even more change

By RICHARD MORIN

WASHINGTON — Want to talk political change? Don't talk to Ross Perot, and please ignore the goofy and unreliable pseudo-poll he's doing on government reform. The man you need to talk to these days is Alan Kay, America's patron of the polls who has just asked a random sample of voters what they would do to make government really work for the people.

Earlier this month, Mr. Kay and his Americans Talk Issues Foundation sponsored a survey of 1,000 adults by telephone on their attitudes toward electronic democracy and government reforms.

When his pollsters asked about reform, here's what these voters said:

Nearly two out of three favorably viewed having binding national referendums on policy questions. Seven in 10 favored a modified balanced-budget amendment that would exclude from the budget calculation the amount spent on disaster emergencies.

Seven in 10 responded favorably to a proposal to automatically register voters when they get their driver license, the so-called motor-voter initiative now before Congress. Nearly six in 10 favored the "reverse frank," in which constituents would not have to pay to mail cards or letters to their elected representatives in Congress.

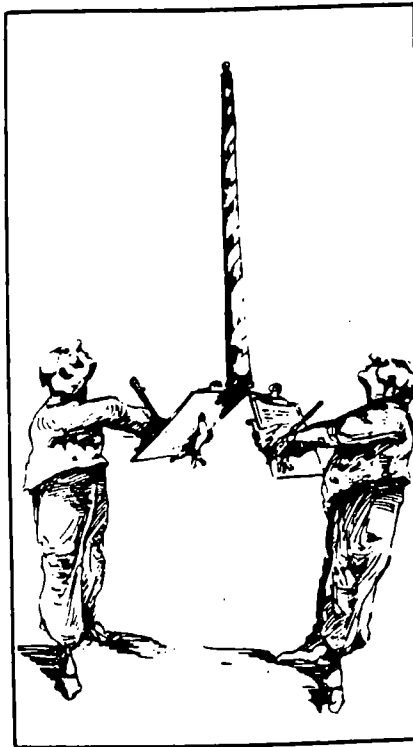
Also winning a thumbs-up from voters: free air time for congressional candidates and electronic town halls.

But that's not all. To measure the public's appetite for reform, Mr. Kay tested other, even more exotic reforms.

Two out of three would not object if term limits were imposed on members of Congress — and on lobbyists and federal bureaucrats as well.

Four out of 10 voters surveyed said it wouldn't be a bad idea if Americans were allowed to vote by telephone, with dial-in voters "identifying themselves in the same way shoppers do with a credit card or driver's license."

One out of six wouldn't be



bothered if members of Congress were selected by a national lottery. That's right — a random drawing from the voter rolls to see who serves in Congress, "thus changing the composition of Congress to represent all demographic groups and walks of life and removing the influence of money from elections."

And one out of six were not opposed to having congressional seats going to the highest bidder — with the money going to the Treasury. Yes, if your price is right, you, too, could serve in Congress. (Other polls consistently show that many Americans already suspect Senate and House seats already are bought and paid for by special interests, so this may not be viewed as much of a change.)

Granted, those last results should be taken with a hefty dose of salt. Asking people whether congressional seats should be bought outright at open auction is an open invitation to even the most somber-minded respondent to make mischief. And many pollsters might quibble with the language of some questions in Mr.

Kay's survey, despite the efforts of respected political pollsters Fred Steeper, a Republican, and Democrat Celinda Lake, who designed the survey questionnaire.

Still, the numbers strongly suggest that voters have yet to lose their appetite for change.

Congress and lobbyists were singled out for special attention by these voters. Eight out of 10 people surveyed were favorably disposed to cutting the salaries of Congress "to let them know that we really want spending cuts and that cuts should start at the top with themselves," the single most popular proposed "reform" in the poll. (No surprise, then, that the least popular was increasing congressional salaries to attract better candidates, viewed favorably by 15 percent of those questioned.)

Three out of four favored registering and limiting lobbyists' activities, and six in 10 favored eliminating political-action committees. Nearly two out of three — 64 percent — favored term limits for members of Congress, lobbyists and federal bureaucrats.

"What this survey shows is that when it is called to their attention, the public quickly recognizes that term limits of elected members only is a simplistic and subvertible approach to better government and needs to be included in the larger context of concomitant limitations on lobbyists and bureaucrats," said Mr. Kay, a retired millionaire whose avocation in recent years has been to finance and direct sophisticated polls on national and international issues.

Still, with talk of change in the air, some things never change. According to the poll, voters continue to hate Congress but love our own representatives. While only a third had a favorable view of Congress as an institution, 48 percent held favorable views of their own representative, and 47 percent held a similarly positive view of their own senator.

Richard Morin is director of polling for The Washington Post.

The Gallup Poll

53 Bank Street, P.O. Box 628, Princeton, New Jersey 08540 • 609 924-9600 • Telex 843-470

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February 13, 1981

Mr. Tom Ryan
MISSOURI PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP
P.O. Box 8276
St. Louis, MO 63156

Dear Mr. Ryan:

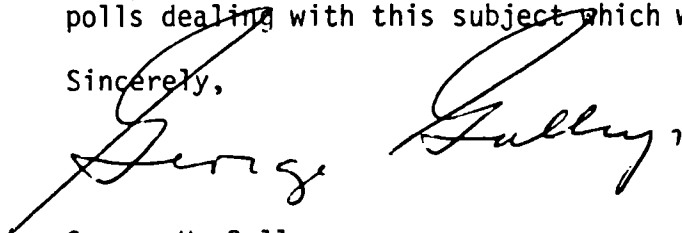
Many thanks for your recent news release on the national referendum proposed by Congressman Gephardt. We have done a great deal of polling on the subject of public opinion referenda. I am enclosing an article which was printed in "The Public Opinion Quarterly," 1971, telling about one experiment which we conducted in conjunction with N.E.T.

I hope to get in touch with Congressman Gephardt to learn more about his bill.

As you may know, Switzerland is virtually governed by the initiative and referendum. In fact, citizens have an opportunity to vote on forty or fifty key issues each year - federal, cantonal and local. And you will notice from the enclosed reprint, Switzerland is regarded by world leaders as the best governed nation in the world, which is a good argument in favor of this democratic instrument.

I hope you will keep me on your mailing list. We, in return, will send you any polls dealing with this subject which we obtain.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "George Gallup", written in dark ink.

George H. Gallup

GHG/svc
Enclosures

Advisory Referendums

They Are Seen As A Way To Improve Decisionmaking

A Statement By Co-Directors

Tom Ryan And Evonne Ianacone

Missouri Public Interest Research Group

Over the past two decades marked shifts have taken place in the mood of the American people. Frustration with government has almost become a cliché for our times.

In 1958 only 18 percent of the respondents to a

mirror of public opinion

University of Michigan poll agreed with the statement that "government is run for a few big interests," while today that figure has risen to 74 percent. From their own political perspectives, liberals, mod-

erates and conservatives have been loudly heard decrying unresponsive government.

It is often charged that an unresponsive government stands in the way of the popular will. As government has become more complex and more remote from the average citizen, people have become less confident in their ability to influence the course of public policy.

A 1978 survey by Cambridge Survey Research found that 57 percent of the people agreed with the statement "people like me don't have any say about what government does" and 59 percent agreed with the statement "I don't think public officials care much what people like me think." A recent survey by the University of Michigan found that 70 percent of the people did not believe government can be "regularly trusted to do what is right," which is a dramatic increase from the 25 percent who agreed in 1958.

When the people of California sent shockwaves through the nation by approving Proposition 13, the news media signaled the vote as a precursor of people asserting direct control over government. During the same summer of 1978, voters in Missouri participated in a non-binding advisory referendum on whether a dam should be built on the Meramec River. The significance of the Missouri vote in which the people were given a collective voice in the process of decisionmaking while leaving the final decision to elected officials was totally ignored by the national media.

After the Missouri experience, we came to the conclusion that the use of a regular advisory referendum to include people in the shaping of public policy would be far better for our democracy and less of a threat to responsible government than letting the frustration of the American people build to a point where they seek popular lawmaking as their legislative

process of first resort.

The twin obligations of government are to be both responsive and responsible. Government has an inherent obligation to allow citizen participation in decisionmaking while not abdicating the responsibilities of good judgment.

We propose the establishment of a national advisory referendum and a state advisory referendum to be held at each general election on one to three issues chosen by the Congress and the state legislature respectively. A national and state advisory referendum will give people a greater voice in government and a more effective means to participate in shaping public policy. U.S. Rep. Richard Gephardt is sponsoring the national legislation and state Rep. Tom Villa is the sponsor of the proposal in the Missouri General Assembly.

The establishment of a non-binding advisory referendum is intended to make representative government more responsive, not to replace it with popular lawmaking. We recognize that government has an obligation to weigh the interests of the majority with the rights of individuals. Each elected official must exercise his/her best judgment and reflect upon his/her conscience in deciding matters of public policy. However, we should not fear the open and public discussion of sensitive issues. When prejudice and ignorance are exposed to the light of public scrutiny, they begin to evaporate.

A democracy cannot ignore a continuing decline in the confidence in its governmental institutions. A democracy cannot ignore a feeling of isolation, powerlessness, and frustration with government among many of its citizens. People want more than promises of a responsive government. They want guarantees that their voices, their desires, their interests will become integral parts in government decisionmaking. The American people do not want to be passive pawns of either special interest groups or government itself. The people want to help decide the very direction of this nation.

The time has come to let the public have a clear voice in shaping public policy. The time has come for government to recognize its obligation to forge a public consensus for public policies. It is time to recognize that enlightened social policy means that the people themselves are brought into the consensus of decisionmaking. It is time to understand that leadership is not the prudent exercise of social authority over people but rather the ability to persuade the people to willingly follow the chosen path and facilitate their participation in determining its direction. It is time to understand that any movement which does not have trust and confidence in the people themselves does not have any legitimacy to claim it represents their interests.

We seek to build upon our democratic traditions to form a new mechanism in which we as a people begin to collectively search out our common destiny. As we boldly begin a search for a new consensus, we are guided by our most fundamental principles and seek to give contemporary meaning to the words, "We the people."



Pat Quinn for U.S. Senate

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For Immediate Release

Wednesday, November 8, 1995

Contact: Claude Walker

312-654-8888

PAT QUINN UNVEILS PLAN FOR NATIONAL ADVISORY REFERENDUM; ILLINOIS SENATE CANDIDATE SAYS IDEA WILL ENABLE CITIZENS TO SEND "MARCHING ORDERS" TO CONGRESS

Washington, D.C.---Former Illinois State Treasurer Pat Quinn today unveiled a plan at the National Press Club for a National Advisory Referendum process to enable American voters to have a more active role in shaping public policy during each general election.

Quinn, Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate, has organized several successful referendum drives in Illinois, including one which cut the size of the legislature and another referendum which created the largest consumer group in the state.

"The National Advisory Referendum is a mechanism to give voters an opportunity to express their views on issues of national importance and be a strong tool to make Congress more responsive," Quinn said. "This process will allow citizens to send marching orders to Congress and, in effect, adds 200 million new seats in Congress."

Under Quinn's National Advisory Referendum proposal, questions of public policy could be proposed by petitions signed by voters equal in number to at least 2% of the total votes cast for President in at least three-fourths of the states, about a million signatures overall. Referendum questions advising Congress on the conduct of its constitutional duties could include subjects such as raising revenue, appropriating tax dollars, reforming Congress itself and protecting consumers.

Other issues which could be voted upon in a National Advisory Referendum include protecting Medicare, overhauling the federal tax code, health care reform, reducing Congressional pensions, ending corporate welfare and imposing term limits, Quinn said.

"Thomas Jefferson--author of the Declaration of Independence--first proposed a national advisory referendum in 1816 to counter the influence of the elites. Today, the gulf between the government and the governed has widened. The National Advisory Referendum process will give new meaning to the phrase 'We The People' in the 21st Century," Quinn said.

"We can't go wrong by having more democracy in America, by giving everyday people a greater opportunity to have a voice in their government," Quinn said. "A strong democracy is not possible with weak citizen participation."

Last year, the *Washington Post* reported that two-thirds of those polled want to vote on national issues in addition to voting on candidates. Just last Sunday, a *Los Angeles Times* poll showed that only 12% of Americans "have much confidence in Congress". Moreover, 69% say that "people like me have almost no say in the political system".

-more-

Congressional pensions skyrocket every time Congress gives itself a pay raise because the pension levels are directly linked to Congressional salaries, Quinn said.

The infamous 1989 midnight pay raise law has boosted Congressional salaries from \$89,500 to \$133,600, a 49% increase. Quinn supports repeal of the law and cutting Congressional salaries back to their 1989 level.

"Since 1989, millions of American workers have seen little or no increase in their take-home pay, yet Members of Congress with their soaring salaries and pensions seem oblivious to the needs of people who live from check to check," Quinn said.

The *American Taxpayer Referendum* also takes on corporate welfare, the system of tax giveaways and subsidies to big corporations whose Washington lobbyists hand out millions of dollars in campaign cash, primarily to Congressional incumbents.

"Utilities, oil companies, wineries, sugar producers, casinos, mink breeders and countless other special interests benefit from tax breaks and subsidies handed out by Members of Congress. The *American Taxpayer Referendum* will enable voters to let Congress know how taxpayers feel about unnecessary welfare for dependent corporations," Quinn said.

During the current federal budget battle, severe cuts are being proposed in Medicare, as well as for many education programs, including Head Start, teacher development and student loans, and for health programs like child immunizations, nutrition aid for pregnant women and child care assistance.

The *American Taxpayer Referendum* will be placed on county ballots by citizens gathering signatures of 10% of the number of registered voters in that county. The deadline for submission of *American Taxpayer Referendum* petitions is August 19, 1996.

Since 1975, Quinn has organized grassroots petition drives that have collected more than four million signatures for government ethics reforms, consumer protection laws and tax reforms.

In 1976, Quinn led the biggest petition drive in state history that collected 635,158 signatures and stopped a century-old practice which allowed Illinois state legislators to collect their entire annual salary on their first day in office. In 1980, Quinn spearheaded the Cutback Amendment, which reduced the size of the legislature in the first and only constitutional amendment ever adopted in Illinois by citizen initiative.

Quinn's referendum drive in 1983 led to the creation of the Citizens Utility Board (CUB), now the largest consumer group in the state. Last year, Quinn helped organize the "Eight is Enough" petition drive which gathered 437,000 signatures calling for term limits for state legislators.

Quinn, Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate, is the former Illinois State Treasurer (1991-1995). Anyone interested in obtaining *American Taxpayer Referendum* petitions may write to Quinn's office at PO Box 428, Oak Park, IL. 60303, or call 312-654-8888.

TOM W. RYAN
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Littleton, CO 80127

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ryandenver@msn.com

November 13, 1999

Mr. Eric Liu, Deputy Director, Domestic Policy Council
and Mr. Tom Friedman
The White House, West Wing, 2nd Floor
Washington, DC 20502

Dear Eric and Tom::

When you first called me following my visit with the President at Senator Dianne Feinstein's home in Aspen, you asked me about democracy and the Internet. Enclosed is an important article from the magazine *Yahoo! Internet Life* which should have direct bearing on the President's State of the Union address in January 2000.

Let me quote a few key passages and then tell you why I think it's important.

"Yet the folks whose very existence depends on tapping into the public's mood seem determinedly clueless about the political possibilities as the new millennium, the Digital Age, and a presidential election collide head on. Pundits on and off the Net are touting the 2000 presidential election as the one in which the Internet transforms politics the way it has commerce and entertainment.

"Don't be on it.

"The U.S. has a tradition of ratifying new media through politics and big stories. Network television news came of age during the Kennedy-Nixon debates. Politicians recognized the power of cable TV when war broke out in the Persian Gulf and when Ross Perot practically moved into Larry King's studio."

. . .

Gore, Forbes, McCain, and others have already held moderated chats on outside sites such as **WASHINGTON POST.COM** and **CNN.COM**. . . . But the odd truth is that live chats on the Net are almost universally confusing and unrevealing, more about appearing to be democratic than actually being so. It's hard to say for sure, but there has probably never been a meaningful live chat involving a national politician in the history of the NET.

(Tom Ryan update note: Enclosed is *Slate* Internet columnist Jacob Weisberg's commentary on the President's cyber Town Hall Meeting, that "history will remember them as fumbling experiments that pointed in a different direction. At this point, they testify mainly to the capacity of the Internet to take something interesting—like a discussion with President Clinton--and make it unbearably dull. But be patient: In five years or so, advances in technology may get us to the point where an Internet Town Meeting is almost as interesting as a Town Meeting without the Internet.")

. . .

"Most Washington politicians, and the reporters who cover them, are too mired in their incestuous talk show, dinner party, spin the news atmosphere to get what the Net is about or figure out how to use it politically.

"Part of this is journalism's continuing struggle to come to terms with the Digital Age."

. . .

"But when some future politician *does* figure out the Net, he or she will come nose-to-nose with the powerful ethos of interactivity, and politics will finally be reborn. Best bet: the 2002 congressional elections.

“American style democracy dates to an era when most voters never got to lay eyes on their elected officials, let alone participate in civic information-gathering and decision-making. Washington was constructed to do the talking and voting on behalf of constituents unable to join.

“That’s no longer the case (as Wall Street, among other power centers, is rapidly learning). On the Net, voters can connect instantly with their government representatives, gather information, register opinions. Just as wired Americans are reshaping Wall Street, the music industry, and retailing, they will inevitably get around to beating down the walls around Washington with their keyboards and DSL lines.

