

# The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

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## The People's President

An exciting new possibility for election of the President and Vice President by direct vote of the people has been opened. It stems from the recommendation of an eminent Commission on Electoral College Reform set up by the American Bar Association. After months of cogitation on the evils and perils of the existing system, these 15 experts representing both parties, many different sections of the country and a wide variety of intellectual views came out for direct presidential elections as the best available remedy. There was no dissent.

According to Paul Freund, professor of constitutional law at Harvard, the Electoral College Commission of which he is a member examined many half-measures. But the more the problem was studied the more apparent it became that direct popular elections are the only safe and trusted method that would be worthy of this great democratic country.

Direct election of the President by popular vote was discussed by the Founding Fathers in 1787. James Madison, James Wilson, Gouverneur Morris, Hugh Williamson, John Dickinson, Elbridge Gerry and Daniel Carroll thought it the best method. The Constitutional Convention finally entrusted the choice of the President to electors to be "appointed" in each state because they feared that the various candidates would not be sufficiently known to the people outside their own states and because this was deemed to be fairer to the South where slaves did not vote.

Today, of course, neither of these considerations has any validity. The country is thoroughly committed to the principle that every citizen who meets minimum qualifications is entitled to a vote, and television, radio and the press, have made it possible for every citizen to acquaint himself with the qualifications of the candidates. There is no excuse whatever for allowing "dummy" electors to stand between the people and their

President, with the possibility of frustrating the popular will.

The people of this country have come to regard the President as their special representative. He alone speaks for the whole Nation. It is especially fitting that he be elected directly by the people.

Nothing in the proposal would detract from our Federal system. The essentials of that system are a successful national government working in smooth cooperation with strong state governments. This relationship would not be changed.

Direct presidential elections would cause some shift in the voting impact of various states and ethnic groups. The small states, which now have three electoral votes regardless of population, would have only such leverage as their popular votes would give. One-party states where the electoral vote is now almost automatically counted for the dominant party would have to get out their voters to make their influence felt in a presidential election. Since candidates would no longer be able to capture all the electoral votes of a state by taking a small majority of the popular vote, campaigns would no longer be concentrated on the populous states. The whole country would be a political battleground. The advantages thus gained would more than offset the minor losses resulting from the abolition of electoral votes.

We think the country is ready to accept the one-man-one-vote concept in relation to the Presidency as it has done in regard to state legislatures. Application of that principle to our greatest national office may well bring a rejuvenation in our democratic system. In any event, it will provide new safeguards against potential chaos. We hope that the Johnson Administration and both political parties will embrace this principle and work for an amendment that will make the presidential office in law and in principle what it has long since become in practice and popular thinking.

