

# Electoral College Changes May Be a Long Way Off

By Henry C. MacArthur  
Capitol News Service

SACRAMENTO — After every presidential election, there seems to be a hue and cry for the elimination of the electoral college, which is defined by some as archaic, and unresponsive to the will of the majority of the people who cast their ballots in the 50 states for the candidate of one of the parties.

The near miss in the recent presidential election of one candidate obtaining enough electoral votes to as-

sure election, which would have thrown the choice into the House of Representatives, is renewing this hue and cry. Much will be heard in the future for some sort of change which will eliminate the electoral college.

It is highly unlikely that the moves upcoming to inaugurate such an extensive change in the make-up of the United States constitution will get to first base. They have not in the past, and it does not appear credible that they will in the immediate future. For

one reason the people are resistant to change, which in the final analysis, is no cogent reason at all, but it nevertheless exists.

For another reason, the arguments against changing the system so that a popular vote would select the president, would cut the heart out of the original purposes of the constitution, which contemplated state's rights. And state's rights would suffer a severe setback in the event popular vote elected the president, for

the apparent reason big cities and populous states would control the presidency.

Thus, the smaller states would have even less of a voice in the election than they have at the present time.

Of course, state's rights have been deteriorating for the past hundred years, and the trend of thinking, especially on the part of the U. S. Supreme Court, is the "one-man, one vote" philosophy, which the court has

forced on the states through its decisions on reapportionment.

In its reapportionment decision, the court negated the time-honored principle that the rural and small-town areas should have something to say about the conduct of government.

The full effect of this reapportionment has not as yet been felt in California, and probably not in other states, but give it a few years, and the big cities will call the turn as to government in California.

This has nothing to do with the electoral college, but it is a parallel situation. And if abolished, the electoral college would depart as the final bastion of government in which all the people could participate.

Another state right involves the fixing of standards for voters. With a direct vote for president, the standards throughout the nation would have to be equal, else a popular vote election could be challenged on the grounds of inequality. Some states may have

eventually as low as an 18 year age limit on voters, while others remain at 21 years. Thus, one state would be able to pour more popular votes into the total and thus swing the election.

These are only a few of the arguments against abolishing the electoral college, created at the nation's beginning as a buffer against complete control by any state or group of states. More will be heard as the demand increases from that segment of the population most likely to benefit.

Your Right to Know Is the Key to All Your Liberties

## -Comment and Opinion-

TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1968

### New Charter Questioned

If early reaction from the establishment can be taken as a guide, Torrance's Charter Review Committee has its work cut out for it if it hopes to sell the city on the need for a drastic change in the basic form of its city and school governments.

Almost without exception, those who have studied the proposals submitted recently by the committee have raised serious objections. It is our opinion that many of the objections thus far raised are valid and that the proposal is far from an acceptable document.

In the first place, we question the premise upon which the 120-plus pages of findings are based. At an early meeting, and apparently with very little testimony on the matter, the committee — which no one has characterized as representative of the community — decided that strong central authority should be vested in the city manager's office and that all other offices should report to him.

Acting on this premise, the committee decided that the city manager should have charge of record keeping, money accounting, and the absolute authority to employ and dismiss the heads of the many city departments.

Coupled with the proposal to have an appointed Land Use Adjustment Board with final authority on zoning, and a Personnel Appeals Board to pass on employ suspensions, dismissals, promotion, and grievances, the need for a City Council has been nearly eliminated.

True, the City Council is still expected to levy the taxes and ratify the salary schedules, but its power would not extend much beyond that.

Elimination of an elected representative of the people in the important areas of keeping official records and public accounting of the city's monies appears on the surface to be too costly a price to pay in the name of efficiency. One-man domination of the city hall does not appear to be the most desirable goal.

The charter proposal is shot full of dangers, including the mixing of city and school elections, and the fixing of the right of the City Council to appoint school board members under certain conditions.

We suggest that someone take another look at the proposals and determine whether Torrance residents are ready for such drastic changes in their municipal government. We have serious doubts.