“Washington may well be the last hold out. The music and entertainment industries, banking and education are all reeling as Internet-driven interactivity threatens their primacy and influence. But Washington’s twin power centers—journalism and politics—don’t really seem to want or like all that much feedback. They’re piling up the sandbags and stockpiling supplies, digging in rather than embracing change.”

. . .

“(The Net) needs universal access to it, and some intelligent discussion about how to harness the most transformative technology of the century for civic good.”

. . .

“And some constitutional scholars worry that instant electronic voting belies the spirit of the U.S political system—that is, deliberative bodies like Congress aren’t supposed to be resolved by public referendum, they argue, but by careful deliberation and argument.

“Still, it seems an almost certain option, and it’s hard to believe Jefferson wouldn’t have danced with joy at the thought of all Americans having the chance to vote instantly and easily on issues affecting them. At least

one reason the Founders created a deliberative democracy is that voters were far away from legislators. Franklin would surely have been thrilled at the idea of an Internet.

“Voting ought to be easy, and the Net can make it so. The notion that citizens can do it from their living rooms—regardless of the weather, their age, physical condition, or the distance to the nearest poll—is so powerful as to be inevitable.

. . .

“Instead of offering millennial techno-blabber about the future and half-baked programs to purchase computers for low-income Americans (Bill Clinton), the Net candidate will be looking for concrete ways to get computers into the hands of every kid, assuring not only equality of opportunity but also continued American dominance of the global economic boom.

“This may seem inevitable, but it isn’t imminent. How ironic that in 2000, everything—the technology, the constituency, the opportunity—is in place for the Net to revolutionize our fragmented and remote political system, except for the most important: a politician with the vision to see it.”

The time has come for change, because the changes are already reshaping how we are connected as a nation. My 87 year old mother gave me this article after reading it in *Yahoo! Internet Life*.

My 87 year old mother is connected and on-line for one simple reason—it connects her to her family who is spread throughout the United States, England and Brazil. My mother bought her first computer in her 80’s. It was the opportunity to become better connected to her family that brought her into the world of the Internet. But it does not matter why people get connected, once they join the 102 million Americans who are on-line, they become a member of a new community with far reaching implications for our democracy.

The world is changing faster than anyone can imagine. The President has an historic opportunity in his State of the Union address to transform his concept of community into a “New American Community” for a “New American Century.”

The genius of Jefferson was that he was able to take a concept, create a foundation based on timeless principles and build a democratic structure which will stand the test of time.

The President has a choice. He can either create a new democratic wave in his State of the Union address or miss the wave of the future.

Here is a simple test for you. Can you remember anything of significance that was proposed in the last State of the Union address of the last four Presidents: Bush, Reagan, Carter, or Ford?

I can't. Yet I remember the beginning of each President's term so clearly. President can change how he will be remembered by what he does in his State of the Union. Events create opportunities for Presidents to make history and to lead the nation into a new era.

The President has a choice. He can focus on programs which will be lost in history just as the programs of his predecessor last State of the Union addresses have been lost, or he can give a speech about the democratic promise of the future—the technology, the people, and Jefferson's ideas to break down the final barriers to democratic decision-making where we as a nation come together as a national community as both Jefferson and President Clinton have envisioned.

The President must decide whether his last State of the Union address will be a time marker for the new millennium or be judged by historians as just passing time until a new order of a new president shapes the new century.

The President must decide whether he will provide structure to his promise in his second inaugural address where “we will have reformed our politics so that the voice of the people will always speak louder than the din of narrow interests.”

The President must decide whether he will provide structure to his

promise in his second inaugural address where he said, "Our greatest responsibility is to embrace a new spirit of community for a new century. Will we be one nation, one people, with one common destiny or not?"

The answer is more clear today than in January 1997 when President Clinton spoke those words. The President, who shares Jefferson's name, can share Jefferson's legacy on democracy by resurrecting Jefferson's idea to create a National Advisory Referendum, where we as a people can come together to forge a public consensus for our common destiny, "and the voice of the whole people would be thus fairly, fully and peaceably expressed, discussed and decided by the common reason of society." (Thomas Jefferson, letter to Samuel Kercheval, 1816)

The President has a choice.

A State of the Union address which offers the President's commentary about the technology of today and its impact on the future of our democracy will be lost in history.

People are looking for action to break down the doors of democratic decision-making, not words about the promise of a new technology. People are already using the technology and see the promise. Nobody has to tell them what they already know and what they are already doing. People are voting on the Web for the greatest athletes of the century (ESPN); voting to program TV channels (both ESPN Classic and the Biography Channel); voting on murder cases (NBC Dateline with real time interactive voting through a MSNBC website just this past week on prime time television. You saw the votes superimposed on the prime time show while they were being cast. Don't you think that if people are voting on television to give their opinion they will inevitably want to vote on the issues which affect their daily lives in a similar advisory capacity?

Once again the people are way ahead of the elected officials.

A state of the Union address which resurrects an idea to open the doors of decision-making to the people which Thomas Jefferson first

proposed in 1816, and which has been lost to history for over 180 years, will become a time marker for all of American history.

The interactive technology of today will change the course of American democracy tomorrow.

President Clinton will either miss the technology turnoff in the road ahead or steer the course of our democracy for centuries to come by creating a new model of American democracy for all the world.

You can't stop technology. Voting on the Internet is inevitable. But the issue is not how to make voting easier, but how to make voting more effective so that, in the words of President Clinton's First Inaugural address, we must "reform our politics, so that power and privilege no longer shout down the voice of the people."

Thomas Jefferson has set forth the architectural plan to give people the voice they deserve. All the people need is a presidential contractor to build a new American house of democracy.

But who will get credit for breaking down the barriers and opening the doors of decision-making for the people? History has always rewarded those who break down doors to democratic decision-making. History is already being written by the Internet pioneers of saying that the public officials of today who had the opportunity to create a "democracy reborn" have missed the boat and "don't have a clue" as to how to steer the course for the future.

But whether we stay on the same course of a factionalized, representative democracy dominated by special interest groups and the power of money, or whether we go forward in a new direction where we give contemporary meaning to the words, "We the people" by creating a new structure for democratic decision-making, depends on what you do right now.

The choice is yours.

History is in your hands.

I respectfully request the opportunity to meet with you and the President at your convenience to discuss this most important issue.

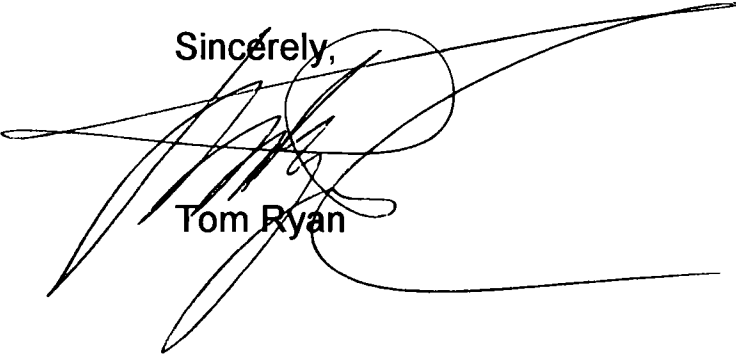
Jefferson's ideas deserve the President's personal review. I'm merely Jefferson's attorney petitioning you for a hearing so that his ideas can be heard.

You've now read the briefs.

Give me 30 minutes for oral argument.

Your decision can change the world.

Sincerely,



Tom Ryan

(Revised draft to include Congress for 2000 National Advisory Referendum)

Proposed Legislation
to Give the President of the United States the
Power to Refer to the People up to Three
Issues for a National Advisory Referendum to
Give People a Greater Voice in Government
and to Forge a Common Consensus on
Matters of Public Policy.

Section 1. The President of the United States may at his sole discretion submit to the voters of the United States two issues for a non-binding advisory vote of the people at the general election to be held in November of the year 2000.

Section 2. The Congress of the United States may at its sole discretion submit to the voters of the United States two issues for a non-binding advisory vote of the people at the general election to be held in November of the year 2000. The Congress shall certify to the President of the United States the two issues to be included in the advisory referendum. The President shall refer the two advisory issues, without subject to veto, to the several states under Section 5 of this Act.

Section 3. The President of the United States may at his sole discretion submit to the voters of the United States one, two or three issues for a non-binding advisory vote of the people to be held at any general election for the Congress of the United States beginning in the year 2002, and for every general election for the Congress of the United States thereafter.

Section 4. The purpose of the advisory referendum is to give people a greater voice in shaping national policy by directly participating in a vote on issues referred to the people by the President of the United States. Issues submitted by the President may include proposed federal legislation, regulations or executive branch policies. Any issue referred to the voters of the United States shall be written in such a way that a "yes" or "no" vote may be taken.

Section 5. The President shall submit to the election authorities of the several states the issues for the advisory vote of the people no later than 120 days prior to the general election. The issues submitted by the President shall appear on the ballot in close proximity to the election of the Senators and Representatives to the Congress of the United States.

Section 6. Any state receiving federal funds shall participate in any referendum referred to the several states by the President of the United States as a condition for the continued receipt of federal moneys.

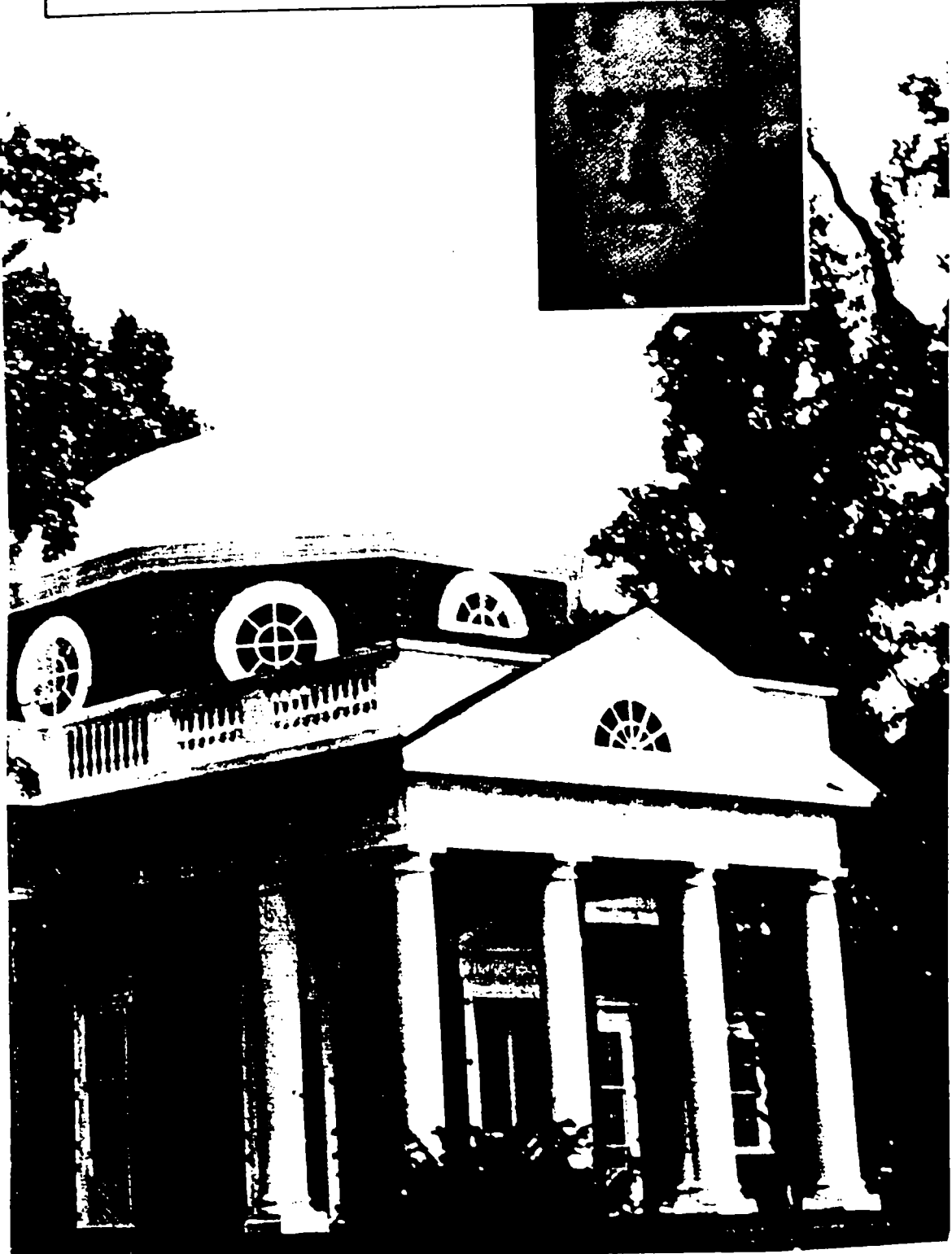
Section 7. Enforcement of this act shall be by a writ of mandamus in federal district court.

THE PORTABLE

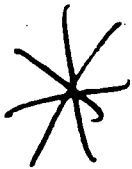
Edited by MERRILL
D. PETERSON

THOMAS JEFFERSON

0



lions of human beings has probably been the effect of these convulsions. I did not, in '89, believe they would have lasted so long, nor have cost so much blood. But although your prophecy has proved true so far, I hope it does not preclude a better final result. That same light from our west seems to have spread and illuminated the very engines employed to extinguish it. It has given them a glimmering of their rights and their power. The idea of representative government has taken root and growth among them. Their masters feel it, and are saving themselves by timely offers of this modification of their powers. Belgium, Prussia, Poland, Lombardy, etc., are now offered a representative organization; illusive probably at first, but it will grow into power in the end. Opinion is power, and that opinion will come. Even France will yet attain representative government. You observe it makes the basis of every Constitution which has been demanded or offered,—of that demanded by their Senate; of that offered by Bonaparte; and of that granted by Louis XVIII. The idea then is rooted, and will be established, although rivers of blood may yet flow between them and their object. The allied armies now couching upon them are first to be destroyed, and destroyed they will surely be. A nation united can never be conquered. . . .



To Samuel Kercheval

Monticello, July 12, 1816.

SIR

I duly received your favor of June the 13th, with the copy of the letters on the calling a convention, on which you are pleased to ask my opinion. I have not been in the habit of mysterious reserve on any subject, nor of buttoning up my opinions within my own doublet. On the contrary, while in public service especially, I thought the public entitled to frankness, and intimately to know whom

they employed. But I am now retired: I resign myself, as a passenger, with confidence to those at present at the helm, and ask but for rest, peace and good will. The question you propose, on equal representation, has become a party one, in which I wish to take no public share. Yet, if it be asked for your own satisfaction only, and not to be quoted before the public, I have no motive to withhold it, and the less from you, as it coincides with your own. At the birth of our republic, I committed that opinion to the world, in the draught of a constitution annexed to the "Notes on Virginia," in which a provision was inserted for a representation permanently equal. The infancy of the subject at that moment, and our inexperience of self-government, occasioned gross departures in that draught from genuine republican canons. In truth, the abuses of monarchy had so much filled all the space of political contemplation, that we imagined everything republican which was not monarchy. We had not yet penetrated to the mother principle, that "governments are republican only in proportion as they embody the will of their people, and execute it." Hence, our first constitutions had really no leading principles in them. But experience and reflection have but more and more confirmed me in the particular importance of the equal representation then proposed. On that point, then, I am entirely in sentiment with your letters; and only lament that a copyright of your pamphlet prevents their appearance in the newspapers, where alone they would be generally read, and produce general effect. The present vacancy too, of other matter, would give them place in every paper, and bring the question home to every man's conscience.

But inequality of representation in both Houses of our legislature, is not the only republican heresy in this first essay of our Revolutionary patriots at forming a Constitution. For let it be agreed that a government is republican in proportion as every member composing it has his equal voice in the direction of its concerns, (not indeed in per-

son, which would be impracticable beyond the limits of a city, or small township,) but by representatives chosen by himself, and responsible to him at short periods, and let us bring to the test of this canon every branch of our Constitution.

In the legislature, the House of Representatives is chosen by less than half the people, and not at all in proportion to those who do choose. The Senate are still more disproportionate, and for long terms of irresponsibility. In the Executive, the Governor is entirely independent of the choice of the people, and of their control; his Council equally so, and at best but a fifth wheel to a wagon. In the Judiciary, the judges of the highest courts are dependent on none but themselves. In England, where judges were named and removable at the will of an hereditary executive, from which branch most misrule was feared, and has flowed, it was a great point gained, by fixing them for life, to make them independent of that executive. But in a government founded on the public will, this principle operates in an opposite direction, and against that will. There, too, they were still removable on a concurrence of the executive and legislative branches. But we have made them independent of the nation itself. They are irremovable, but by their own body, for any depravities of conduct, and even by their own body for the imbecilities of dotage. The justices of the inferior courts are self-chosen, are for life, and perpetuate their own body in succession forever, so that a faction once possessing themselves of the bench of a county, can never be broken up, but hold their county in chains, forever indissoluble. Yet these justices are the real executive as well as judiciary, in all our minor and most ordinary concerns. They tax us at will; fill the office of sheriff, the most important of all the executive officers of the county; name nearly all our military leaders, which leaders, once named, are removable but by themselves. The juries, our judges of all fact, and of law when they choose it, are not selected by the people, nor amen-

able to them. They are chosen by an officer named by the court and executive. Chosen, did I say? Picked up by the sheriff from the loungings of the court yard, after everything respectable has retired from it. Where then is our republicanism to be found? Not in our Constitution certainly, but merely in the spirit of our people. That would oblige even a despot to govern us republicanly. Owing to this spirit, and to nothing in the form of our Constitution, all things have gone well. But this fact, so triumphantly misquoted by the enemies of reformation, is not the fruit of our Constitution, but has prevailed in spite of it. Our functionaries have done well, because generally honest men. If any were not so, they feared to show it.