WASHINGTON, D. C., JANUARY 15, 1967

EDITORIAL

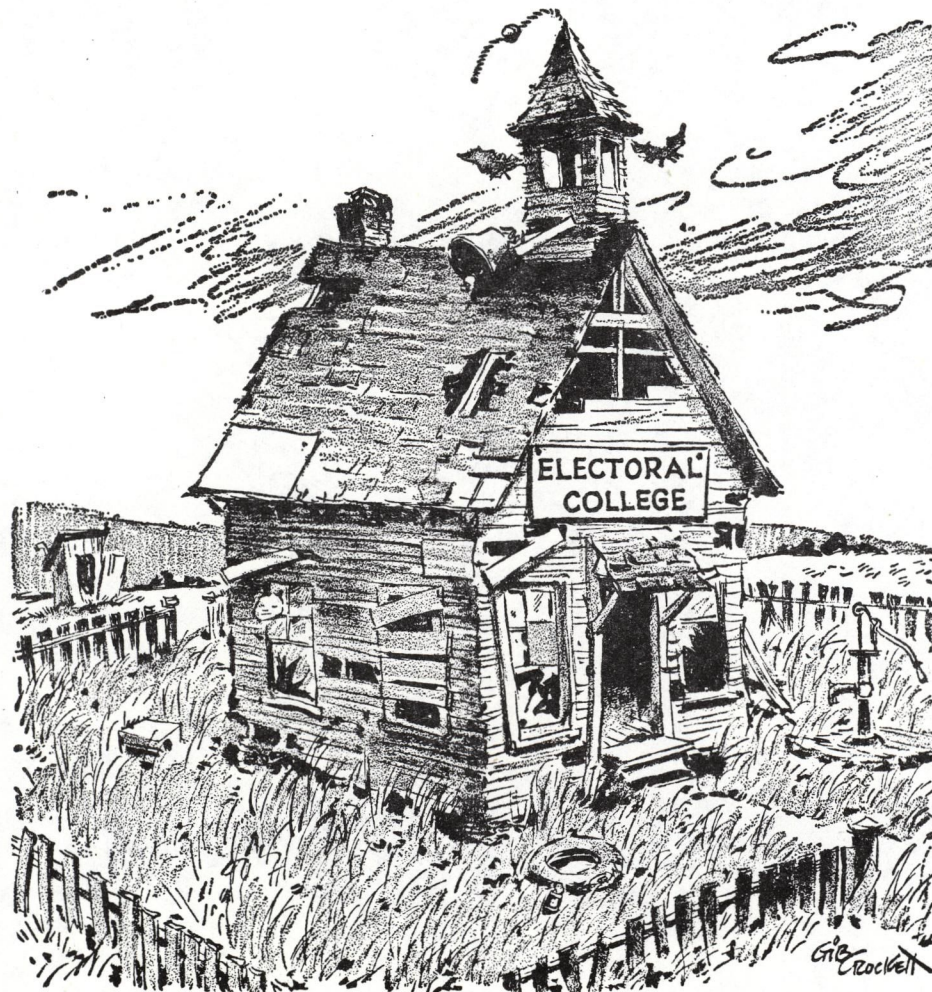
# It's Time to Elect the President Directly

For 177 years, the presidents of the United States have been elected, not by the people, but by the faceless, nameless, membership of the Electoral College.

The people's voice is heard, to be sure, in the election of the electors. And usually, but not always, the people's mandate to the electors is carried out. But nothing in the Constitution binds the electors to vote for their party's nominee. Indeed, the citizens of the United States have no constitutional right to vote for their president, even indirectly. They do so solely at the pleasure of their state legislatures.

The Electoral College system was adopted by the constitutional convention over bitter but splintered opposition. Today the system is still with us, substantially unchanged. So is the general opposition to that system. And so is the disagreement over how to go about changing it that has, up to the present, stymied hundreds of attempts at reform.

From the beginning, opposition to the existing electoral system has divided itself into four camps favoring rival reform plans. These are: (1) The proportional vote plan that would split a state's electoral vote in proportion to the vote cast for each candidate; (2) the district vote plan, whereby the electoral vote would be divided up according to the outcome of the election in a state's election districts; (3) the automatic electoral vote



plan under which the Electoral College would be abolished and a state's entire electoral vote would automatically go to the candidate that carries the state, and (4) the direct election plan that would abolish the electoral vote as well as the Electoral College, and would choose the president and vice president—our only two national officers—in a direct national referendum.

Now, as the 90th Congress settles down to business, there is a growing feeling in and out of Congress that the archaic system can best be reformed by doing away with the electoral middlemen and by guaranteeing, through constitutional amendment, the right of the voters to elect their own president directly.

The movement toward popular presidential election picked up significant momentum with the release, earlier this month, of a report by a special commission of the American Bar Association, set up to study Electoral College reform. The substance of the commission's argument is that the system has never functioned as the framers of the Constitution intended; that it is "archaic, undemocratic, complex, ambiguous, indirect and dangerous," and that it should, therefore, be abolished.

The ABA report backs up this strong language. For example, on the question of democracy, while it is true that the voters speak every election day, their voice is not always heard by the presidential electors. In 1948, 1956 and 1960, individual electors took it upon themselves to vote contrary to the mandate of the voters. Three times in American history the candidate receiving the greatest number of popular votes has turned out to be the loser. And under the present winner-take-all system, all of a state's electoral vote goes to the candidate who carries the state, regardless of the margin of victory, so that all the votes cast in that state for the loser count for nothing in the election of the president.