WILLIAM HOGAN

### LeCarre Takes a Look at Seamy Side of Diplomacy

The small town of John LeCarre's "A Small Town in Germany" is Bonn, the old Rhine university and provincial capital. Some years ago LeCarre was stationed in Bonn as a minor British diplomat. He sees it as an unnatural capital village, an island estate, a bureaucratic wilderness. So is its pretty suburb, the spa of Bad Godesberg, "whose principal industry having once been bottled water, is now diplomacy."

LeCarre has a fine sense of place in his novels which comes through especially well in this book, less a thriller in the Helen MacInnes fashion than an at-

tempt at serious fiction in which, nevertheless, the classic chace is a key element. It is a comment on West Germany of the "immediate future," a seminar

#### Browsing Through the World of Books

in the vocabulary of German politics (and British also, to a degree). We are involved, first off, with a new right-wing, political movement, a "resentful mass" unified by slogans and fed by dreams, awaiting the emergence of a new hührer.

IN THIS climate a second secretary of the British Em-

bassy vanishes, a shifty, enigmatic, unpopular man named Harting. Missing with him is a set of important documents which have bearing on whether Britain finally will be admitted to the Common Market. A tough professional named Turner is dispatched from London to determine if Harting is a major defector, and the cat-and-mouse game is on.

LeCarre, a fine craftsman, allows a certain element of suspense to enter the resulting action. But he keeps everything under control, perhaps a little too much under control for collectors of standard chase entertainments.

As in "The Spy Who Came In From the Cold," in which LeCarre emphasized the seamy and wearying side of espionage (the antithesis of the fake, oversexed glamor of the Ian Fleming charades), this book emphasizes the wearying, seamy, often deadly incompetent side of diplomacy. The result is an interesting, carefully constructed novel rather than a sparkling one. Always there is the undercurrent of ominous political potentialities in West Germany. This, after all, may be the author's central message, his own projection to 1984.

This is a strange, somber work which I found less rewarding than "The Spy Who Came In From the Cold." But you must admire LeCarre for not repeating himself, and his suggestion of menace in these odd diplomatic maneuverings is as pronounced as ever. LeCarre remains a serious writer of talent and force.

ROYCE BRIER

### Mid-East Timetable for War Points Toward 1970

A table is floating around the newspaper and magazines purporting to show the relative strength of Arab and Israeli armed forces. It is attributed to the Institute for Strategic Studies in London.

In this table the Israelis and Egyptians are fairly matched in armor since the buildup following the 1967 disaster, though the Israelis have more manpower. There are also figures for Syria, Iraq and Jordan showing total Arab strength in manpower and material exceeding Israel's.

For instance, the Israelis have 800 tanks, the Egyptians 700, but the combined Arab tank force is 1,940.

Although Arab leaders, including President Nasser, have for six months been talking of a renewal of warfare, with a decisive attack on Israel, they concede they can't be ready before 1970. Most impartial observers would add several years.

The series of border clashes and raids with Syria and Jordan, and with Egypt

across the Suez Canal, have increased this summer, and the smart of Arab humiliation over the June defeat a year ago has accelerated this year.

This, and the somewhat intransigent attitude of the Israelis regarding method of negotiations, combined to prevent any serious move toward a settlement of territorial claims and ethnical grievances.

#### Opinions on Affairs of the World

The weakest area in the Arab position is the ruin of some 800 ranking officers of the Egyptian staff following the 1967 debacle. Effective armies are run by effective staffs, and staffs must have plans requiring some years to work out. The new Egyptian staff has simply lacked the time to learn its job. Moreover, coalition war demands multiple staff coordination for a showdown. There is no evidence the Arabs have it.

In any case, the table of comparative strengths is

### Morning Report:

A wife is suing United Airlines because they fired her when the brass found out she was not living in sin but was truly and legally married. United insists that its flying cocktail waitresses be single.

This is a little extra sop to those male passengers who enjoy making romantic small talk while being poured their whiskey. The traveling salesman type who, on the ground, chooses a cocktail lounge over a proper saloon. Personally, I prefer my drinks served by a man and it might be a good idea to eliminate stewardesses — married or unmarried — from planes entirely.

They are not quite as good as men at the food and drink bit and are completely impossible when it comes to repairing an ashtray or unsticking a chair that refuses to go back.