But it will be said, it is easier to find faults than to amend them. I do not think their amendment so difficult as is pretended. Only lay down true principles, and adhere to them inflexibly. Do not be frightened into their surrender by the alarms of the timid, or the croakings of wealth against the ascendancy of the people. If experience be called for, appeal to that of our fifteen or twenty governments for forty years, and show me where the people have done half the mischief in these forty years, that a single despot would have done in a single year; or show half the riots and rebellions, the crimes and the punishments, which have taken place in any single nation, under kingly government, during the same period. The true foundation of republican government is the equal right of every citizen, in his person and property, and in their management. Try by this, as a tally, every provision of our Constitution, and see if it hangs directly on the will of the people. Reduce your legislature to a convenient number for full, but orderly discussion. Let every man who fights or pays, exercise his just and equal right in their election. Submit them to approbation or rejection at short intervals. Let the executive be chosen in the same way, and for the same term, by those whose agent he is to be; and leave no screen of a council behind which to

skulk from responsibility. It has been thought that the people are not competent electors of judges *learned in the law*. But I do not know that this is true, and, if doubtful, we should follow principle. In this, as in many other elections, they would be guided by reputation, which would not err oftener, perhaps, than the present mode of appointment. In one State of the Union, at least, it has long been tried, and with the most satisfactory success. The judges of Connecticut have been chosen by the people every six months, for nearly two centuries, and I believe there has hardly ever been an instance of change; so powerful is the curb of incessant responsibility. If prejudice, however, derived from a monarchical institution, is still to prevail against the vital elective principle of our own, and if the existing example among ourselves of periodical election of judges by the people be still mistrusted, let us at least not adopt the evil, and reject the good, of the English precedent; let us retain amovability on the concurrence of the executive and legislative branches, and nomination by the executive alone. Nomination to office is an executive function. To give it to the legislature, as we do, is a violation of the principle of the separation of powers. It swerves the members from correctness, by temptations to intrigue for office themselves, and to a corrupt barter of votes; and destroys responsibility by dividing it among a multitude. By leaving nomination in its proper place, among executive functions, the principle of the distribution of power is preserved, and responsibility weighs with its heaviest force on a single head.

The organization of our county administrations may be thought more difficult. But follow principle, and the knot unties itself. Divide the counties into wards of such size as that every citizen can attend, when called on, and act in person. Ascribe to them the government of their wards in all things relating to themselves exclusively. A justice, chosen by themselves, in each, a constable, a military company, a patrol, a school, the care of their own poor, their

own portion of the public roads, the choice of one or more jurors to serve in some court, and the delivery, within their own wards, of their own votes for all elective officers of higher sphere, will relieve the county administration of nearly all its business, will have it better done, and by making every citizen an acting member of the government, and in the offices nearest and most interesting to him, will attach him by his strongest feelings to the independence of his country, and its republican Constitution. The justices thus chosen by every ward, would constitute the county court, would do its judiciary business, direct roads and bridges, levy county and poor rates, and administer all the matters of common interest to the whole country. These wards, called townships in New England, are the vital principle of their governments, and have proved themselves the wisest invention ever devised by the wit of man for the perfect exercise of self-government, and for its preservation. We should thus marshal our government into, 1, the general federal republic, for all concerns foreign and federal; 2, that of the State, for what relates to our own citizens exclusively; 3, the county republics, for the duties and concerns of the county; and 4, the ward republics, for the small, and yet numerous and interesting concerns of the neighborhood; and in government, as well as in every other business of life, it is by division and subdivision of duties alone, that all matters, great and small, can be managed to perfection. And the whole is cemented by giving to every citizen, personally, a part in the administration of the public affairs.

The sum of these amendments is, 1. General suffrage. 2. Equal representation in the legislature. 3. An executive chosen by the people. 4. Judges elective or amovable. 5. Justices, jurors, and sheriffs elective. 6. Ward divisions. And 7. Periodical amendments of the Constitution.

I have thrown out these as loose heads of amendment, for consideration and correction; and their object is to secure self-government by the republicanism of our Consti-



tution, as well as by the spirit of the people; and to nourish and perpetuate that spirit. I am not among those who fear the people. They, and not the rich, are our dependence for continued freedom. And to preserve their independence, we must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt. We must make our election between *economy and liberty*, or *profusion and servitude*. If we run into such debts, as that we must be taxed in our meat and in our drink, in our necessities and our comforts, in our labors and our amusements, for our callings and our creeds, as the people of England are, our people, like them, must come to labor sixteen hours in the twenty-four, give the earnings of fifteen of these to the government for their debts and daily expenses; and the sixteenth being insufficient to afford us bread, we must live, as they now do, on oatmeal and potatoes; have no time to think, no means of calling the mismanagers to account; but be glad to obtain subsistence by hiring ourselves to rivet their chains on the necks of our fellow sufferers. Our land-holders, too, like theirs, retaining indeed the title and stewardship of estates called theirs, but held really in trust for the treasury, must wander, like theirs, in foreign countries, and be contented with penury, obscurity, exile, and the glory of the nation. This example reads to us the salutary lesson, that private fortunes are destroyed by public as well as by private extravagance. And this is the tendency of all human governments. A departure from principle in one instance becomes a precedent for a second; that second for a third; and so on, till the bulk of the society is reduced to be mere automatons of misery, to have no sensibilities left but for sinning and suffering. Then begins, indeed, the *bellum omnium in omnia*, which some philosophers observing to be so general in this world, have mistaken it for the natural, instead of the abusive state of man. And the fore horse of this frightful team is public debt. Taxation follows that, and in its train wretchedness and oppression.

Some men look at constitutions with sanctimonious reverence, and deem them like the ark of the covenant,

too sacred to be touched. They ascribe to the men of the preceding age a wisdom more than human, and suppose what they did to be beyond amendment. I knew that age well; I belonged to it, and labored with it. It deserved well of its country. It was very like the present, but without the experience of the present; and forty years of experience in government is worth a century of book-reading; and this they would say themselves, were they to rise from the dead. I am certainly not an advocate for frequent and untried changes in laws and constitutions. I think moderate imperfections had better be borne with; because, when once known, we accommodate ourselves to them, and find practical means of correcting their ill effects. But I know also, that laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths disclosed, and manners and opinions change with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also, and keep pace with the times. We might as well require a man to wear still the coat which fitted him when a boy, as civilized society to remain ever under the regimen of their barbarous ancestors. It is this preposterous idea which has lately deluged Europe in blood. Their monarchs, instead of wisely yielding to the gradual change of circumstances, of favoring progressive accommodation to progressive improvement, have clung to old abuses, entrenched themselves behind steady habits, and obliged their subjects to seek through blood and violence rash and ruinous innovations, which, had they been referred to the peaceful deliberations and collected wisdom of the nation, would have been put into acceptable and salutary forms. Let us follow no such examples, nor weakly believe that one generation is not as capable as another of taking care of itself, and of ordering its own affairs. Let us, as our sister States have done, avail ourselves of our reason and experience, to correct the crude essays of our first and unexperienced, although wise, virtuous, and well-meaning councils. And lastly, let us

provide in our Constitution for its revision at stated periods. What these periods should be, nature herself indicates. By the European tables of mortality, of the adults living at any one moment of time, a majority will be dead in about nineteen years. At the end of that period then, a new majority is come into place; or, in other words, a new generation. Each generation is as independent of the one preceding, as that was of all which had gone before. It has then, like them, a right to choose for itself the form of government it believes most promotive of its own happiness; consequently, to accommodate to the circumstances in which it finds itself, that received from its predecessors; and it is for the peace and good of mankind, that a solemn opportunity of doing this every nineteen or twenty years, should be provided by the Constitution; so that it may be handed on, with periodical repairs, from generation to generation, to the end of time, if anything human can so long endure. It is now forty years since the constitution of Virginia was formed. The same tables inform us, that, within that period, two-thirds of the adults then living are now dead. Have then the remaining third, even if they had the wish, the right to hold in obedience to their will, and to laws heretofore made by them, the other two-thirds, who, with themselves, compose the present mass of adults? If they have not, who has? The dead? But the dead have no rights. They are nothing; and nothing cannot own something. Where there is no substance, there can be no accident. This corporeal globe, and everything upon it, belong to its present corporeal inhabitants, during their generation. They alone have a right to direct what is the concern of themselves alone, and to declare the law of that direction; and this declaration can only be made by their majority. That majority, then, has a right to depute representatives to a convention, and to make the Constitution what they think will be the best for themselves. But how collect their voice? This is the real difficulty. If invited by private authority, or county or district meetings, these divisions are so large that few



will attend; and their voice will be imperfectly, or falsely, pronounced. Here, then, would be one of the advantages of the ward divisions I have proposed. The mayor of every ward, on a question like the present, would call his ward together, take the simple yea or nay of its members, convey these to the county court, who would hand on those of all its wards to the proper general authority; and the voice of the whole people would be thus fairly, fully, and peaceably expressed, discussed, and decided by the common reason of the society. If this avenue be shut to the call of sufferance, it will make itself heard through that of force, and we shall go on, as other nations are doing, in the endless circle of oppression, rebellion, reformation; and oppression, rebellion, reformation, again; and so on forever.



These, Sir, are my opinions of the governments we see among men, and of the principles by which alone we may prevent our own from falling into the same dreadful track. I have given them at greater length than your letter called for. But I cannot say things by halves; and I confide them to your honor, so to use them as to preserve me from the gridiron of the public papers. If you shall approve and enforce them, as you have done that of equal representation, they may do some good. If not, keep them to yourself as the effusions of withered age and useless time. I shall, with not the less truth, assure you of my great respect and consideration.

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INTERNET LIFE

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WHAT'S NEXT 2000 AND BEYOND FOR THE WEB?

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The next major **breakthrough** in national politics will be finding a **candidate** who represents the online nation. Who will it be? By Jon Katz



ILLUSTRATION BY SILVE BROOME

YOU'D THINK THAT BY NOW SOME smart pol would have figured out that the real opportunity isn't in bashing the Internet as a dangerous, pornographic, addictive medium that ruins our kids: It's in capturing the tens of millions of bright, affluent, educated citizens—and voters—who are online in greater numbers daily.

All sorts of people in other professions have grasped this concept, from filmmakers (as with *The Blair Witch Project*) to New York Stock Exchange executives. Yet the folks whose very existence depends on tapping into the public's mood seem determinedly clueless about the political possibilities as the new millennium, the Digital Age, and a presidential election collide head-on. Pundits on and off the Net are touting the 2000 presidential election as the one in which the Internet transforms politics the way it has commerce and entertainment.

Don't bet on it.

The U.S. has a tradition of ratifying new media through politics and big stories. Network television news came of age during the Kennedy-Nixon debates. Politicians recognized the power of cable TV when war broke out in the Persian Gulf and when Ross Perot practically moved into Larry King's studio.

Although there's a lot of chatter about politics online, the future union of politics and the Internet still seems murky. Al Gore would like to be considered the Father of the Net, but he's had as much trouble capturing the imagination of the wired world as the other one. John McCain has a savvy grasp of telecommunications issues, but seems too traditional to woo the Web crowd. George W. Bush doesn't appear interactive or Net savvy. Earlier this year, the Forbes campaign promised to run the "first Internet-based campaign," but Steve Forbes has hardly set the Net universe on fire.

Gore, Forbes, McCain, and others have already held moderated chats on outside sites such as WASHINGTONPOST.COM and CNN.COM. A representative for Elizabeth Dole's campaign says she plans on participating in online chats. But the odd truth is that live chats on the Net are almost uniformly confusing and unrevealing, more about appearing to be democratic than actually being so. It's hard to say for sure, but there has probably never been a meaningful live chat involving a national politician in the history of the Net.

This is not to say that politicians have

never used the Net to their advantage. Minnesota Governor Jesse Ventura raised money and rounded up volunteers via his innovative [JESSENET \(jesseventura.org\)](http://JESSENET(jesseventura.org)), making a successful end run around well-funded opponents. But Ventura, who says he may retire from public office when his current term ends, isn't exactly the likeliest national politician to vault to higher office, with or without the Net.

Where are Ross Perot and Jerry Brown when we need them? However loopy, they understood the troop-stirring and fund-raising possibilities of new technology and pioneered the use of fax, cable, and 800-numbers to connect with voters.

Some nascent political Net experiments are under way. Last year, Joan Blades and

Some political consultants believe that the first demonstration of Net power will erupt spontaneously

Wes Boyd, husband-and-wife software developers in Silicon Valley, took to the Net to protest the Clinton impeachment. Within days, they had generated a half-million electronic petition signatures that threatened to clog the servers on Capitol Hill.

THE DEMOCRACY ONLINE PROJECT [www.democracyonline.org] analyzed 161 congressional and gubernatorial campaigns last year and found that 84 percent employed some form of online politicking. Seventy-six percent used Web sites to recruit volunteers, and 63 percent were deemed at least somewhat effective in persuading visitors to vote for the candidates.

Most of these campaigns raised some money online. Given the explosive growth of computers, e-pundits believe that the 2000 election will see the first significant contributions through computer links. John Phillips, president of the political fund-raising software company **ARISTOTLE** [www.campaigncontribution.com], estimates that more than \$25 million will be raised via the Internet by Election Day. But that's a drop in the anticipated \$600 million Election Year 2004 bucket.

As of September, Democratic contender Bill Bradley had raised only \$130,000 of his \$12 million presidential war chest online, and most of Bush's and Gore's campaign cash has come through the usual fund-raisers, committees, and distinctly low-tech checks.

Nearly overwhelmed by entertainment-seekers, e-traders, and e-shoppers, the Net has yet to emerge as a primary political venue. Some political consultants believe that the first demonstration of Net power will erupt spontaneously: Somebody will give a dazzling speech or perform brilliantly in a debate; voters, increasingly comfortable rushing to their Web browsers for online financial transactions, will funnel tens of millions of dollars through political Web sites overnight, and wake up a snoozing Washington.

My own notion is that this may happen outside the context of a formal or traditional campaign, as with Ventura. Most Washington politicians, and the reporters who cover them, are too mired in their incestuous talk-show, dinner-party, spin-the-news atmosphere to get what the Net is about or figure out how to use it politically.

Part of this is journalism's continuing struggle to come to terms with the Digital Age.

For many political writers, the Net is a nightmare, as it will inevitably erode their monopoly on communicating directly with politicians and presenting politics to the rest of the country. They'll be lucky to end up with any slice of the pie at all, let alone a big one. It's no accident that Ventura came from about as far outside Washington as you can get: Midwestern local government and pro wrestling.

Washington's political and journalistic elites are so disconnected from most Americans that any politician who goes online—even an ex-wrestler with a confusing political agenda—automatically becomes a charismatic populist. But when some future politician *does* figure out the Net, he or she will come nose-to-nose with the powerful ethos of interactivity, and politics will finally be reborn. Best bet: the 2002 congressional elections.

American-style democracy dates to an era when most voters never got to lay eyes on their elected officials, let alone participate in civic information-gathering and decision-making. Washington was constructed to do the talking and voting on

Modemocracy and you

WILL AMERICANS ELECT THEIR NEXT PRESIDENT FROM HOME?

NEVITABLY, ANY DISCUSSION OF THE Net and politics leads to the idea of online voting, the notion that a wired nation can vote instantly and electronically not only in national elections but also on social issues. Several countries—Costa Rica, Sweden, Indonesia, Finland—are experimenting with some forms of online voting, but no country yet conducts national elections digitally.

Online voting suggests a universal, highly participatory democratic process that is not only fast and efficient but easy as well. Busy CEOs, people with disabilities, older citizens, harried parents, people in remote areas—all would find voting as simple as buying a book on Amazon.com. In theory, the numbers of Americans who vote would skyrocket, and politicians would have an easier time gauging public sentiment. Would Congress have pushed so hard on the impeachment of Bill Clinton if they'd been getting daily, reliable polls online?

Online voting is a highly controversial idea. For the United States, it presents a wide range of social and political problems. For one, most underclass Americans don't have computers, and neither do many affluent ones. The estimates of Americans with access to the Internet in the year

2000 ranges from 100 million to 130 million. Even if you accept the higher figure, that's still not half the country, which means digital voting is years away.

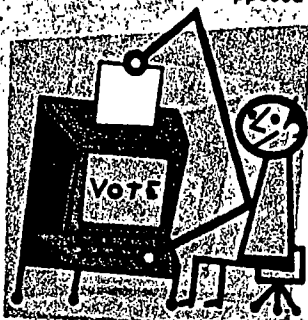
And some constitutional scholars worry that instant electronic voting betrays the spirit of the U.S. political system—that is, deliberative bodies like Congress aren't

supposed to vote instantly, but to consider issues after study and debate. Issues like impeachment aren't supposed to be resolved by public referendum, they argue, but by careful deliberation and argument.

Still, it seems an almost certain option, and it's hard to believe

Jefferson wouldn't have danced with joy at the thought of all Americans having the chance to vote instantly and easily on issues affecting them. At least one reason the Founders created a deliberative democracy is that voters were far away from legislators. Franklin would surely have been thrilled at the idea of an Internet.