As to the dangers, it is the ABA's contention that the republic has survived in spite of the system, not because of it. Perhaps one chilling near miss will serve to show how lucky we've been. In the election of 1948, a shift of less than 0.6 percent of the popular vote for Truman in two states would have thrown the election into the House of Representatives where each state would have had one vote for president. It is quite possible, in view of the political division of the House at that time, that no majority could have been achieved either by Truman or Dewey. The Senate, meanwhile, would have been fulfilling its constitutional function of picking a vice president. Assuming that no deadlock developed, either Alben W. Barkley or Earl Warren would have been named. If the House was still knotted by inauguration day, the vice-president elect would have been named president. The possibilities, then, were Truman for president with either Barkley or Warren as his vice president; Dewey for president with either of the same men as his vice president; Barkley or Warren as President, or—if the Senate as well as the House should deadlock—no constitutional president at all!

Granting then that the present system is undemocratic and dangerous, what are the arguments that have kept the Electoral College in existence to date?

It has been said that direct election would undermine the two-party system and would lead to a proliferation of parties. In answer to this, the ABA report argues that many factors besides the Electoral College system work to produce and maintain the two-party system. In addition, the ABA proposal makes it necessary for a candidate to get at least 40 percent of the popular vote in order to be elected; in the event that no candidate received the required 40 percent, a runoff election would be held between the top two candidates. This provision would tend to minimize the importance of splinter parties.

Too, it has been the prevailing view that a direct election amendment can never pass Congress or be ratified by the required number of state legislatures. The opposition, it has been said, would come from the small, least populous states which are benefitted by the present system which provides for a minimum of three electors, regardless of the population. Under this formula, for example, a single vote cast in a presidential election in Alaska is worth more than five times as much as a California vote.

Yet recent supporters of direct election include members of Congress from both large and small states. And a recent poll of state legislators showed that 58.8 percent favor direct election, including a clear majority of the legislators in the small states. Significantly, only 9.7 percent of the legislators favor retaining the present system.

In 1956, The Star supported the Lodge-Gossett amendment, which would have apportioned a state's electoral vote according to the popular vote. At that time, such a step seemed the most that could be hoped for—and indeed even that limited reform was turned down by the Senate.

But today, the prevailing mood has changed. A series of Supreme Court decisions supporting the one-man, one-vote principle have lent support to the idea that all the voters should have an equal say in the selection of the highest elected official of the nation.

On Wednesday, the first day of regular business for the new Congress, Senator Birch Bayh of Indiana introduced an amendment based on the ABA proposals. From all indications, the nation's voters and the legislators of the separate states are ready for the change. It is now up to Congress to follow through on this proposal to guarantee, under the Constitution, an orderly and democratic means of electing the nation's chief executive.

# The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1967

## Direct Presidential Election

In this era of growing equality, there seems to be a rising demand for direct popular election of the President and Vice President by a majority of the votes cast in all the states. One major argument has stood against the proposed change. Residents of some small states have feared that they would lose some of the influence they now have in such elections by reason of the fact that the Constitution gives each state an electoral vote for each of its two Senators as well as for each of its Representatives. In a direct popular election there would be no electors, and each individual vote would be counted for precisely what it is. The tendency has been to see in this an elimination of the advantage the Founding Fathers gave the small states to induce them to join the Federal system.

More sophisticated analyses seem to show, however, that the supposed advantage given to the small states actually reduces their influence. John F. Banzhaf III, a New York lawyer with a background in mathematics and computer science, has made a detailed study which shows that a voter in a big state like New York or California has more than two and a half times as much chance to affect the election of the President as a resident of a small state and more than three times as much chance as a resident of the District of Columbia.

The reasoning which leads to this conclusion is complex but interesting. Mr. Banzhaf explains it this way:

First, one examines, with the aid of a computer, all of the different possible arrangements of electoral votes and determines those in which any given state, by a change in its electoral vote, could change the outcome of the election. One then looks to the people of the state and determines in how many of these voting combinations a resident could affect how that state's electoral votes would be cast. Finally, combining those two figures, it is possible to calculate the chance of any voter affecting the election of the President through the medium of his state's electoral votes; in other words, his chance to effectively participate in the presidential election.

