

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

intellectuals, stirred by the Wilsonian moral crusade to "make the world safe for democracy," sought new domestic campaigns. Led by philosopher John Dewey, *New Republic* editor Herbert Croly, and *The Nation's* Oswald Garrison Villard, these thinkers each began what Dewey called a "search for the Great Community." If America could unite in war, they argued, why could it not become a *national* community in an era of peace?

The efforts of 1920s intellectuals and novelists dovetailed. While intellectuals invoked the vision of national unity, novelists (e.g., John Dos Passos and Sinclair Lewis) produced works depicting small towns as suffocating and large cities as soul-destroying. But if Americans were, like Lewis's George Babbitt, doomed by their families or neighborhoods to a meaningless life, intellectuals saw hope in "the Great Community" headed by the national government.

The ideas of 1920s pundits became the philosophy of Franklin D. Roosevelt during the Depression. Roosevelt revived Wilson's regulatory agencies, and also echoed his crusading spirit, as New Deal parades and posters repeatedly promised that victory in the war against want was imminent. He also called on the people to look beyond archaic local concerns: "We have been extending to our national life," he once noted, "the old principles of the local community."

Although many New Deal concepts have fallen into disfavor, the idea of national community remains potent: Nisbet suggests that New York governor Mario Cuomo's call at the 1984 Democratic National Convention for America to be a "national family" swiftly resulted in his becoming "a presidential candidate in all but declaration."

Myths About Campaigns

"Misunderstandings: Too Much, Too Little, Too Long" by James A. Barnes and Karlyn H. Keene, in *Public Opinion* (May-June 1988), American Enterprise Institute, 1150 17th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Every four years, columnists and academics revive familiar complaints about U.S. presidential campaigns. Barnes, political correspondent for the *National Journal*, and Keene, a *Public Opinion* editor, suggest that much of the "conventional wisdom" about campaign flaws is misleading.

Some examples:

- *Presidential campaigns last too long.* In fact, the current presidential race has been shorter than those in the past. During the 1984 contest, four Democrats had announced their candidacy for president by February 1983; in the current contest, only Republican Pierre S. Du Pont and Democrat Richard Gephardt had declared their intentions by February 1987. Surveys show that long campaigns *do* hold Americans' interest.

- *The U.S. should hold "snap" elections similar to those held by Britain and France.* The authors observe that the European nations are smaller and more homogeneous than America; the United States' size and diversity "make a long and arduous campaign a necessity."

- *Presidential races are too expensive.* In 1988 each candidate could spend up to \$23 million in primaries and caucuses. Corporate marketing experts spend much more; General Foods, for example, spent \$32 million

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in 1987 just advertising Jell-O. Compared to such outlays, the amount spent on political advertising "seems like a bargain."

- *Voting in presidential elections is declining.* True, voter participation did fall steadily between 1960 and 1980. In 1960, 62.8 percent of eligible Americans voted for president; by 1980, only 52.6 percent did. But the 1980 rate was not precedent-setting; only 52 percent of eligible Americans voted in the Roosevelt-Hoover election of 1932, and 51 percent voted in the Truman-Dewey battle of 1948.

In 1984, 53.1 percent of Americans voted for president, a slight rise over 1980. The authors predict that because the U.S. electorate is aging, and older Americans tend to vote more often than younger ones, the percentage will increase this November. But nonvoting Americans probably avoid the polls more out of laziness than alienation; 41 percent of those questioned in a 1983 ABC News/Harvard survey said they had not registered to vote because they "just hadn't gotten around to it."

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

The Guard's Role

"The National Guard: Whose Guard Anyway?"
by Maj. Samuel J. Newland, in *Parameters*
(June 1988), U.S. Army War College, Carlisle
Barracks, Pa. 17013.

In recent years, several governors, objecting to Reagan foreign policy, have barred National Guard units in their states (including Minnesota and Maine) from joining U.S. training exercises held in Latin America. In an August 1987 decision, a U.S. District Court ruled that the governors had no power to block these units from holding or joining maneuvers overseas.

But the debate over the National Guard, notes Maj. Newland, an analyst at the Army's Strategic Studies Institute, is not new. In fact, the discussion is almost as old as the United States.

The Constitution's framers could not decide whether the new nation should have a unified army or if each state should have its own defense force. The Militia Act of 1792 required that all able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 45 perform military service—in units controlled by the states. During the War of 1812, the governors of Connecticut and Massachusetts barred their militias from entering combat.

After the war, state militia units withered; they were largely replaced by volunteer forces. By the 1880s, the militias had become known as the "National Guard" and were recognized as the U.S. Army's reserve forces.

The passage of the Dick Act in 1903 allowed the federal government to subsidize National Guard units and give them regular Army advisers. Further reforms enabled the president to draft National Guard regiments into the Army in time of war and send them overseas; 17 divisions in World War I were composed of these soldiers.

Since the 1970s, overseas training for National Guardsmen has be-