Voting ought to be easy, and the Net can make it so. The notion that citizens can do it from their living rooms—regardless of the weather, their age, physical condition, or the distance to the nearest poll—is so powerful as to be inevitable. —J.K.



behalf of constituents unable to join.

That's no longer the case (as Wall Street, among other power centers, is rapidly learning). On the Net, voters can connect instantly with their government representatives, gather information, register opinions. Just as wired Americans are reshaping Wall Street, the music industry, and retailing, they will inevitably get around to beating down the walls around Washington with their keyboards and DSL lines.

Washington may well be the last hold-out. The music and entertainment industries, banking, and education are all reeling as Internet-driven interactivity threatens their primacy and influence. But Washington's twin power centers—journalism and politics—don't really seem to want or

like all that much feedback. They're piling up the sandbags and stockpiling supplies, digging in rather than embracing change. The pols pass one communications decency act after another, as the journalists dutifully pass along their endless posturing and fussing about the endangered young and the decline of civilization.

What would a national political figure have to do to enlist this astonishingly powerful new audience? Surprisingly little, and almost nothing technologically complex. He or she might start by moving beyond Web sites and doing some old-fashioned listening and reasoning.

First, there's no evidence that the Internet is a threat to public safety and welfare, or that the occasional—and genuinely hor-

rifying—Net predator is a common phenomenon. Washington politicians merely look out of touch when they try to exploit fear of new media technologies.

We know better than to buy this any longer. Your grandma is as likely to be downloading streaming video as she is to be quilting. America doesn't need to be protected from the Net. It needs universal access to it, and some intelligent discussion about how to harness the most transformative technology of the century for the civic good.

By their nature, politicians will exploit any new base of voters and money. The failure of a single national political candidate to go after the Net and its enormous constituency speaks to the gap between mainstream institutions and the emerging digital culture. While politicians trek from photo-op to photo-op, the most revolutionary new tool in political history is largely ignored. The Net seems to be growing faster than the ability of our political system to keep up.

How would a pol take advantage of the Internet?

Politicians need to understand the particular characteristics of the young, educated, technologically centered people working, playing, and communicating through networked computers. In 1997, *Wired* magazine and Merrill Lynch jointly conducted a Digital Citizen survey to discover distinct political values emerging from the online world.

The survey found that wired Americans—people who use computers to go online regularly—were different from the nonwired, often in ways that contradicted conventional wisdom.

Wired Americans tend, for instance, to be enthusiastic and optimistic about democracy. Perhaps because they benefit from it, they love the free-market system. They resist labels like *Republican* and *Democrat* or *liberal* and *conservative*; they regard issues one by one, rather than invoking ideological affiliation.

Smart and intensely communicative, they share pop culture as a common passion. They love movies, TV, and music in particular—and are more likely to be talking about the weekend box-office grosses at the watercooler on Monday than about anything they saw on *Meet the Press*. But they're suspicious of conventional media, with little regard for the self-righteous moral polic-

ing or politics-as-wrestling presented on Washington talk shows.

A Net-savvy politician, knowing this, would trumpet the Net as a boon to research, a liberator of information, a spur to community-building and new forms of communications, a landmark evolution of the participatory democracy envisioned by Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson. In fact, our forebears seemed more farsighted than our contemporary leaders when it comes to information. Through a free press, wrote Paine, "we see with other eyes; we hear with other ears; and think with other thoughts, than those we formerly used."

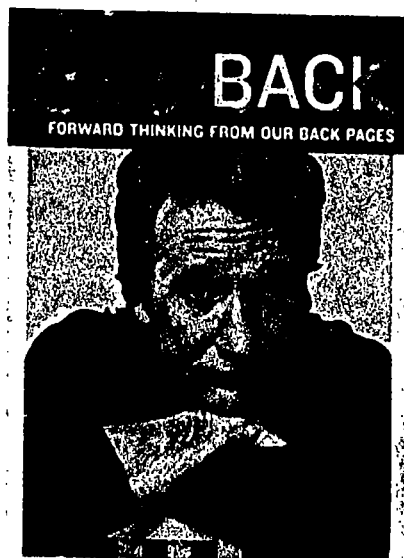
The Net-savvy politician would bang the drums about preserving freedom online, jump into the ferocious battle over encryption, confront the growing power of the megacorporations flooding the Net, and advocate a competitive business environment in which entrepreneurs can also flourish. The Net pol might favor the equitable distribution of technology, so that America won't remain split (as it sadly is now) into tech-naves and have-nots.

A Net pol would leave moral posturing to preachers, parents, and individual families. Enough of laws forbidding indecent language, unworkable and chaotic ratings systems, or copies of the Ten Commandments posted in schools as solutions to complex social problems. The Net is in its second generation, and it would be nice if politicians were as mature.

A Net campaigner needs some smart geeks high up in her campaign, as well as slick pollsters. And this is important: She would be interactive, rather than pretending to be. Bush made a lot of noise this past summer by announcing that he'd list every campaign contribution received on his new Web site [www.georgebush.com], but he's about as interactive as a concrete piling. This is also our vice president's problem: He talks often about technology, but he's unconvincing as an interactive political figure.

The successful Net candidate would have to walk the walk, not just talk the talk. She would not merely appear to care what voters think; she really would care, and, unlike many national political figures, would actually know.

Interactivity is a political idea, not a technological one. It means sharing power, not giving up power. The Net candidate would



"The Net is like TV. Both have incredible potential for education and political debate. Will people use it for these things? Probably not. They'll probably use it to masturbate and make bombs." — BILL MAHER 10/99, on the Net and political involvement

not simply go online (with almost always useless chats) but engage in some running online conversations, browsing the Web, e-mailing voters, downloading files, chatting over ICQ, trawling through message boards where harried homemakers post messages while the kids nap, and where

teens go looking for MP3s.

Over time, this kind of interaction is transformative, to journalists as well as to politicians. Different points of view seep into one's consciousness. Isolation and disconnection are tough to maintain.

He or she would reengineer the political Web site—from a static advertising and fund-raising vehicle peddling buttons and stickers to a genuinely democratic forum that uses digital technologies as a way of amassing continuously updated information on what citizens want their leaders to address.

At the heart of the Internet culture are the programmers, designers, developers, entrepreneurs, and users who constitute the influential core of the networked computing industry. The first politician who wins their allegiance will have enlisted the country's most powerfully connected constituencies—and one of its most affluent and civic-minded.

Netizens believe in democracy. They believe in the future, perhaps because they are part of it. They see themselves as agents of change. They embrace the idea of using technology to identify problems and solutions. They don't want a political system in which politicians and pundits lecture them on morality; they want an interactive

FUTURE TOOL E-BUZZZ



THOMSON CONSUMER ELECTRONICS' stylish E-Buzzz, a PDA for students, was designed specifically with the rigors of college life in mind. Its rugged exoskeleton was inspired by the scarab beetle, which curls up to fortify itself against threats. Similarly, E-Buzzz folds up to repel such common dorm-room dangers as skunked beer and half-eaten Ho-Hos. When opened, the gadget metamorphoses into a wireless PDA that's capable of surfing the Web, storing notes, and scheduling assignments. E-Buzzz doubles as a campus safety device: It can be used to dial 911 or to sound an ear-splitting alarm.

SEE ALSO: KIDS ►►

one, marked by straight talk, an exchange of information, and rationality in place of posturing, dogma, hype, and spin.

Instead of taking on the battle to keep children away from Net pornography and making this a central issue of her campaign (am I thinking of Elizabeth Dole?), she might be arguing for all children to learn how to use the Net. Instead of viewing the Net warily from afar (George W. Bush), he'll be on it every day. Instead of claiming to be its

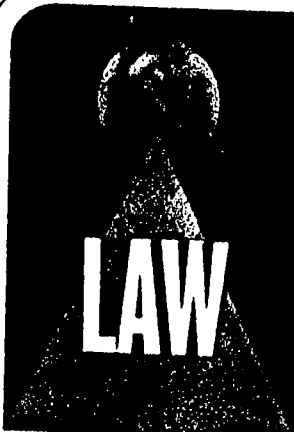
founder (Al Gore), the ideal Net candidate will periodically trounce computer companies for their arrogance and greed.

Instead of offering millennial technoblabber about the future and half-baked programs to purchase computers for low-income Americans (Bill Clinton), the Net candidate will be looking for concrete ways to get computers into the hands of every American kid, assuring not only equality of opportunity but also contin-

ued American dominance of the global economic boom.

This may seem inevitable, but it isn't imminent. How ironic that in 2000, everything—the technology, the constituency, the opportunity—is in place for the Net to revolutionize our fragmented and remote political system, except the most important: a politician with the vision to see it.

SEE ALSO: MEDIA



WHAT'S NOW Despite some campaign-year restraint, big battles over Net taxation are continuing, with Republicans and libertarians fighting to keep the Net a tax-free zone. As legislators look to find some way to control the Web, they have latched on to everything from censorship to cybersquatting.

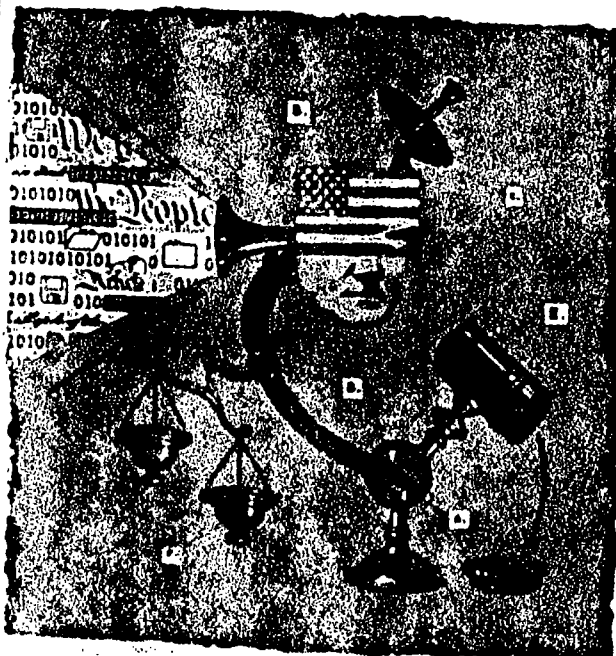
WHAT'S NEXT The cryptography and intellectual-property battlegrounds will only get bloodier, leading to the ultimate question: Will the Net ever be governed? If so, it may have to be through dispute-resolution services rather than through traditional courts. Finally, telecommuting is poised to create new legal challenges: Will monitoring workers at home result in breaches of privacy?

THE BOTTOM LINE **DATELINE 2009:** CIA Admits It Peddled Porn Online to Fund Battle Against Online Pornographers **FORE-SITE:** www.bigbrother.gov **COCKTAIL PARTY QUOTE:** "How can Ain't It Cool News reverse MSNBC's guilty verdict? When did they go federal?"

OPINION BY JEFFREY PEARSHOWITZ

Law and reorder

How will we as a society choose to wield the wired double-edged sword?



ONE OF DOSTOEVSKY'S CHARACTERS IS IN THE PROCESS OF forcing himself on a woman when suddenly she pulls out a gun. The character backs off, declaring, "This changes everything!" Dostoevsky could have been writing about the Internet. Like the gun in the woman's hand, the Internet changes everything. The Internet is capable of producing both benefits and harms unimagined by the framers of our Constitution. Like so many other innovative tools—from the first weapon to the first book, from the first harnessing of nuclear energy to the first use of genetic engineering—the Internet is truly (to borrow another phrase employed by Dostoevsky) "a knife that cuts both ways."

Consider the First Amendment's guarantee of freedom of speech, press, and association. In 1793, speech was delivered "retail" from a soapbox, a stage, or a pulpit. The maximum audience was in the hundreds. The press consisted of small-run newspapers and books that took time to publish and distribute. Associations consisted of small groups that were physically proximate to one another. Though the influence of the idea has always been powerful—witness the impact of Voltaire, Paine, Adams, and the Encyclopedists on the revolutions in France and the U. S.—events generally unfolded in relatively slow motion, especially when the events were communicative in

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TOM W. RYAN
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ryandenvier@msn.com

November 28, 1999

President William Jefferson Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

In two short months you will give your last State of the Union address.

You have a choice—to make headlines or history.

A speech which focuses entirely on policies for programs will make headlines for a day but will be lost in history. However, a speech which seizes the millennial moment to set forth the principles upon which to build our democracy for the future will make history.

Today we are at a digital crossroads. Will the Internet remain primarily a technology tool for commercial transactions or will the Internet in the 21st century become a bridge for democracy here in America and a bridge for peace throughout the world?

I have enclosed articles which are important for your State of the Union address which when taken together can provide a vision for merging the future of technology with your long-sought goal of building a new spirit of community. I share your vision. And I can show you how these technological changes can form the basis of a new vision to build a “New American Community” for a “New American Century.”

You have a chance to make a historic speech which can ring throughout history like President Kennedy’s speech to send a man to

the moon. President Kennedy captured the imagination of a nation with a speech that has become a time marker for the 20th century.

Mr. President, you can capture the imagination of a nation by opening the doors of democracy by resurrecting Thomas Jefferson's idea for a National Advisory Referendum to give people an advisory vote on matters of public policy. This can be your "man to the moon" speech.

By the time January rolls around, many Republicans will be focused on winning the Presidency in 2000 while thinking that your time has already passed into history. You can surprise them once again with a speech that makes history and sets the stage for a Democratic victory in the 2000 elections.

You have a chance to wow the world of the Web by bridging the technology of today with Jefferson's democratic vision for the future. Jefferson's ideas are more practical than a wired world of instant voting. Jefferson's genius provides the architectural plans to reform our democracy in a way which combines the best of democratic participation which people are beginning to demand of today's technology while preserving the best of democratic decisions made after careful deliberations by elected representatives.

When we met in Aspen at Senator Dianne Feinstein's home in July of this year, you and I talked about Thomas Jefferson's idea first proposed in 1816 to create a National Advisory Referendum where we as a nation would come together to forge a common consensus for public policy by casting advisory votes on matters of public policy so that the "voice of the whole people would be thus fairly, fully and peaceably expressed, discussed and decided by the common reason of society."

You said you liked the idea because it would not require a Constitutional Amendment and it would allow you as President to bring the nation together. I would like to meet with you for 30 minutes at the White House to discuss why Jefferson's idea lost to history for over 180 years can become one of your most significant achievements.

You share Jefferson's name; you can share Jefferson's legacy on democracy.

Last week in Florence, Italy, you talked about closing the digital divide between rich and poor nations. But the promise of a wired world is more than economic development. The promise of a wired world is to march boldly down a future path for both prosperity and peace for all the world. History shows that past aggressions can only be accomplished when information is controlled. By getting the world connected to the Internet, we will create a democratic bond which can never be broken. Once a nation is wired to the World Wide Web, there are no walls which can be built to block the flow of information for democratic decision-making.

Just as Thomas Jefferson set forth in 1816 his plan to give people an advisory vote on the issues, you can set forth for all the world a vision for a wired world where people can participate in global decision-making.

There is no reason why Jefferson's plan for advisory votes for America could not be molded into a model for all the world.

You can propose in your State of the Union address not only a National Advisory Referendum for the United States but set forth a future vision for a wired world: a plan for a Global Advisory Referendum for all the world. A Global Advisory Referendum could be conducted by the United Nations every four years on matters of health, environment, economic policy, and other issues recommended by the U.N. General Secretary and approved by the unanimous consent of the members of the Security Council.

Jefferson saw the vision to open the doors of the decision-making for all Americans. You can share his vision for all the world.

You have the opportunity to turn Jefferson's dream of democratic participation into reality for the United States by proposing a plan for Congress for a National Advisory Referendum, and then share this vision for all the world with a plan to open the doors of decision-making in the United Nations to all the people of the world.

We are years away before such a global idea becomes reality, but you can lead the way for all the world with a speech which sets forth the vision for global democracy.

You have the opportunity to lead us on the path of peace for all the world.

But it all begins by turning Jefferson's dreams for a National Advisory Referendum into reality here at home.

There will never be a Global Advisory Referendum to bring peace to all the world, unless you create the first model of a National Advisory Referendum here in the birthplace of democracy.

The march toward technology and democracy moves ever so quickly.

There are many new developments since you and I talked in July at Senator Dianne Feinstein's home in Aspen.

1. Enclosed is a full-page advertisement from "NETZERO" which is offering free Internet service forever. There is no gimmick. Netzero is using the revenue generating power of advertising to offer free Internet service. The faster we can bridge the digital divide, the faster we can look at using the Internet for democratic decision-making in a deliberative democracy.
2. See the enclosed article announcing an amazing advance in technology by U.S. West. You can purchase a new service that links the telephone lines to your television allowing direct access to the web through an auxiliary keyboard. You can watch television, surf the web and receive phone calls at the same time.

Can you imagine how much more effective your "Cyber Town Meeting" would have been if people could have just dialed you up on their television with direct access to the web for e-mailing you questions as well as providing you instant feedback on whatever issues you wanted?

3. NBC has begun direct voting on real courtroom cases by letting people participate in an “on-line jury” while reporting on criminal cases in conjunction with Court TV. Thousands of votes are being cast throughout the show with a “box score” being shown in the corner of the screen while the show proceeds.
4. ESPN is broadening its democratic decision-making for viewers with a regular “click and pick” feature to decide what ESPN Classic will air the following Sunday.

“Ever disagreed with one of ESPN’s programming decisions? Ever wished you could help decide what gets piped into your television: Well, now you can – at least for one program on Classic Sports’ Sunday programming lineup.