Without delving into Mr. Banzhaf's technical explanations, his conclusion may be illustrated by a specific example. New York has 43 electoral votes and Alaska 3. Since New York has approximately 74 times the population of Alaska, it might be supposed that an individual Alaskan's vote carries much more weight than a New Yorker's. But the computers say otherwise. The key to the situation is the fact that the New Yorker may potentially affect 43 electoral votes and the Alaskan only three. This advantage, according to Mr. Banzhaf, far outweighs Alaska's heavily weighted representation in the electoral college.

If this reasoning is correct, the most heavily favored citizens under the present system are those of New York, California, Pennsylvania and Ohio. The most deprived are those in Maine, New Mexico, Nebraska, Utah and the District. With the aid of computers, Mr. Banzhaf has worked out elaborate tables showing the inequities of the present system and of all other proposed methods of counting electoral votes. All the systems which would retain electoral votes in any form, including the Administration's plan for abolition of the electoral college, fall critically short of the ideal of voter equality.

Only direct popular election of the President would put all voters on an equal basis. Votes would then be cast for the presidential candidates as such, and, under the proposed constitutional amendment before Congress, the candidate with the largest number would win if it amounted to 40 per cent or more of the total. If no candidate had more than 40 per cent, a run-off would be necessary. In our view, this is the only method of providing real voter equality in the election of greatest concern to American citizens. Although it is too late to affect the 1968 election, Congress ought to approve this fair and modern constitutional change early next year and send it to the states for ratification.

JAN 16 1967

*B. Heller*

## Abolish the college

The time is ripe for abolishing the Electoral College. Talk of reform is nothing new, but the support it is getting is unprecedented. A Gallup Poll shows 63 percent of the American people would approve a constitutional amendment providing for election of president and vice-president by direct popular vote. Only 20 percent would disapprove.

A poll of state legislators, who would be called upon to ratify any such amendment, showed only 9.7 percent against any change whatsoever. In 44 of the 50 states there was enough sentiment for direct popular election to have resulted in ratification of such an amendment.

The Chamber of Commerce of the United States came out for reform. And now a select Commission on Electoral College Reform of the American Bar Association (ABA) has called for a direct nationwide election plan. The present system it calls "archaic, undemocratic, complex, ambiguous, indirect, and dangerous."

The Electoral College was devised as a way to keep the people from choosing the president. In that objective it soon failed. But thereafter it has distorted the popular vote, sometimes fatally. Three times it resulted in the choice of presidents who received less popular votes than their opponents.

It would hardly be too strong to say that, in a bizarre situation, it robbed

Samuel J. Tilden of the presidency. On many other occasions, the thwarting of the popular will has barely been avoided. In short, the college is a highly dangerous anachronism. We know of no persuasive reason for keeping it.

Direct popular vote would appear the best alternative. It should strengthen the two-party system by making each state a significant battleground—one worth fighting for. It should strengthen democracy by stimulating and spreading voter interest and participation. It would, in effect, extend the one-man, one-vote principle to presidential elections.

It would mean that both parties in Southern states would eagerly court the Negro vote, hence it would boost Negro voter registration and participation. Influence of third-party candidates to swing elections would decline. Influence of cohesive minority interests in large, industrial, urban states, now disproportionate, would lessen. And there would no longer be the same compulsion to choose presidential candidates from these few states, with their large electoral voting blocs.

Some critics fear that direct popular election could result in a proliferation of splinter parties. We believe there are other factors present in American political and institutional life which would assure the continuance of a vital two-party system. In our judgment, the gains of reform far outweigh any disadvantages.

## Direct Vote for President

The committee of experts the American Bar Association appointed to study reform of the Electoral College has decided that the best way to reform it is to get rid of it.

The committee favors substitution of a system under which Presidents would be elected by direct popular vote on a countrywide basis. The nation's commitment to the "one-man, one-vote" doctrine makes this a logical replacement for an Electoral College that never did function as the independent deliberative body the framers of the Constitution intended.

The dangers inherent in the existing arrangement were illustrated as recently as 1960 when electors in Southern states attempted to exploit their technical right of independence to throw the contest into the House of Representatives. President Johnson proposed last year a constitutional amendment requiring that the electoral vote of each state be cast automatically for the candidate who polled the most popular votes in that state.