C'mon, Back Off, Fatso-



HERB CAEN SAYS:

### Tow Car Group Hates Progress

The S.F. Tow Car Association has a problem (awwww). All the '69 General Motor cars (and several foreign makes) have a new safety device — a steering wheel that locks, "Freezing" the rear wheels and making the front wheels impossible to turn. "Of course," says a Tow Car spokesman, "we could tow illegally parked cars from the rear — but if the driver has turned his wheels into the curb, locked, the car would go around in circles." Moral: Curb your wheels. Keep the Tow Car Association going around in circles.

Other voices, other rumors: Cop-out: All kinds of ways for hippies to make money these days. Just before the election, some of them got \$5 from right-wing candidates to demonstrate "against" them at public gatherings. "The Establishment is really weird," says one Hashberry. "Imagine paying us for something we enjoy! . . ." A bearded, shaggy-haired, dirty-clothed hippie type was driving through Fort Baker the other night when an MP barked: "Hey you — back up!" The driver complied. "Now get out!" commanded the MP. The driver got out, yanked off his beard and showed his credentials: Col. Harry Chittick, en route to a costume party. Never has the Marine air been filled with so many stammered "Yes SIR!"s . . . Both Enrico Banducci and Bimbo have been bidding hotly for Comedian Ronnie Schell's services, and Enrico won. Ronnie opens Dec. 26 at Bimbo's.

The culturati: Harpsichordist Margaret Fabrizio, Artist Jean Varda and Composer Robert Moran (she wearing Matisse, Varda in a red and orange suit, Moran in a toga) went to the S.F. Opera's "Wozzeck" in Margaret's black hearse, with liveried chauffeur. To a plump dowager who stared at him in distaste, Moran hissed: "Didn't I see you playing the title role in 'Falstaff, dearie?'" Varda on "Wozzeck": "Frankly, I would have preferred something more contemporary." Anyway, the old town still jumps a little . . . Now we swing you to Hotel Filipinas in Manila, where S.F.'s Maury Notch is just checking into his room. On his way out, the bellman asked: "Can I get you anything, sir?" Maury: "Uh-yeah, San Miguel." A few minutes later, a slinky-looking girl appeared at his door, and Maury said "Yesss?" Girl: "The room boy tol' me you say 'Sen' me gal,' and here I am!"

Barrel's bottom: Wirk Douglas lunched at the Trident in Sausalito on gloomy, drizzly Monday, and asked a busboy jocularly: "Doesn't the sun ever shine around here?" "I don't know," deadpanned the busboy, "I'm only 18" . . . Publicist Ed Fitzharris tried to take a few days off recently, but went running back after an SOS from the manager of 607 Market, where he has his offices. Somebody had sent Fitz a salmon the day he left and — phewwww!

Mrs. Bing Crosby (nee Kathryn Grant) bagged only one small animal on her African safari — a Grant's Gazelle — and that's keeping it in the family the hard way . . . Today's quotable notable is Italy's Eugenio Monti, Olympic Games bobbed winner who's house-guesting with Dr. John Emery in Sausalito. Gazing out the window, Eugenio sighed: "What's the use of living on a hill if there's no snow?"

Onward: The Bad Timing Award of the month to the Berkeley Centennial Fund, which raises money for UC Berkeley. Its current newsletter is headlined "Berkeley Keeps Cool! Campus Achieves Stability as Progress Dulls Protest." Yep . . . Did you know that our wealthy Ben Swig is one of the owners of the historic old Willard Hotel property in Washington? That makes two of us. The once great hotel, soon to be torn down for an office bldg., was used as a Nixon Headquarters, but Ben, a Humphrey supporter, smiles nastily: "Don't worry, we charged him PLENTY."

Our golden book of memories: This happened last Halloween to a couple near and dear to us all. They sat home, drinking, with plenty of candy on hand for the trick-or-treaters — but the doorbell rang so infrequently that wife finally yawned: "Oh hell, I think I'll go to bed." Then, giggling to herself, she trotted upstairs, took off all her clothes, put on an overcoat and Frankenstein mask and sneaked down the backstairs. Creeping up to the front door, she rang the bell — and when her husband appeared she hollered "Trick or Treat!" and threw open her coat. This so startled him that he slammed the door on his hand, breaking four fingers. Boo.



"Is There Anything You Want, Dear, Before I Go Off to My Red Cross First Aid Class?"

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