“Here’s how you join the fun. Each Sunday at 9PM ET, we’ll post a poll on this page asking you to cast your vote on which program you’d like to see next Sunday on Classic Sports in the 7 p.m. ET time slot.

“From there on, democracy will rule as you will decide what we show. Polls will close each week on Wednesday at midnight ET so get your vote in early.”

5. The battle for phone company mergers both here and abroad are being fueled by Internet connections for the future. In commenting about Bell Atlantic’s battle to beat out Britain’s Vodafone Airtouch for Mannesmann, the fast growing German telecommunications provider, USA Today reported:

“The battle, which could overshadow MCI WorldCom’s \$115 billion friendly offer for Sprint, is fueled by a growing belief that cellular phones will soon surpass personal computers as the main device to surf the Internet, store data and send e-mail.”

If you can make commercial transactions safely on the Internet, you can make democratic decisions safely on the Internet. Voting on the Internet will ultimately happen. Just as consumers are given passwords and pins to safeguard commercial transactions, the same technology can be used to develop “civic” pins to safeguard democratic decisions.

As part of your State of the Union address, I recommend that you announce that you will call together a conference of Internet pioneers and leaders to tackle the problem of how to turn the Internet into a mechanism for democratic decision-making. You should challenge the industry leaders to come up with a way to secure voting on the Internet so that we can vote at home from computers or at voting kiosks set up at government buildings and publicly funded libraries for those who don't have computers.

You should set forth in your State of the Union address the future vision that once the technology has been developed the States need to pass new voting laws to allow voting at home and at voting kiosks in public places. (Already, a citizens movement has begun an initiative in California to let voters decide in the 2000 elections whether to allow Internet voting from a computer at home for all future elections. The initiative laws in over a dozen states make it inevitable that someday these ideas will be passed into law and become reality. You can take the lead and accelerate its development.)

President Kennedy did not have any idea how to solve the technological problems in sending a man to the moon. As President, that was not his responsibility. President Kennedy's responsibility was to lead this nation forward by setting forth the vision to send a man to the moon. He had faith that those who were pioneering our space program could solve all the technological problems to achieve the goal he set forth for the nation.

Mr. President, you can build a bridge to the 21st century using Jefferson's plans to give people an advisory vote

on the issues while setting forth the vision for how we can use the technology of today to make our democracy more effective for tomorrow and a model for expanded participation for all the world.

You need to set forth the vision for greater prosperity and peace for all the world while challenging industry leaders to develop the Internet voting technology.

Like Kennedy, you don't have to know how it will be done. You, as President, can set forth the vision and the challenge to industry to get it done.

6. The FCC has ordered regional Bell companies to share Internet lines with competitors which will lower the cost of bringing broadband service—the speedy Web service called DSL to 50 million phone lines by 2001. Expanded broadband service will allow for merging television, voice, and data services to make the television and computer a seamless technology/service.
7. Dick Morris has created a Web voting cite called “Vote.Com” where he is having people vote every week on public policy issues. The very consultant who opened the door to the Oval Office for you has once again found himself on the cutting edge of the future of our democracy.

Morris has the right idea, but Jefferson has the better plan.

Mr. President, you can make history or watch history march on by with the Morris' of the world setting forth a new dynamic for our democracy. If Morris only knew he was putting into practice an idea Jefferson had over 180 years ago!

How ironic!!!

8. Speaking of irony, there are two other important ironies for you to consider:

- a) The U. S. Postal Service has let hundreds of thousands of people vote on what images will appear on special editions. The image of cell phones will adorn a 90's commemorative stamp.
- b) A couple of years ago, you endorsed an "advisory" referendum for Russia that Boris Yeltsin put forward for the Russian people.

Isn't it ironic that here in the birthplace of democracy the only "National Advisory Referendum" we have held has been to choose commemorative stamps while the President of the United States has endorsed a National Advisory Referendum for Russia on matters of public policy?

- 9. Take a look at the enclosed article, "Voters lean left but back Bush". The article shows how many times people vote against their own interest when selecting their elected representatives.

A National Advisory Referendum will give people more power to make sure that their elected representatives do what they want after they are elected and will better ensure that they will faithfully do what the people want rather than the special interests.

In 1787 Thomas Jefferson wrote these words:

"... institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths discovered and manners and opinions change, with the changes of circumstances, institutions must advance also to keep pace with the times."

Mr. President, I have heard you share the vision for a new sense of community every time we have met over the last few years.

Jefferson's plans for a National Advisory Referendum are as relevant today as they were over 180 years ago.

Mr. President, with Jefferson's ideas and your vision, you can set forth a new vision for a "new American community" for a "new American century."

Mr. President, I respectfully request the opportunity to meet with you for 30 minutes to discuss Jefferson's ideas to give people the right to vote on the issues and my plan to give the President the power to put 3 advisory issues on the ballot every general election.

You once quoted Robert Frost's poem "The Road Not Taken." Today you are faced with another fork in the road and must choose the well traveled path of a democracy dominated by money and special interests or the path of reform as Jefferson envisioned where the people would be given a direct say in shaping public policy.

"The Road Not Taken"

"I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and
I –
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference."

Robert Frost

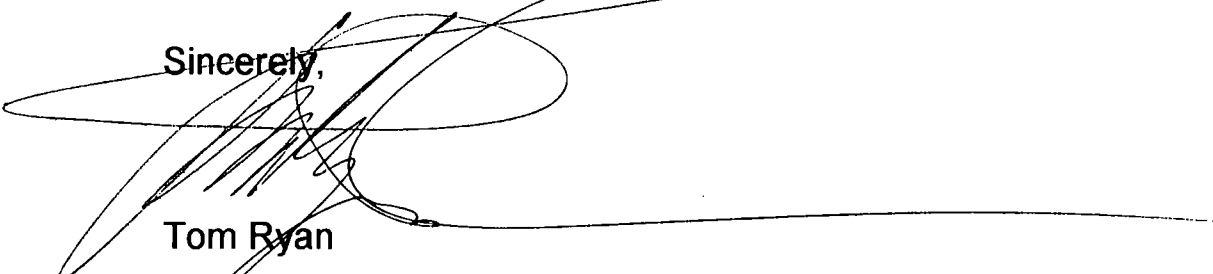
Jefferson's road to direct democracy is the road less traveled. Mr. President, we need you now more than ever to lead us down the road to justice and peace for all the world.

I respectfully request the opportunity to meet with you for 30 minutes to discuss Jefferson's ideas to open the doors of decision-making by giving people the right to cast advisory votes on matters of public policy.

It's the road which will make all the difference for future generations.

You share Jefferson's name, you can share his legacy on democracy.

Sincerely,

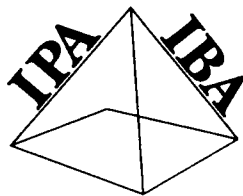


Tom Ryan

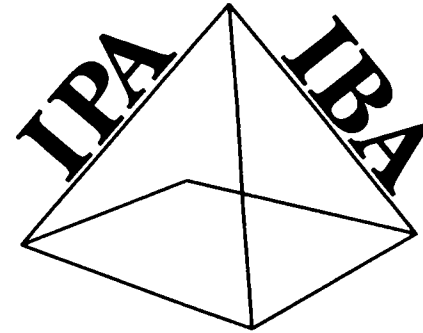
P. S. I will be in Chicago for the week November 29. I can be reached at 1-800-531-7626, extension 4014. I can come to Washington any time except Dec. 11th and 12th when I will be meeting with President George Bush who is the keynote speaker at my company's "9th Annual Celebration of Success" in Chicago.

I've decided **not** to mention these above ideas to President Bush. I want you, not his son, to share Jefferson's pedestal on democracy.

IPA/IBA
wishes all of you a
very happy, healthy and
prosperous New Year!



photocopy of printers proof
President George Bush
Keynote Speaker - see
inside



9th Annual
Celebration of Success

December 11-12, 1999

Hyatt-Regency
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Friends:

*Draft of letter by Tom
Rymer*

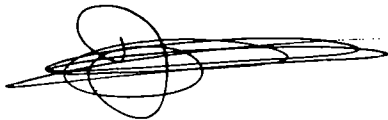
In less than a decade we have built a \$120 million company and have become the fastest growing consulting company in the history of American business. We are gathered here to celebrate our success which would not have been possible without your dedication, loyalty and skill in providing business development services to our clients.

Today we are honored to have President George H.W. Bush as our keynote speaker. President Bush showed uncommon courage in defending freedom abroad and common sense compassion in his policies here at home. During President Bush's term of office, Kuwait was liberated from Iraq, the Berlin Wall fell, Germany was reunified, and the Soviet Union was replaced by a democratic Russia. President Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Clean Air Act-- landmark civil rights and environmental legislation.

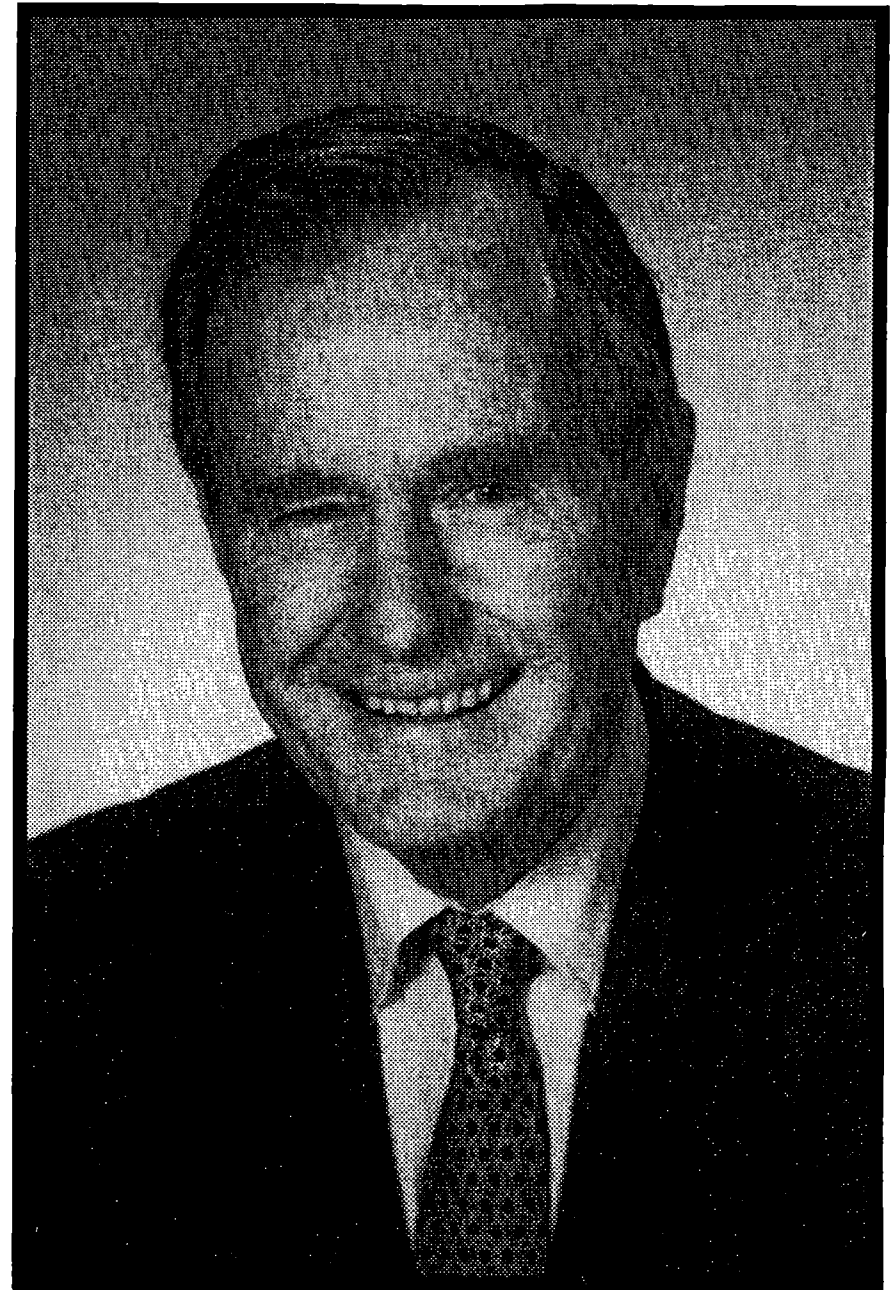
As we look beyond the turn of the century, there is a bright future for all of us. You have built IPA/IBA into the preeminent business development company for small and medium size business.

Dana and I wish to extend to each of you our warmest regards for the season and best wishes for your good health, prosperity, and continued success for the coming year.

Sincerely,



John and Dana Burgess



President George H.W. Bush
*41st President
of the United States
1989 - 1993*

(Revised draft to include Congress for 2000 National Advisory Referendum)

**Proposed Legislation
to Give the President of the United States the
Power to Refer to the People up to Three
Issues for a National Advisory Referendum to
Give People a Greater Voice in Government
and to Forge a Common Consensus on
Matters of Public Policy.**

Section 1. The President of the United States may at his sole discretion submit to the voters of the United States two issues for a non-binding advisory vote of the people at the general election to be held in November of the year 2000.

Section 2. The Congress of the United States may at its sole discretion submit to the voters of the United States two issues for a non-binding advisory vote of the people at the general election to be held in November of the year 2000. The Congress shall certify to the President of the United States the two issues to be included in the advisory referendum. The President shall refer the two advisory issues, without subject to veto, to the several states under Section 5 of this Act.

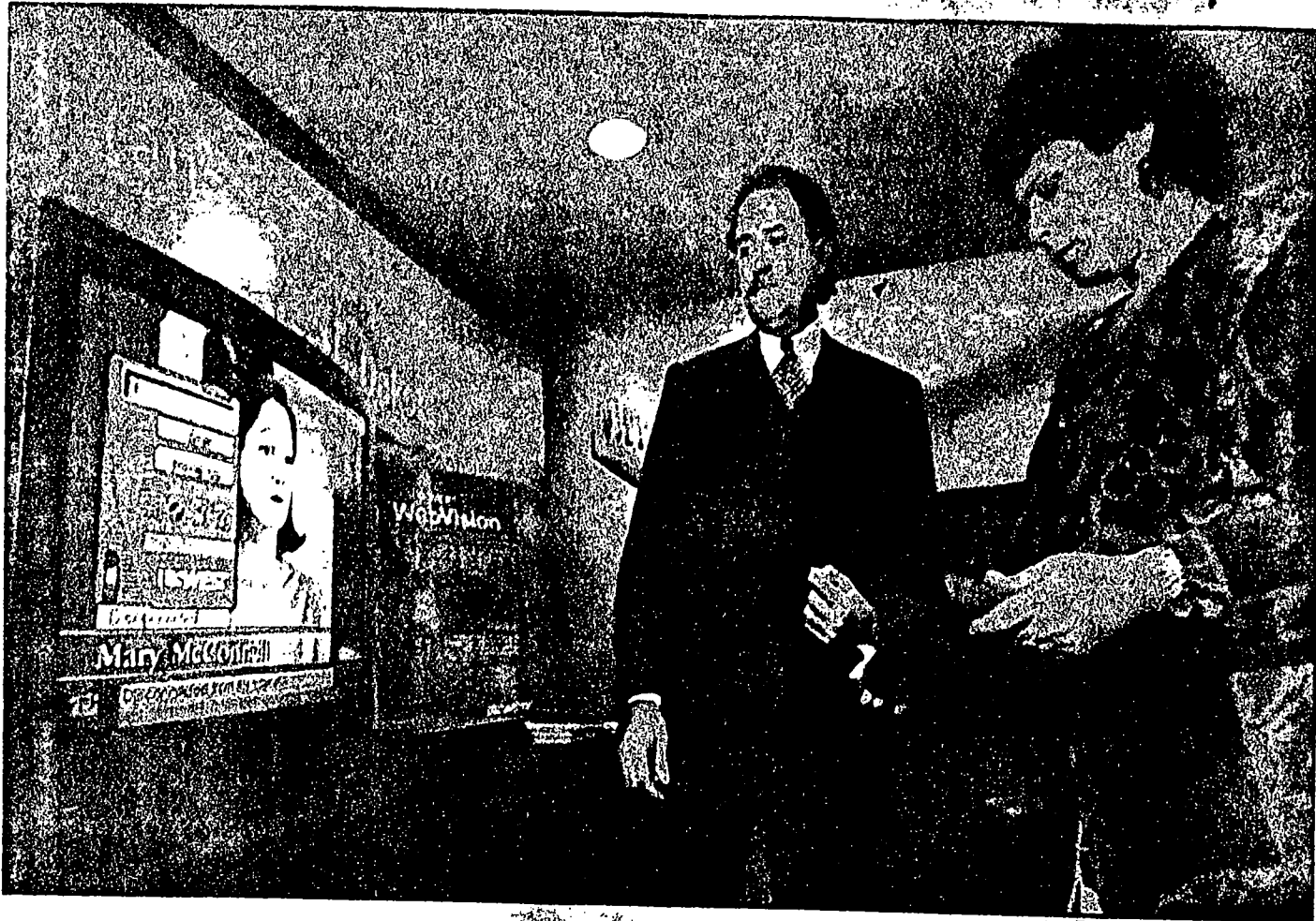
Section 3. The President of the United States may at his sole discretion submit to the voters of the United States one, two or three issues for a non-binding advisory vote of the people to be held at any general election for the Congress of the United States beginning in the year 2002, and for every general election for the Congress of the United States thereafter.