That proposal would not eliminate the possibility that a candidate who lost on the basis of the total popular vote could win because he carried the states with a majority of the electoral votes. That was just what did happen twice in the nineteenth century.

The direct-vote plan has the virtue of simplicity as against the one proposal we have in the past considered soundest for Electoral College reform—the Lodge-Gossett plan approved by the Senate but killed by the House in 1950. It called for dividing the electoral vote of each state in exact ratio to the popular vote. Interestingly, a co-author of that plan, former Representative Ed Gossett of Texas, was a member of the bar association commission.

The most dubious part of the commission's recommendation, in our judgment, is its call for national run-off elections if no Presidential candidate receives at least 40 per cent of the total popular vote.

We recognize that a President serving with only a third of the voters affirmatively on his side might have monumental problems, but the current gubernatorial election muddle in Georgia indicates the complications that can arise when there is any departure from the principle that victory goes to the candidate with the largest number of votes.

That principle now applies in every other type of direct election for Congressional, state or local office. It ought to control in Presidential elections as well. Congress can help by taking the first steps this year toward giving the people the right to apply the one-man, one-vote precept to the choice of their Chief Executive.

# Direct Vote for President?

A proposal that the President and vice president of the United States be elected by direct vote of the people instead of by the Electoral College, as the Constitution now provides, will be a principal item of business at the mid-winter meeting of the House of Delegates of the American Bar Association in Houston Feb. 13.

The change has the endorsement of a special 15-member commission headed by Robert G. Storey of Dallas, dean emeritus of the Southern Methodist University Law School. The panel, which included four former ABA presidents, recommended that a presidential candidate be required to receive 40 per cent of the popular vote to win, with a runoff between the two top candidates if nobody should receive that many.

If the proposal should win the approval of the 288-member House of Delegates, the association would undertake a campaign to get the required constitutional amendment submitted by Congress and ratified by the states.

**THERE IS NOTHING NEW** about proposals for abolishing the Electoral College or reforming the system. This method of selecting the President and vice president has had its critics from the beginning, and demands or proposals for reform are perennial.

There are at least two reasons, however, for believing that the current proposal of the ABA might get somewhere. One is the widespread acceptance of the one-man, one-vote principle enunciated by the Supreme Court as applying to the election of state legislators and members of the United States House of Representatives.

Another is that a 1964 recommendation of the association dealing with the problem of presidential disability was approved by Congress the following year and is about to become the 25th amendment to the Constitution. It has been ratified by 31 of the required 38 states, and more than a dozen state legislators are meeting this year.

**THE ABA COMMISSION** said that the Electoral College method of electing a President is "archaic, undemocratic, complex, ambiguous, indirect and dangerous." There can be little argument on any of these points. The President and his vice president are the only federal officials who are elected by all the people and who are answerable to the American people as a whole.

Yet, under the indirect, cumbersome way of electing them that the Constitution provides, it is possible for a candidate to be elected without receiving a majority of the popular vote. This has happened in 14 of 45 presidential elections. On three occasions, the successful candidate received fewer votes than his major opponent. What is required for election is a majority of the Electoral College vote, not the popular vote.

In each state, the top candidate takes all. If no candidate gets a majority of the electoral votes, the House of Representatives selects the President from the three top candidates, with each state having one vote.

**A GALLUP POLL LAST YEAR** showed that 63 per cent of the American people favored abolishing the Electoral College in favor of a direct vote, with only 20 per cent opposed.

But the system has been in effect since the beginning of the Republic, and this is the source of the strongest resistance to change. Adopted before the development of political parties, the system represents one of the several compromises the Founding Fathers made with the democratic principle.

Although the system is, as the ABA commission observed, potentially "dangerous," the country thus far has escaped disaster. It can be expected that opponents of change will point this out, that the system has worked fairly well in the past in spite of all its defects, deficiencies and objectionable features.

The ABA commission conceded that there probably is no perfect system, but it expressed the belief that a direct, nationwide popular vote is the best of all possible methods.

# Books of The Times

## The Making of a Deadlock, 1968

By ELIOT FREMONT-SMITH

OUR NEXT PRESIDENT. By Russell Baker. 108 pages. Atheneum. \$3.95.