Section 4. The purpose of the advisory referendum is to give people a greater voice in shaping national policy by directly participating in a vote on issues referred to the people by the President of the United States. Issues submitted by the President may include proposed federal legislation, regulations or executive branch policies. Any issue referred to the voters of the United States shall be written in such a way that a "yes" or "no" vote may be taken.

Section 5. The President shall submit to the election authorities of the several states the issues for the advisory vote of the people no later than 120 days prior to the general election. The issues submitted by the President shall appear on the ballot in close proximity to the election of the Senators and Representatives to the Congress of the United States.

Section 6. Any state receiving federal funds shall participate in any referendum referred to the several states by the President of the United States as a condition for the continued receipt of federal moneys.

Section 7. Enforcement of this act shall be by a writ of mandamus in federal district court.



Robin Tidwell, a senior product developer for U S West WebVision, demonstrates the product for Chief Executive Sol Trujillo. The Denver Post / Lew

U S West unites TV, phone, 'Ne

U S West is king of the hill with DSL

When it comes to high-speed Internet access, the hot new company used to be the cold old company.

U S West Interprise Networking group, a unit of the Denver phone giant, is the country's undisputed leader selling so-called DSL technology to 'Net users. It bests both its Bell siblings and a host of aggressive startups.

But the market that allowed Interprise to grow from "zero people and zero revenue" in 1992 to 1,700 employees and \$950 million today is changing dramatically.

What's Joe Zell doing to be innovative now?

Zell, Interprise's president, helped his company get its early lead in DSL, the awkwardly named phone-based Internet service that competes with cable modems and fixed-base wireless efforts. The company sells the service — which stands for "digital subscriber loop" —



Don Knox

story."

Zell, who appeared Monday alongside U S West Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Sol Trujillo to tout a variety of new "e-products," estimated U S West's DSL market share in its territory at 90 percent and at 20 percent to 30 percent nationwide.

In other words, it's Zell's lead to keep.

under the MegaBit brand name.

U S West now has 85,000 DSL users vs. "30,000 to 40,000 for Covad and 5,000 to 10,000 for Rhythms," Zell says, naming two of his chief startup competitors. "If we were a standalone company, we'd be an incredible success

Please KNOX on 5C

By Roger Fillion

Denver Post Business Writer

U S West on Monday unveiled what it hopes will be a couch potato's dream: a service that lets customers use their television set to watch TV, surf the Internet and take telephone calls.

The Baby Bell is betting its WebVision service and other new products will boost it over rivals in the crucial business of giving customers access to the Internet. WebVision will be available to Denver-area customers early next year.

At a Pepsi Center ceremony, U S West unveiled a bevy of other Internet products as well, such as a single message box that permits users to check their voice mail, e-mail and faxes from either a phone or a computer. A new anti-computer-virus service for Internet customers also was introduced, as was a network of business and consumer Internet Web sites.

"This is the Internet made easy," said U S West Chief Executive Sol Trujillo. "People tell us they like the opportunity and power of going online. But they want it simpler, more convenient, and to work seamlessly with other devices like their phone and TV."

Upcoming U S West produc

WEB from Page 1C

Analyst Jeffery Kagan said the products could better position the regional Bell against rivals that focus primarily on providing high-speed access to the Internet over "digital subscriber line" DSL technology and cable-TV modems. U S West is a major DSL provider.

All these value-added services help (U S West) differentiate from the competitors who only offer high-speed DSL or cable modems," Kagan said. "This should help U S West protect their customers from

switching to competitors who simply offer high-speed data lines."

Introduced in Minneapolis, WebVision will be available in Denver in the first quarter of next year. It uses a set-top box to fold together TV, Internet and telephone.

Customers can screen and receive phone calls over the service, shop for books and groceries online, send e-mails to friends, and navigate the Internet. The phone number of an incoming call, for example, flashes across the bottom of the TV screen.

Or customers can watch a game

on TV and then shrink the screen to locate their favorite Web site for sports statistics.

To get WebVision, customers must pay a onetime \$225 equipment charge for a set-top box which includes a speaker phone, a wireless keyboard and a remote control. Customers must use U S West's Internet service.

The company also unveiled an "integrated mailbox" for voice messages, faxes and e-mails. Customers can check all their messages from a computer or a phone. For example, customers can listen

25C

unites TV, 'Net, phone

to their e-mails by phone. The "header" information on a fax also can be heard through technology that translates text information into spoken words.

U S West officials portrayed the new offerings as a way to differentiate themselves in the high-speed Internet business.

"We're not out there competing with just high-speed pipes. We're integrating these new capabilities," said Joseph Zell, president of U S West's division responsible for data and Internet-related products

and services.

U S West provides DSL service to 85,000 customers across its 14-state territory. The technology permits customers to transmit data and access the Internet at high speeds over ordinary phone lines.

Among the key competitors are Denver-area upstarts Rythms Net-Connections and privately held Jato Communications. Rythms declined to comment on the U S West announcement.

But Jerry Dinsmore, president and CEO of Jato, said the new ser-

vices are geared more toward consumers and less toward the small and medium-sized businesses his company serves.

"It doesn't really affect the direction that Jato is taking," Dinsmore said. "They're primary competitor here is America Online."

Elsewhere in the Denver area and nationwide, AT&T is testing its own system for providing voice and high-speed Internet, data and video communications over cable-TV lines.

U S West: Content key to expanding DSL

KNOX from Page 1C

or lose.

Some of the products announced Monday — including reasonably priced Net service for the TV market — will be popular so long as U S West can actually deliver the products it is purporting to sell.

And another product combining e-mail and voicemail (accessible by phone or computer) could sell well if the company can persuade customers of other Internet service providers to part with their cherished e-mail addresses. Zell calls the service, dubbed Integrated Messaging, "a huge deal."

But another important strategic change may come next year, when U S West is to unveil a host of snazzy features aimed at preserving its DSL lead — and adding to it. These include movies and music on demand, as well as CD-quality games and applications that can be "rented" over telephone lines.

This means that within the space of a few months, U S West could be a credible alternative to your local video-rental store.

Zell says these additional services are what will differentiate MegaBit from offerings from Rhythms (also based in Denver), Covad and a third DSL competitor, Northpoint. "They're just selling pipes," he says, dismissively. When it comes to high-speed Net access, content will be just as important, he suggests.

Zell and the others also are racing to exploit so-called "voice over

DSL," which allows a single DSL line to host as many as 16 voice lines. It'll be a boon for small businesses looking to cheaply expand capacity, but Zell says line quality could be an issue: "I don't think we'll be offering 16 lines" in the beginning, he says.

Combined with other business initiatives, either announced or expected, Zell is looking to prove his competitors are wrong.

Interprise can fly nimbly alongside its mother ship, U S West — which has struggled lately to meet state standards for its basic and most widely used product, telephone service.

And Interprise is neither cold nor old.

Don Knox's column runs Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. His e-mail is dknox@denverpost.com.

Bell Atlantic eyes Europe merger fight

By Thor Valdimanis
USA TODAY

11-16-99

NEW YORK — Bell Atlantic, the nation's second-largest local telephone company, is considering entering an all-out battle for Mannesmann after the fast-growing German telecommunications provider turned down a \$114 billion bid from Britain's Vodafone AirTouch.

Mannesmann's rejection late Sunday night of the Vodafone approach sets the stage for the biggest hostile takeover attempt in history. A move to buy Dusseldorf-based Mannesmann — which is set to close its \$33 billion acquisition of British mobile phone operator Orange this month — could come as early as Tuesday, people with knowledge of Vodafone's strategy say.

Bell Atlantic, Vodafone's cellular partner in the USA, is eager to join the unsolicited campaign for Mannesmann, people close to Bell Atlantic say. A ferocious war is erupting among European phone companies to become the dominant wireless services provider in a market that is expected to be worth more than \$100 billion by 2003.

The battle, which could overshadow MCI WorldCom's \$115 billion friendly offer for Sprint, is fueled by a growing belief that cellular phones will soon surpass personal computers as the main device to surf the Internet, store data and send e-mail. The pending MCI-Sprint merger could be challenged by U.S. regulators concerned about a monopoly of the long distance phone market.

"There's only a short list of large wireless companies — once they're gone, they're gone," Atlanta telecommunications analyst Jeff Kagan says. "We are just waking up to the reality that phone calls as well as Internet access will be wireless. That's the new battleground."

Wall Street analysts say SBC Communications, the nation's largest regional carrier, and MCI WorldCom, the No. 2 long-distance provider after AT&T, could also enter the fray, although that is considered unlikely. A Bell Atlantic spokesman declined to comment. Other companies could not be reached Sunday night.

FCC orders Bells to share Internet lines

By Paul Davidson
USA TODAY

► Deal reached for local programs on satellite TV, 3B

Federal regulators passed rules Thursday aimed at bringing speedy Internet access at lower prices to homes and businesses by spurring competition.

The Federal Communications Commission ordered the regional Bell companies to share phone lines with competitors, cutting the rivals' costs to offer broadband service.

The move is expected to help

make the speedy Web service, called DSL, available on 50 million phone lines by 2001, up from about 10 million today, a report by Goldman Sachs says.

Subscribers should increase tenfold to 3 million, the firm says. Broadband enlivens the Internet with full-motion video and audio capability.

"(The FCC's ruling) is going to bring more players into the market and make the service more broadly available," ana-

lyst Frank Governali of Goldman Sachs says.

Critics say DSL has lagged behind the broadband offerings of cable companies, which have almost 2 million subscribers, partly because the Bells have been loath to cannibalize their more profitable high-speed data services.

"There is no need for corporate welfare that gives one sector of a very competitive industry an unnecessary advantage,"

said Bruce Posey, senior vice president at US West.

Challengers have had a tough time offering DSL because they must lease a separate phone line from the Bells for about \$22 a month.

As a result, competitors charge consumers and small businesses about \$50 or more for DSL vs. the Bell's \$40.

Using a cheaper technology called line sharing, the Bells split the frequency of an exist-

ing voice line so the Internet service is beamed on a portion of it. But the Bells argue that line sharing with DSL firms gives the firms a lucrative service at meager cost and degrades voice service.

Line sharing is expected to cut rivals' costs at least \$10 and let them compete on price with Bells in cities with DSL and add unserved markets.

"Now we have a level playing field," said Rich Wong, marketing head for Bell rival Covad Communications.

INTERNET COMMERCE: Cisco Systems CEO

John Chambers estimated that \$1 trillion to \$2 trillion worth of goods and services will be sold on the Net by 2002. Chambers, whose company is the leading maker of Internet equipment, said industry projections that put electronic commerce at \$200 billion to \$300 billion in 2002 are "way too conservative."

DENVER POST 6/27/99 Cell phones sail past 'Titanic' to first place in '90s stamp poll

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — People talk into their cell phones while walking the streets, while driving their cars, while riding the bus, while eating in restaurants — it seems like cell phones are everywhere. Now, they'll even be on a postage stamp.

Asked to pick 15 subjects for a set of stamps commemorating the 1990s, the No. 1 choice of Americans was cellular phones, which got 214,449 votes during balloting in May, the Postal Service announced last week.

A close second was another piece of popular culture that, at least for a time, also seemed to be everywhere — the movie "Titanic." It was the choice of 210,154 voters.

The 1990s stamp set will be released next April.

The voting was the last in a series of ballots in which the public was asked to name the people or

topics for sets of 15 stamps recalling each of the last five decades of the century. Subjects for the first five decades were picked by a postal advisory committee.

"The Celebrate the Century program has given the American public a voice in how many of us will remember the 20th century in years to come," said Postmaster General William Henderson.

Besides cell phones and "Titanic," the winning subjects for the 1990s set are: recovering species, 193,313 votes; the World Wide Web, 191,292; movie "Jurassic Park," 184,370; computer art and graphics, 170,449; sport utility vehicles, 164,058; Persian Gulf War, 160,687; virtual reality, 156,944.

Also, Special Olympics, 155,802; baseball records, 151,511; extreme sports, 151,090; improving education, 141,124; television series "Seinfeld," 140,710; and return to space, 138,984.

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Community

Community Tuesday, November 2

Sign-in/Home Chat Message boards Fantasy Insider

Sport Sections

NFL
Scores
College Football
Scores
NBA
Scores
M College
BB
Scores
NHL
Scores
W College
BB
Scores
Soccer
Scores
Baseball
Golf Online
Soccernet (UK)
NASCAR

More Sports

Broadcast

Live
Radio/TV
TV Listings
Video
Highlights
Audio
Highlights

Which show do you want to see on Classic Sports?

Ever disagreed with one of ESPN's programming decisions? Ever wished you could help decide what gets piped into your television? Well, now you can -- at least for one program on Classic Sports' Sunday programming lineup.

Here's how you join the fun. Each Sunday at 9 p.m. ET, we'll post a poll on this page asking you to cast your vote on which program you'd like to see next Sunday on Classic Sports in the 7 p.m. ET time slot.

From there on, democracy will rule as you will decide what we show. Polls will close each week on Wednesday at midnight ET so get your vote in early.



Which event would you like to see Classic Sports air on Nov. 28?



- 1968 U.S. Open golf: Trevino posts four under-70 rounds
- Oct. 6, 1991 Mets-Phillies: Cone strikes out 19
- 1992 Stanley Cup Finals, Penguins vs. Blackhawks, Game 4: Bowman wins 6th cup
- 1983 NCAA Tournament, Houston vs. Louisville: Drexler and Olajuwon each score 21

Road's fiercest rivalry to a new level with a double OT war.

Sunday, Nov. 28 - TENNESSEE

12-12:30 p.m. - 1997 Oilers Yearbook

12:30-1:30 p.m. - NFL Inside Access: Two Roads to Glory

1:30-2:30 p.m. - 1991 NCAA Women's Final Four Film

2:30-5 p.m. - NCAA Football: Volunteers @ Syracuse Orangemen (Sept. 5, 1998)

5-7 p.m. - NCAA Basketball: Volunteers @ Kentucky Wildcats (Jan. 12, 1999)

7-9 p.m. - Click & Pick - "THE HORN OF PLENTY"

Viewers select Sunday primetime programming by voting online at

<http://espn.go.com/community/s/classicsportsviewerpoll.html>.

Polls open on Sunday mornings, and close

Wednesdays at midnight. "Plenty" choices: 1968

U.S. Open Golf (Trevino 1st to post four rounds under 70)

Mets @ Phillies (Cone's 19 strikeouts, 10/6/91)

1992 Stanley Cup Finals, Game 4: Penguins @ Blackhawks (Bowman's 6th Cup)

1983 NCAA National Semifinals: Houston vs.

Louisville (Drexler and Olajuwon each score 21 points)

9-10 p.m. - ESPN SPORTSCENTURY Click & Pick Viewers program two back-to-back presentations of ESPN SportsCentury 50 Greatest North American Athletes by voting online.

ESPN Classic information

ESPN Classic is a 24-hour, all-sports network devoted to telecasting the greatest games, stories, heroes and memories in the history of sports. ESPN Classic presents programming from the NFL, NBA, MLB, NHL, NASCAR, boxing (including the ESPN Big Fights Library),

Sport Sections

NFL

Scores

College

Football

Scores

NBA

Scores

M College

BB

Scores

NHL

Scores

W College

BB

Scores

Soccer

Scores

Baseball

Golf Online

Soccernet

(UK)

NASCAR

More Sports**Broadcast**

Live

Radio/TV

TV Listings

Video

Highlights

Audio

Highlights

Community

Sign-

in/Home

Chat

Message

Boards

Arcade

Games

ESPN Inc.

The

Magazine

Personalities

Press

Releases

ESPN

Products

Ask ESPN

Avalanche at Panthers (June 10, 1996)

5-7 p.m. - NCAA Football: Buffaloes at Michigan Wolverines (Sept. 24, 1994)

7-9 p.m. - Click and Pick - "Break-Through Performances"

Viewers select Sunday primetime programming by voting online. Polls open on Sunday mornings, and close Wednesdays at Midnight.

"Break-through" choices:

- Dwight Gooden's Six-Hitter: Cubs @ Mets (9/17/86)
- Edmonton Oilers 1st Title: 1984 Stanley Cup Finals, Game 5: Islanders at Oilers
- Navratilova vs. Evert: 1984 U.S. Open Final
- Villanova Championship: 1985 NCAA Finals: Villanova vs. Georgetown

9-10 p.m. - ESPN SportsCentury Click and Pick

Viewers program two back-to-back presentations of ESPN SportsCentury 50 Greatest North American Athletes by voting online.

All times are Eastern. Schedule is subject to change.

Monday, Nov. 22 - Sunday, Nov. 28**Monday, Nov. 22, 9-11 p.m.**

1975 World Series, Game 7: Cincinnati Reds @ Boston Red Sox (Oct. 22, 1975)

Joe Morgan leads the Reds with an RBI in the ninth inning as Cincinnati tries to overcome a 3-0 deficit.

Wednesday, Nov. 24, 8:30-9 p.m.

SPORTSCENTER FLASHBACK: JERRY JONES & JIMMY JOHNSON

ESPN Classic offers a look back at how ESPN's SportsCenter covered the strained relationship between Cowboys owner Jerry Jones and his former coach Jimmy Johnson. The show will

- active votes
- vote archive
- discussions
- fifth estate
- about us

From
Dick Morris
Vote.com

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YES We must do whatever we can to keep drunk drivers off the roads



NO! What ever happened to due process? This is unfair to people who are charged but later found innocent

the issue	view results	discussions
PRO <u>the facts</u> Drunk drivers continue to threaten innocent victims <u>the arguments</u> Drunk driving is a crime - Keep the weapon away from the criminal	your vote will always be sent where it counts  We'll send your vote to your congressional representative, your Senators, and the President.	CON <u>the facts</u> Such seizures are an end-run around the Constitution <u>the arguments</u> Police shouldn't be given a license to steal

Voters lean left but back Bush

By Adam Clymer
and Janet Elder
The New York Times

A year before the election, Democrats enjoy public confidence on most critical election issues, from health care to education to Social Security, and more voters say they will vote for Democrats than Republicans in the House of Representatives, the latest New York Times/CBS News Poll shows.

The poll does contain some good news for the Republicans. The party still has the leading candidate in the presidential race: George W. Bush, who holds a clear though somewhat smaller lead over either Vice President Al Gore or former Sen. Bill Bradley. And Bush himself remains the runaway favorite among Republicans for his party's nomination.

In addition, the Republicans, whose image suffered badly during the battle to impeach President Clinton, have recovered some

Public likes Dems' take on issues, yet favors GOP's leading candidate

ground on several issues and for the first time in more than a year have an overall favorable standing with the public. But the gains are modest and do not affect Democratic dominance on issues that voters say they care about the most.

The strongest number for the Democrats in the poll was on how people expected to vote in House races next year. Forty-five percent said they would vote for a Democrat in their district, while 38 percent said they would vote for a Republican. While a national poll cannot predict the results of 435 House elections, an actual 7 percentage point advantage in the November 2000 election would ensure a Democratic House.

The public clearly finds the most fault with the Republicans who control Congress. A Gallup Poll — conducted on the same days, Thursday through Sunday, as the Times/CBS News Poll — showed 53 percent of the public disapproved of congressional Republicans, while 38 percent approved. For Democrats in Congress, 49 percent approved and 42 percent disapproved.

On issues, the poll measured one especially striking Republican failure. Despite their spending much of the summer and fall trying to assert that their party was trying to protect Social Security while Democrats were about to squander its resources, the public solidly prefers the Democrats to make the

"right decisions" about Social Security. Forty-nine percent preferred the Democrats; 33 percent the Republicans.

Similarly, a 49 percent to 33 percent ratio favored the Democrats on improving education in the nation.

When the public was asked which party would do a better job of improving the health-care system, 54 percent cited the Democrats, compared with 28 percent who named the Republicans.

But on the question of which party would do best at ensuring a strong military, Republicans held a 57 percent to 37 percent advantage. Yet that advantage has little apparent political value. Only 2 percent of the public considered defense the "single most important problem for the president and Congress to deal with." Six percent cited education, 8 percent cited Social Security, and 13 percent cited health care.

SBC to purchase 43% of Prodigy, combine firms' Internet services

By Dina Bass
Bloomberg News

SAN ANTONIO — SBC Communications Inc., the largest U.S. local-telephone company, will buy a 43 percent stake in Prodigy Communications Corp. and combine the firms' Internet businesses, gaining a brand name as it invests in data services.

Prodigy will issue 49 million new shares, valued at about \$1.6 billion, to SBC. In return, SBC will make Prodigy the exclusive Internet-access provider for consumers and small businesses in its service area, with about 100 million people. Prodigy will manage SBC's present 650,000 Internet customers.

SBC, facing increased competition in its local-phone business and battling competitors like AT&T Corp., is spending \$6 billion to bring high-speed voice, data and

video services to about 80 percent of its customers by 2002. By teaming with Prodigy, founded in 1984, SBC gets access to a recognized name and managers experienced in running an Internet business.

"This is a huge deal for Prodigy because this really gives them some guaranteed growth over the next few years. For SBC, this reconfirms their push into data," said Mel Marten, an analyst at Edward Jones who rates SBC a "strong buy."

SBC said Prodigy, based in White Plains, N.Y., will make payments to SBC for providing the network infrastructure for Prodigy's Internet service. SBC is investing in digital subscriber line, or DSL service, which boosts the data capacity of copper phone lines.

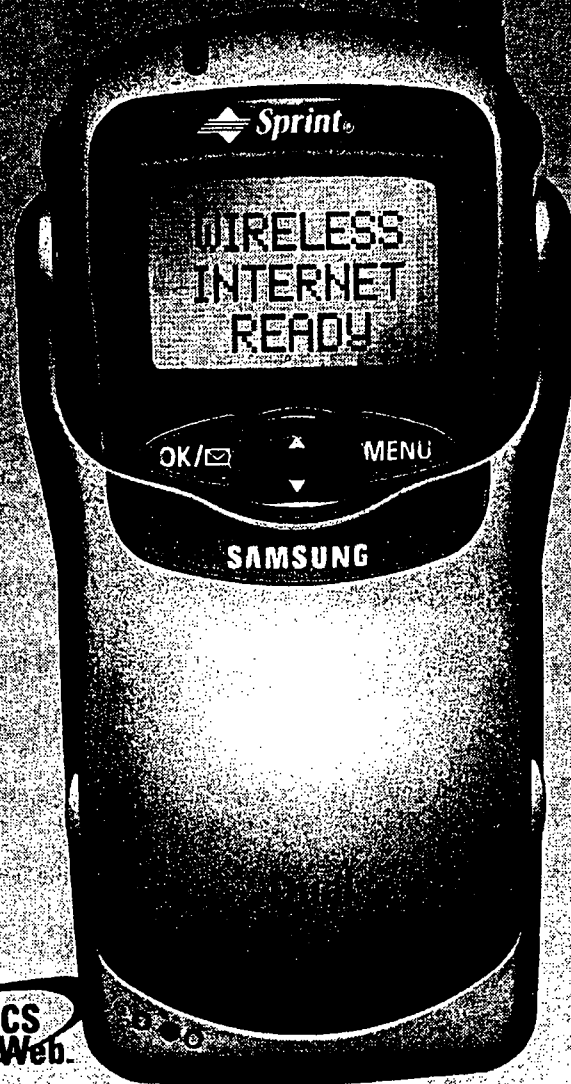
Prodigy will also make payments to SBC for selling service,

though SBC declined to give the size of the payments.

"SBC has spent the last several years amassing an enormous number of access lines and customers," said Jeffrey Kagan, a telecommunications analyst based in Atlanta. "Prodigy has been one of the oldest crown jewels in the online and Internet space, but has been a sleeper in recent years."

The additional SBC customers will boost Prodigy's subscriber base to about 2 million, making it the third-largest Internet-service provider, behind America Online Inc. and the pending combination of EarthLink Network Inc. and Mindspring Enterprises Inc., SBC said. SBC has agreed to provide Prodigy with at least 1.2 million more customers over the next three years.

SAMSUNG



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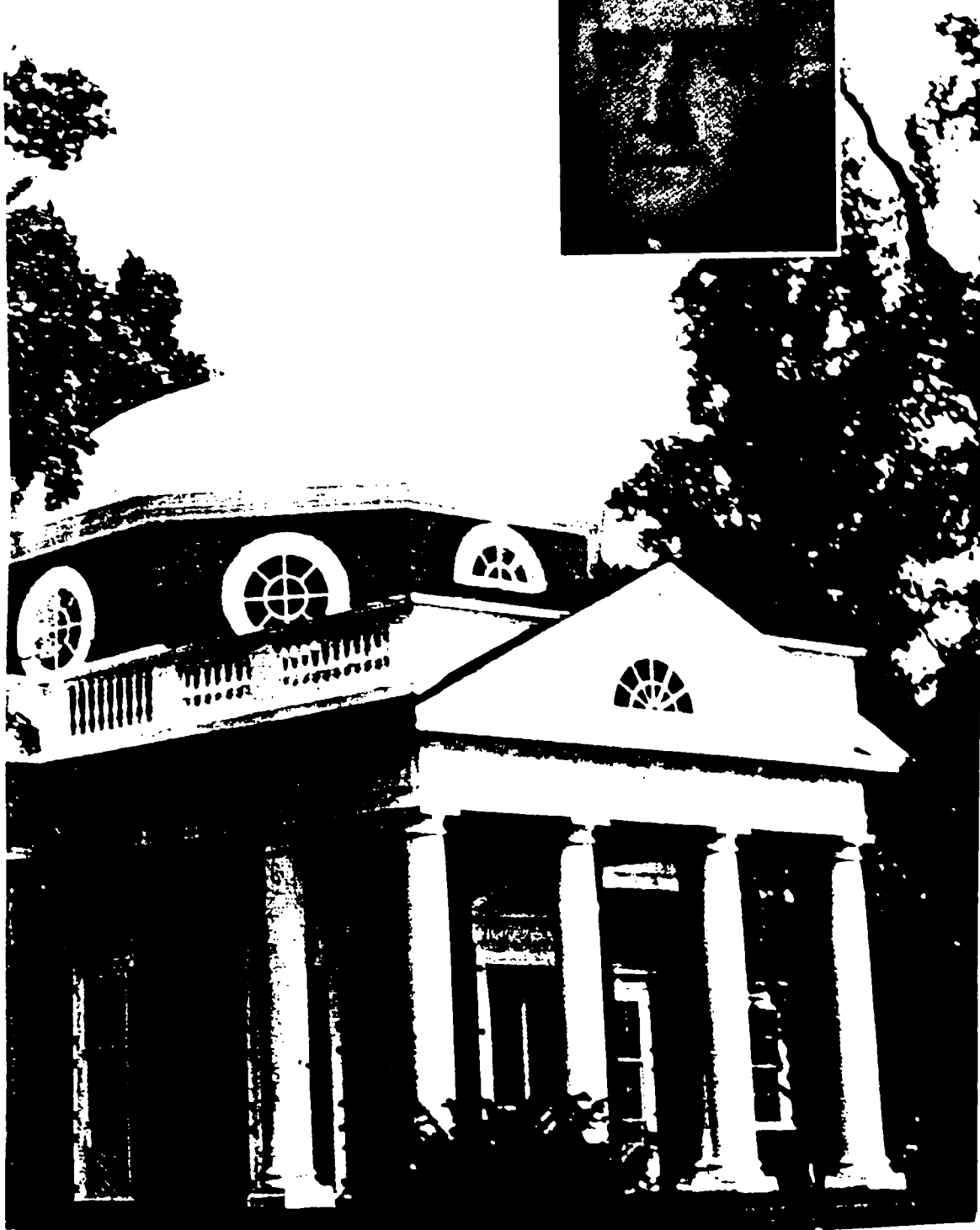
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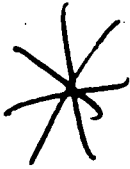
Edited by MERRILL
D. PETERSON

THOMAS JEFFERSON

0



lions of human beings has probably been the effect of these convulsions. I did not, in '89, believe they would have lasted so long, nor have cost so much blood. But although your prophecy has proved true so far, I hope it does not preclude a better final result. That same light from our west seems to have spread and illuminated the very engines employed to extinguish it. It has given them a glimmering of their rights and their power. The idea of representative government has taken root and growth among them. Their masters feel it, and are saving themselves by timely offers of this modification of their powers. Belgium, Prussia, Poland, Lombardy, etc., are now offered a representative organization; illusive probably at first, but it will grow into power in the end. Opinion is power, and that opinion will come. Even France will yet attain representative government. You observe it makes the basis of every Constitution which has been demanded or offered,—of that demanded by their Senate; of that offered by Bonaparte; and of that granted by Louis XVIII. The idea then is rooted, and will be established, although rivers of blood may yet flow between them and their object. The allied armies now couching upon them are first to be destroyed, and destroyed they will surely be. A nation united can never be conquered. . . .



To Samuel Kercheval

Monticello, July 12, 1816.

SIR

I duly received your favor of June the 13th, with the copy of the letters on the calling a convention, on which you are pleased to ask my opinion. I have not been in the habit of mysterious reserve on any subject, nor of buttoning up my opinions within my own doublet. On the contrary, while in public service especially, I thought the public entitled to frankness, and intimately to know whom

they employed. But I am now retired: I resign myself, as a passenger, with confidence to those at present at the helm, and ask but for rest, peace and good will. The question you propose, on equal representation, has become a party one, in which I wish to take no public share. Yet, if it be asked for your own satisfaction only, and not to be quoted before the public, I have no motive to withhold it, and the less from you, as it coincides with your own. At the birth of our republic, I committed that opinion to the world, in the draught of a constitution annexed to the "Notes on Virginia," in which a provision was inserted for a representation permanently equal. The infancy of the subject at that moment, and our inexperience of self-government, occasioned gross departures in that draught from genuine republican canons. In truth, the abuses of monarchy had so much filled all the space of political contemplation, that we imagined everything republican which was not monarchy. We had not yet penetrated to the mother principle, that "governments are republican only in proportion as they embody the will of their people, and execute it." Hence, our first constitutions had really no leading principles in them. But experience and reflection have but more and more confirmed me in the particular importance of the equal representation then proposed. On that point, then, I am entirely in sentiment with your letters; and only lament that a copyright of your pamphlet prevents their appearance in the newspapers, where alone they would be generally read, and produce general effect. The present vacancy too, of other matter, would give them place in every paper, and bring the question home to every man's conscience.

But inequality of representation in both Houses of our legislature, is not the only republican heresy in this first essay of our Revolutionary patriots at forming a Constitution. For let it be agreed that a government is republican in proportion as every member composing it has his equal voice in the direction of its concerns, (not indeed in per-



son, which would be impracticable beyond the limits of a city, or small township,) but by representatives chosen by himself, and responsible to him at short periods, and let us bring to the test of this canon every branch of our Constitution.

In the legislature, the House of Representatives is chosen by less than half the people, and not at all in proportion to those who do choose. The Senate are still more disproportionate, and for long terms of irresponsibility. In the Executive, the Governor is entirely independent of the choice of the people, and of their control; his Council equally so, and at best but a fifth wheel to a wagon. In the Judiciary, the judges of the highest courts are dependent on none but themselves. In England, where judges were named and removable at the will of an hereditary executive, from which branch most misrule was feared, and has flowed, it was a great point gained, by fixing them for life, to make them independent of that executive. But in a government founded on the public will, this principle operates in an opposite direction, and against that will. There, too, they were still removable on a concurrence of the executive and legislative branches. But we have made them independent of the nation itself. They are irremovable, but by their own body, for any depravities of conduct, and even by their own body for the imbecilities of dotage. The justices of the inferior courts are self-chosen, are for life, and perpetuate their own body in succession forever, so that a faction once possessing themselves of the bench of a county, can never be broken up, but hold their county in chains, forever indissoluble. Yet these justices are the real executive as well as judiciary, in all our minor and most ordinary concerns. They tax us at will; fill the office of sheriff, the most important of all the executive officers of the county; name nearly all our military leaders, which leaders, once named, are removable but by themselves. The juries, our judges of all fact, and of law when they choose it, are not selected by the people, nor amen-

able to them. They are chosen by an officer named by the court and executive. Chosen, did I say? Picked up by the sheriff from the loungings of the court yard, after everything respectable has retired from it. Where then is our republicanism to be found? Not in our Constitution certainly, but merely in the spirit of our people. That would oblige even a despot to govern us republicanly. Owing to this spirit, and to nothing in the form of our Constitution, all things have gone well. But this fact, so triumphantly misquoted by the enemies of reformation, is not the fruit of our Constitution, but has prevailed in spite of it. Our functionaries have done well, because generally honest men. If any were not so, they feared to show it.

But it will be said, it is easier to find faults than to amend them. I do not think their amendment so difficult as is pretended. Only lay down true principles, and adhere to them inflexibly. Do not be frightened into their surrender by the alarms of the timid, or the croakings of wealth against the ascendancy of the people. If experience be called for, appeal to that of our fifteen or twenty governments for forty years, and show me where the people have done half the mischief in these forty years, that a single despot would have done in a single year; or show half the riots and rebellions, the crimes and the punishments, which have taken place in any single nation, under kingly government, during the same period. The true foundation of republican government is the equal right of every citizen, in his person and property, and in their management. Try by this, as a tally, every provision of our Constitution, and see if it hangs directly on the will of the people. Reduce your legislature to a convenient number for full, but orderly discussion. Let every man who fights or pays, exercise his just and equal right in their election. Submit them to approbation or rejection at short intervals. Let the executive be chosen in the same way, and for the same term, by those whose agent he is to be; and leave no screen of a council behind which to

skulk from responsibility. It has been thought that the people are not competent electors of judges *learned in the law*. But I do not know that this is true, and, if doubtful, we should follow principle. In this, as in many other elections, they would be guided by reputation, which would not err oftener, perhaps, than the present mode of appointment. In one State of the Union, at least, it has long been tried, and with the most satisfactory success. The judges of Connecticut have been chosen by the people every six months, for nearly two centuries, and I believe there has hardly ever been an instance of change; so powerful is the curb of incessant responsibility. If prejudice, however, derived from a monarchical institution, is still to prevail against the vital elective principle of our own, and if the existing example among ourselves of periodical election of judges by the people be still mistrusted, let us at least not adopt the evil, and reject the good, of the English precedent; let us retain amovability on the concurrence of the executive and legislative branches, and nomination by the executive alone. Nomination to office is an executive function. To give it to the legislature, as we do, is a violation of the principle of the separation of powers. It swerves the members from correctness, by temptations to intrigue for office themselves, and to a corrupt barter of votes; and destroys responsibility by dividing it among a multitude. By leaving nomination in its proper place, among executive functions, the principle of the distribution of power is preserved, and responsibility weighs with its heaviest force on a single head.