NOTHING is sacred, they say, and humor can enlighten all events, past, present and future. It is a hopeful idea, and based on the unfunny thought that the ability of man to see himself as funny may be his saving grace. Yet it needs refining. For, if humor about the past, present and far future is difficult and rare and highly prized, laughter about the near and impending future seems the most difficult to achieve, and often the least appreciated.

There is a subtle difference between spoof-predictions of things to come and spoof-predictions of events of great seriousness that are already upon us. Indeed, their close proximity to us in time appears to be what makes them "serious"—and thus sobering, or intimidating, for both the humorist and his audience.

Russell Baker, The New York Times "Observer" columnist, is one of the two funniest and more enlightening commentators on the Washington scene. (The other is Art Buchwald). Mr. Baker's latest book, portions of which recently featured in The Saturday Evening Post, tells "The Incredible Story of What Happened in the 1968 Elections." It is not the first spoof on the upcoming Presidential campaigns, nor will it be the last. (Some weeks ago, The New York Times Magazine ran a piece in which the major party candidates turned out to be—ho, ho—Dean Rusk and Robert McNamara.)

Mr. Baker's new scenario provokes one or two chuckles, but what is interesting about it is that it is so unfunny. The publishers seem to have recognized this, calling it a "nightmare" and a "political horror story" and wrapping the book in funereal black.

### The Balance of Power

In brief, Mr. Baker has Mayor Lindsay and Senator John Towers of Texas nominated in a deadlocked Republican convention, while President Johnson replaces Hubert H. Humphrey with Robert F. Kennedy as his Vice Presidential running mate on the Democratic ticket. When the votes are in, however, neither gets the required electoral majority; George Wallace, running as an independent, holds the balance.

The Constitutional wheels turn and the Presidential election is thrown into the House of Representatives, where another and permanent deadlock develops. With no President-elect, the Senate (as provided in the Constitution) elects the Vice President who, on inauguration day, becomes Acting President. Thus it is that, confronting all, Robert F. Kennedy takes up residence in the White House.

This is all quite possible, if not very probable. Mr. Baker's electoral numbers are plausible—in fact, Mr. Wallace's avowed aim is to force an electoral deadlock in which one of the major candidates will have to come to him for the winning votes—and

the Constitutional résumé is accurate. Thus the book is not just a spoof, but also a criticism of our election system, particularly of the nomination process, which can be (and has often been) boss-controlled, and of the Constitutional requirements of an absolute majority for a Presidential decision in the Electoral College and, failing that, ditto in the House on an undemocratic one-state, one-vote basis.

### Golden Opportunities Missed

As a spoof, however (which would provide an edge for the criticism—otherwise why spoof it up at all?), the tale is oddly bare-boned, and too often strikes one as a record of surprisingly missed golden opportunities. Comic mimicry of the various politicians' rhetorical styles is kept to a minimum, and what there is seems quite bland. Opportunities for broader laughs are also missed. There is a funny spot, where General Eisenhower repeats his to-endorse-or-not-to-endorse confusion of 1964 (remember William W. Scranton?), and another when Hubert Humphrey must pretend it's an honor to resign the Vice Presidency to become Secretary of State.

But more typical is a flat showdown scene at the end of the book between the Vice President-elect and his furious former superior, in which Mr. Baker has an inexplicably witless Mr. Kennedy say to Mr. Johnson, "I am the only President the country has." Left ready and waiting, and sadly unexploited, is President Johnson's own comically notorious, real-life assertion, "I'm the only President you've got."

### A Twist of Fate

Fate, too, has been less than kind to the comic aspects of this book; the pre-publication withdrawal of George Romney from the race has, inevitably, a flattening effect on the early sections of "Our Next President" where Mr. Baker's Mr. Romney is still plugging determinedly on.

All of which conspires to tempt one to treat this book as serious after all. Mr. Baker's scenario is set against a background of racial unrest and urban riots. And certainly, the Constitutional crisis is a grim prospect. Yet if the scenario is intended to be convincing, one wonders why the issue of Vietnam is scarcely mentioned. Not only is it missing from Mr. Baker's imaginary campaign history, but so also is an explanation of its absence.