The organization of our county administrations may be thought more difficult. But follow principle, and the knot unties itself. Divide the counties into wards of such size as that every citizen can attend, when called on, and act in person. Ascribe to them the government of their wards in all things relating to themselves exclusively. A justice, chosen by themselves, in each, a constable, a military company, a patrol, a school, the care of their own poor, their

own portion of the public roads, the choice of one or more jurors to serve in some court, and the delivery, within their own wards, of their own votes for all elective officers of higher sphere, will relieve the county administration of nearly all its business, will have it better done, and by making every citizen an acting member of the government, and in the offices nearest and most interesting to him, will attach him by his strongest feelings to the independence of his country, and its republican Constitution. The justices thus chosen by every ward, would constitute the county court, would do its judiciary business, direct roads and bridges, levy county and poor rates, and administer all the matters of common interest to the whole country. These wards, called townships in New England, are the vital principle of their governments, and have proved themselves the wisest invention ever devised by the wit of man for the perfect exercise of self-government, and for its preservation. We should thus marshal our government into, 1, the general federal republic, for all concerns foreign and federal; 2, that of the State, for what relates to our own citizens exclusively; 3, the county republics, for the duties and concerns of the county; and 4, the ward republics, for the small, and yet numerous and interesting concerns of the neighborhood; and in government, as well as in every other business of life, it is by division and subdivision of duties alone, that all matters, great and small, can be managed to perfection. And the whole is cemented by giving to every citizen, personally, a part in the administration of the public affairs.

The sum of these amendments is, 1. General suffrage. 2. Equal representation in the legislature. 3. An executive chosen by the people. 4. Judges elective or amovable. 5. Justices, jurors, and sheriffs elective. 6. Ward divisions. And 7. Periodical amendments of the Constitution.

I have thrown out these as loose heads of amendment, for consideration and correction; and their object is to secure self-government by the republicanism of our Consti-



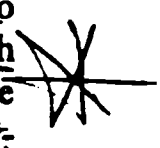
tution, as well as by the spirit of the people; and to nourish and perpetuate that spirit. I am not among those who fear the people. They, and not the rich, are our dependence for continued freedom. And to preserve their independence, we must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt. We must make our election between *economy and liberty*, or *profusion and servitude*. If we run into such debts, as that we must be taxed in our meat and in our drink, in our necessities and our comforts, in our labors and our amusements, for our callings and our creeds, as the people of England are, our people, like them, must come to labor sixteen hours in the twenty-four, give the earnings of fifteen of these to the government for their debts and daily expenses; and the sixteenth being insufficient to afford us bread, we must live, as they now do, on oatmeal and potatoes; have no time to think, no means of calling the mismanagers to account; but be glad to obtain subsistence by hiring ourselves to rivet their chains on the necks of our fellow sufferers. Our land-holders, too, like theirs, retaining indeed the title and stewardship of estates called theirs, but held really in trust for the treasury, must wander, like theirs, in foreign countries, and be contented with penury, obscurity, exile, and the glory of the nation. This example reads to us the salutary lesson, that private fortunes are destroyed by public as well as by private extravagance. And this is the tendency of all human governments. A departure from principle in one instance becomes a precedent for a second; that second for a third; and so on, till the bulk of the society is reduced to be mere automatons of misery, to have no sensibilities left but for sinning and suffering. Then begins, indeed, the *bellum omnium in omnia*, which some philosophers observing to be so general in this world, have mistaken it for the natural, instead of the abusive state of man. And the fore horse of this frightful team is public debt. Taxation follows that, and in its train wretchedness and oppression.

Some men look at constitutions with sanctimonious reverence, and deem them like the ark of the covenant,

too sacred to be touched. They ascribe to the men of the preceding age a wisdom more than human, and suppose what they did to be beyond amendment. I knew that age well; I belonged to it, and labored with it. It deserved well of its country. It was very like the present, but without the experience of the present; and forty years of experience in government is worth a century of book-reading; and this they would say themselves, were they to rise from the dead. I am certainly not an advocate for frequent and untried changes in laws and constitutions. I think moderate imperfections had better be borne with; because, when once known, we accommodate ourselves to them, and find practical means of correcting their ill effects. But I know also, that laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths disclosed, and manners and opinions change with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also, and keep pace with the times. We might as well require a man to wear still the coat which fitted him when a boy, as civilized society to remain ever under the regimen of their barbarous ancestors. It is this preposterous idea which has lately deluged Europe in blood. Their monarchs, instead of wisely yielding to the gradual change of circumstances, of favoring progressive accommodation to progressive improvement, have clung to old abuses, entrenched themselves behind steady habits, and obliged their subjects to seek through blood and violence rash and ruinous innovations, which, had they been referred to the peaceful deliberations and collected wisdom of the nation, would have been put into acceptable and salutary forms. Let us follow no such examples, nor weakly believe that one generation is not as capable as another of taking care of itself, and of ordering its own affairs. Let us, as our sister States have done, avail ourselves of our reason and experience, to correct the crude essays of our first and unexperienced, although wise, virtuous, and well-meaning councils. And lastly, let us

provide in our Constitution for its revision at stated periods. What these periods should be, nature herself indicates. By the European tables of mortality, of the adults living at any one moment of time, a majority will be dead in about nineteen years. At the end of that period then, a new majority is come into place; or, in other words, a new generation. Each generation is as independent of the one preceding, as that was of all which had gone before. It has then, like them, a right to choose for itself the form of government it believes most promotive of its own happiness; consequently, to accommodate to the circumstances in which it finds itself, that received from its predecessors; and it is for the peace and good of mankind, that a solemn opportunity of doing this every nineteen or twenty years, should be provided by the Constitution; so that it may be handed on, with periodical repairs, from generation to generation, to the end of time, if anything human can so long endure. It is now forty years since the constitution of Virginia was formed. The same tables inform us, that, within that period, two-thirds of the adults then living are now dead. Have then the remaining third, even if they had the wish, the right to hold in obedience to their will, and to laws heretofore made by them, the other two-thirds, who, with themselves, compose the present mass of adults? If they have not, who has? The dead? But the dead have no rights. They are nothing; and nothing cannot own something. Where there is no substance, there can be no accident. This corporeal globe, and everything upon it, belong to its present corporeal inhabitants, during their generation. They alone have a right to direct what is the concern of themselves alone, and to declare the law of that direction; and this declaration can only be made by their majority. That majority, then, has a right to depute representatives to a convention, and to make the Constitution what they think will be the best for themselves. But how collect their voice? This is the real difficulty. If invited by private authority, or county or district meetings, these divisions are so large that few

will attend; and their voice will be imperfectly, or falsely, pronounced. Here, then, would be one of the advantages of the ward divisions I have proposed. The mayor of every ward, on a question like the present, would call his ward together, take the simple yea or nay of its members, convey these to the county court, who would hand on those of all its wards to the proper general authority; and the voice of the whole people would be thus fairly, fully, and peaceably expressed, discussed, and decided by the common reason of the society. If this avenue be shut to the call of sufferance, it will make itself heard through that of force, and we shall go on, as other nations are doing, in the endless circle of oppression, rebellion, reformation; and oppression, rebellion, reformation, again; and so on forever.



These, Sir, are my opinions of the governments we see among men, and of the principles by which alone we may prevent our own from falling into the same dreadful track. I have given them at greater length than your letter called for. But I cannot say things by halves; and I confide them to your honor, so to use them as to preserve me from the gridiron of the public papers. If you shall approve and enforce them, as you have done that of equal representation, they may do some good. If not, keep them to yourself as the effusions of withered age and useless time. I shall, with not the less truth, assure you of my great respect and consideration.

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December 9, 1999

President William Jefferson Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Yesterday you said that one of your biggest disappointments this year was the failure of Congress to pass "common sense gun legislation which was crying out for action after the tragedy of Columbine." Just this past Monday, 5 more students were shot at a middle school in Oklahoma by a 13 year old student who used his father's gun which did not have a child safety lock as you have proposed. How many more school shootings must we endure before Congress acts?

After the Columbine tragedy, you came to Littleton to pray in my church—the Light of the World—to help heal our community. In your upcoming State of the Union address you have a chance to heal a nation and make history by giving people back their democracy. Be bold in your State of the Union: Congress should either pass your gun control legislation in 90 days or refer the proposals to the people in a National Advisory Referendum in 2000 so the people can decide.

You can make history with Jefferson's idea for an advisory vote on public policy issues so that in Jefferson's words, "the voice of the whole people would be thus fairly, fully and peaceably expressed, discussed and decided by the common reason of society." Let's create a "New American Community" for a "New American Century" where we as a nation can come together to forge a public consensus for our common destiny by opening the doors of decision-making to the people. People want a more participatory partnership with government for the future. While others promise it, you can deliver it—with Jefferson's plan for a National Advisory Referendum.

I would like to meet with you for 30 minutes at the White House to discuss with you Thomas Jefferson's idea for a National Advisory Referendum as proposed in a letter to Thomas Kercheval in 1816. History is in your hands; it's time to decide which road to take.

You share Jefferson's name, you can share his legacy on democracy.

Today we can see clearly that the Internet is revolutionizing commerce, but how it will change government has yet to be determined. An initiative campaign has begun in California to let the people vote in the 2000 election on whether voters should be allowed to vote from home on their computers. But the future is already here.

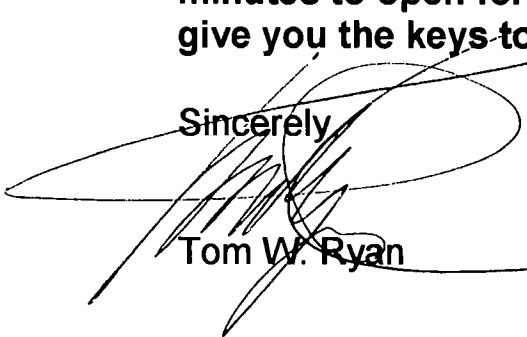
The Democratic Party in Arizona has announced that it will allow people to vote on the Internet for its upcoming March primary—a first for any binding vote in the US. Just this past week a company in Seattle (where else?) has announced that it has developed the cryptography software to make voting on the Internet secure.

Also, NCR announced this week that it will turn its ATM machines into portals for the Internet to give people access to news and sports. Yahoo announced that it has made a deal with Sprint to provide access to its Internet portal. The ATM and phone technology could be used for Internet voting. People are now voting every day on issues on several major Internet sites from ESPN to NBC News. Even Dick Morris has sensed the new wave for increased public participation spawned by the technology of the Internet and has created a site, Vote.com, where people can vote on the issues every day.

Morris has the right idea, but Jefferson has the better plan.

But only you can turn Jefferson's dreams into reality by giving them life in your State of the Union address. Give me 30 minutes to open for you a new window to our future and I will give you the keys to open the doors of democracy to the people.

Sincerely,



Tom W. Ryan

CYBERVOTING: Being 25th in the nation, the Arizona Democratic primary doesn't get much attention, but it could be notable next year for how it's conducted. State party leaders plan to allow voters to cast ballots for the March 11 primary over the Internet, a first for any binding vote for public office in the USA.

Party officials plan to have computers at voting locations, along with paper ballots. To vote online from home, voters would download a form from the party's Web site, choose a personal identification code, sign it and mail it to the party. Once the signature is verified, confirmation would be sent to the voter by e-mail. On Election Day, the voter would open the party's Web site, enter the ID code and cast an electronic ballot.

Deborah Phillips of the Voting Integrity Project in Arlington, Va., said she worries about fraud. "Anyone who's spent an hour on the Internet knows the potential for things to go wrong," she said. "I have real concerns about privacy on the Internet."

California and Washington are considering similar Internet voting.



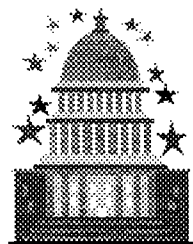
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Posted 11/15/99

**NEWS DESK**

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Capitol Connection**Do your civic duty online**

The Internet is making it easier to research political candidates and make campaign contributions. And soon, although not next year, you may be voting for president from your desktop.

By [Tom Woodruff](#)

The Internet already has succeeded in making the cliché "politics as usual" an obsolete phrase.

Now, plans are under way to allow registered voters in some areas to cast their ballots in the 2000 elections with the click of a mouse. You probably won't be able to vote online for president in next year's election and Internet voting won't be widely available. But there will be several areas where you can vote online at the local level as many towns and counties say they plan to test the concept over the next year.

Meanwhile, additional Internet sites are emerging that promise to change the way we learn about candidates, support them financially and monitor their work once they're in office. Here's a quick summary of where the online electoral process is headed.

Your Money Community

[Discuss government issues](#) in our MSN message boards.

Voting

A Seattle company has developed what it says is the technology to conduct secure elections via the Internet. The idea started in Washington state, where about 50% of the vote is now done by mail.

The mail-in system was put in place to help busy people vote and to increase voter participation. And it has succeeded in getting out more votes, with one consequence: "In Washington, election officials are burdened by mail-in ballots," says VoteHere.net CEO Jim Adler.

While mail-in ballots may be the problem in the state of Washington, elsewhere the problem is the cost of new voting equipment. Many localities are considering whether to install computer equipment using specialized voting software at polling sites. According to Adler, these systems cost several thousand dollars apiece and after the elections, they're locked up until next time.

Adler's solution to voter apathy and local election costs is his secure system of Internet voting, which uses the latest in cryptography technology. (Cryptography is the technology of encoding information so only authorized

individuals can read it.) With VoteHere.net's system, you would vote from your house, your local library or your polling place; wherever you have Internet access. Towns and counties would not have to buy expensive new hardware. They would use computers they probably already own.

Election fraud or frivolous hacking that could disrupt an election are obvious concerns. Here's how VoteHere.net's technology works:

RELATED SITES

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- If the computer is at your polling place, you are screened just as you are today before you cast your ballot.
- If your computer is at work, home or another location, you must register before the election just as you would for an absentee ballot. You would fill out a form, print it and mail it to the elections office. As you're doing this, a privately encrypted "key" is downloaded to a disk on your computer, which you will use to vote once your application is approved. You are assigned a personal identification number (PIN) to prevent someone from voting in your stead.
- When you vote, your encrypted choices are forwarded to the VoteHere.net Web site, which then notifies you via e-mail that your vote has been tallied. Later, using your private key and PIN, you can visit the site and verify that your votes were recorded correctly, something you cannot do with current polling methods.

Adler says that VoteHere.net has applied for certification in several states and he expects to know how many localities will try out the system for the 2000 election in three to six months.

Fund raising

The Internet is promising to change much more than just our method of voting for officials. While Congress unsuccessfully grappled with campaign finance reform, the Internet may be creating an environment for candidates to raise funds directly from supporters and bypass special interest groups.

Democratic presidential candidate Bill Bradley recently reported that his campaign has topped the \$1 million mark in contributions through its Web site, mostly through credit-card contributions. GOP hopeful John McCain, an Arizona senator, likewise has captured more than \$500,000, which is more than the Republican party's frontrunner, Texas Gov. George W. Bush, has collected from his Web site.

Issues

For the 2000 election, the Freedom Channel has a site where you can match up the candidates with issues that are important to you.

RECENT ARTICLES

You can go to the site, look up an issue and listen to a short video clip of what

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Connection articles in
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the candidates say on the topic. The League of Women Voters and a group of nonprofit foundations have created a new Web site, The Democracy Network, that promises to inform us of both national and local campaigns.

Assistance

And what do you do once you've elected candidates to office? Keep track of them at [ezgov.com](#), a site that promises to change the way we interact with elected officials and government agencies.

Ezgov.com identifies who your state's senators and legislators are in Congress. You also can find out your representatives at the state and local level by entering your ZIP code. On the local level, you'll need to enter your full nine-digit ZIP code, but if you don't know it, [ezgov.com](#) has a tool that looks it up for you, once you enter your home address.

Eventually, the site will let you search through records of real-estate transactions, buy license tags and pay your parking tickets in counties and municipalities that allow it. Today, the number of participating communities is thin.

Resources

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(Revised draft to include Congress for 2000 National Advisory Referendum)

**Proposed Legislation
to Give the President of the United States the
Power to Refer to the People up to Three
Issues for a National Advisory Referendum to
Give People a Greater Voice in Government
and to Forge a Common Consensus on
Matters of Public Policy.**

Section 1. The President of the United States may at his sole discretion submit to the voters of the United States two issues for a non-binding advisory vote of the people at the general election to be held in November of the year 2000.

Section 2. The Congress of the United States may at its sole discretion submit to the voters of the United States two issues for a non-binding advisory vote of the people at the general election to be held in November of the year 2000. The Congress shall certify to the President of the United States the two issues to be included in the advisory referendum. The President shall refer the two advisory issues, without subject to veto, to the several states under Section 5 of this Act.

Section 3. The President of the United States may at his sole discretion submit to the voters of the United States one, two or three issues for a non-binding advisory vote of the people to be held at any general election for the Congress of the United States beginning in the year 2002.

Section 4. The purpose of the advisory referendum is to give people a greater voice in shaping national policy by directly participating in a vote

on issues referred to the people by the President of the United States. Issues submitted by the President may include proposed federal legislation, regulations or executive branch policies. Any issue referred to the voters of the United States shall be written in such a way that a "yes" or "no" vote may be taken.

Section 5. The President shall submit to the election authorities of the several states the issues for the advisory vote of the people no later than 120 days prior to the general election. The issues submitted by the President shall appear on the ballot in close proximity to the election of the Senators and Representatives to the Congress of the United States.

Section 6. Any state receiving federal funds shall participate in any referendum referred to the several states by the President of the United States as a condition for the continued receipt of federal moneys.

Section 7. Enforcement of this act shall be by a writ of mandamus in federal district court.