It's grasping at straws, I know, but a possible explanation is that the book is, in fact, neither spoof nor critique, but a cleverly discreet campaign opener. Could Mr. Baker be running himself? The thought is a cheering one; perhaps we need a humorist for President. His opponent? Art Buchwald, of course, whose own campaign book, succinctly titled, "Have I Ever Lied to You?" is scheduled for publication on April Fool's Day. Watch out, George Wallace! Suddenly things are looking up.

MAR 8 1968

Editorial

## Avoiding Deadlock on the Presidency

**D**RAWING on a keen political imagination, New York Times columnist Russell Baker, in a recent issue of The Saturday Evening Post, projects a frightening picture of the United States winding up on inauguration day, 1969, without a President. The reason is that George Wallace's third party candidacy has prevented either major party nominee from receiving a majority of the electoral votes, and thus the decision on the presidential race is thrown into the House of Representatives, where a prolonged deadlock prevents any choice.

\* \* \*

This fantasy is not as far removed from reality as it may seem at first glance. Republican Congressman Clark MacGregor of Minnesota pointed out why in a recent state-

"You Go First, Sonny, Then Point Me Toward Him"

ment in support of his effort to get Congress and the states to act this year to abolish the electoral system. Reminding his colleagues that under the Constitution each state would cast one vote for President in the House of Representatives, Mr. MacGregor noted that at present 29 congressional delegations are controlled by Democrats, 18 by Republicans and three are evenly divided. But five of the delegations now controlled by Democrats are from states that might be won by Wallace—Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and South Carolina. If neither party gains a bigger lead this year and if enough states go to Wallace, neither of the major parties could command the 26 House votes needed to elect a President. If neither of the leading nominees was willing to pay the price of a racist bargain with Wallace, there could be a standoff and a constitutional crisis.

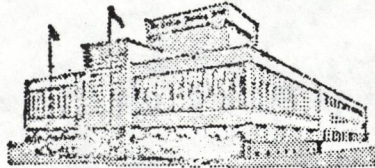
To avoid such a crisis and to eliminate the "archaic and undemocratic" mechanism represented by the Electoral College, the American Bar Association has called for the abolition of the electoral system and the choice of the President by direct popular vote, with a runoff between the top contenders if the leading candidate had less than 40 per cent of the total vote. This is the sensible proposal being backed by Congressman MacGregor and many other individuals and organizations, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Under the existing system, candidates with a minority of the popular vote have been sent to the White House in the past, and it could happen again—conceivably in the case of a candidate who won only 25 per cent of the national vote.

At a time when the American people are bitterly divided over a war abroad and racial strife at home, the political health of the nation would be seriously threatened by paralysis in the election machinery or by the elevation to the presidency of a person who did not have a clear mandate from the voters. Congress should act promptly on the ABA proposal.



# The Dallas Morning News

*The News, oldest business institution in Texas, was established in 1842 while Texas was a Republic*



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FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 1968

## A Dangerous Relic

West Texas Congressman Omar Burleson urges abolition of the electoral college. Burleson joins a growing number of knowledgeable Americans who see the electoral college as a relic of days gone by that threatens the integrity of modern-day democratic processes.

It once served a necessary purpose, but today it tends to keep the political power out of the hands of the people and in the hands of the professional political kingmakers.

Because of the electoral college, both major political parties know they can elect a president if they gather one more vote than the runner-up in just 12 states (New York, California, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Ohio, Texas, Michigan, New Jersey, Florida, Massachusetts, Indiana and any other state).

A president wins by electoral

votes, not the popular vote. If, for example, a candidate wins 50.00001 per cent of the popular vote in Texas, he gets all of the state's 25 electoral votes. Political strategy is designed to fit the undemocratic dictates of the electoral college. The major parties concentrate on the most populous states and are more receptive to the demands of organized pressure groups in those states.

As a result, the view of the majority of Americans on some issues is not represented by either major political party. If the majority is to gain control of its national government, the electoral system must be changed.

Rep. Burleson and his colleagues in the House would perform a great service to the nation by beginning constitutional amendment procedures that would retire the electoral college to the history books, where it belongs.