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August 10, 1992

Linda Ellerbee  
King Features Syndicate  
235 E. 45th St.  
New York, NY 1007

Dear Ms. Ellerbee,

In a recent column about liberal values, you made the following statement:

...the American government is build on two, basic, counter-balancing principles:

1. That the majority of the people, through democratically elected representatives, govern the country.
2. That the power of even a democratic majority must be limited to ensure individual rights.

You are probably correct from a historical standpoint, but what you say reveals a disrespect for democracy. If a democratic majority really did govern the country, why should its power be limited? Why should the majority not get what it wants? I do believe in right and wrong, and I don't believe the majority will always be right, but who am I? I am a very small minority, and I should not be allowed to overrule the majority. Neither should any other minority.

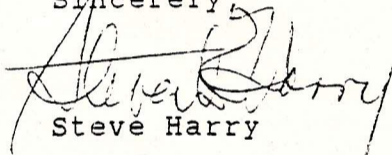
Just who - or what - will limit the power of the majority? The Constitution? The Constitution is a document written by a group of men. Should those men, dead some 200 years now, be allowed to impose their idea of "individual rights" on today's society?

Democracy is rule by the majority, and if you don't believe in absolute rule by the majority, you don't believe in democracy and you should not claim to. As I said before, I don't believe the majority will always be right, but what is "right" is always someone's opinion. In a democracy, the majority is by definition "right".

I think the United States would be a lot better off if it was a real democracy, and I think much of Ross Perot's popularity came from the belief that he would try to find out what the people wanted and do it.

I have enclosed - in the form of a constitutional amendment - my design for a system that would give us real democracy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Steve Harry". The signature is written in dark ink and is somewhat stylized, with a large initial "S".

Steve Harry

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Proposed Amendment to the U.S. Constitution  
8-10-92

We, the people of the United States, in order to establish a more perfect democracy, do ordain and establish a new constitution for the United States of America.

All provisions of the old constitution not superseded by the following remain in effect.

**Elector.** Every citizen of the United States who has attained the age of 18 years may register as an elector. An elector may vote on proposals and bills and may select a representative from the House of Representatives to vote in his behalf on proposals and bills. An elector may also select a candidate for the House of Representatives who shall become his representative if the candidate replaces a member of the House. An elector may also vote for candidates for president and vice president.

**Voting.** A voting system with these features shall be devised:

- available each day for as many hours as technically feasible and financially possible, but not less than 10 hours
- convenient and accessible to all electors
- able to prevent others from voting in the elector's name without his consent.
- able to maintain the confidentiality of the elector's votes

Vote counts shall be made available to the public immediately.

*[A voting "network" is already in place: telephones. Technology exists that would allow voting through touch-tone phones. The voter would need to get the identification number of a proposal, bill, representative, or candidate - probably from a private publication - then he would dial into the voting system where he would be led by a recorded voice through the steps necessary to register his vote. Voting could also be done with more graphic guidance at a computer terminal. Special provisions would have to be made for the handicapped. PIN numbers, voice prints, etc. would be used to control access.]*

**Proposal.** All new laws and constitutional amendments shall originate as proposals. A proposal may be made by any elector. A proposal registration fee of \$100, adjusted yearly for inflation, shall be charged. A proposal shall become a bill if within one year 20% of the electors vote for it, directly or through representatives. Until it becomes a bill, a proposal may be withdrawn by the elector who registered it. It may not be amended.

*[The proposal process might at first seem to make it*

impossible for the House to act quickly when necessary; but since a representative is also an elector, he may make a proposal, and with his vote and that of a few of his fellow representatives, it could quickly have the indirect support of 20% of the electors.]

Bill. A bill that amends the Constitution shall become law on the thirtieth day from the date it became a bill if a majority of electors vote in favor. A bill that does not amend the Constitution shall become law as soon as a majority of electors vote in favor. If any bill is not passed within 30 days, it shall be rejected. A bill may not be amended. Electors may vote directly or through representatives.

[Bills for amendments must remain under consideration for a full 30 days; all other bills become law as soon as a majority approves. A rejected bill may immediately be registered again as a proposal.

The president will have no veto power.]

Representative. An elector may choose a representative from a 200-member House of Representatives to vote in his behalf on proposals and bills. When a representative votes, the number of votes tallied is equal to the number of electors who have named him as their representative and have not voted directly.

[There will be no legislative districts. All representatives will serve at large, thus eliminating pork barrel politics. And since their vote has only as much power as the amount of their popular support, their vote cannot be bought.

[When an elector thinks that his representative is not going to vote the way he wants on a particular proposal or bill, he will vote directly; but as long as he agrees with the votes of his representative, the elector can leave it to the representative.

[For this House of Representatives, there are no legislative "sessions", no required debate, no quorums. Individual representatives are not required by this Constitution to associate in any way with other representatives. They may do their voting from any location. I see most debate occurring in private political publications and through other private and public communication systems. Most legislation will be written by citizens and citizen groups, and political power will be much less concentrated in Washington. The U.S. Capitol Building could be turned into a museum.

[I set the number of representatives at 200 for no particular reason. It could be larger or smaller. Smaller would probably be better because citizens will want to have some knowledge of all of them so they can choose the one that would best represent them. And since much of the legislation will be

written by citizens and citizen groups, less of the representatives' time will be spent on that. Their principal job will be studying legislation and voting.]

Any elector may register as a candidate for the House of Representatives. A registration fee of \$100 per year, adjusted yearly for inflation, shall be charged. The candidate with the most support shall replace the member of the House of Representatives with the least support 30 days after the candidate's support exceeds the member's. A candidate's support shall be the number of electors who have named him as a candidate. The member's support shall be the number of electors who have named him as their representative and have not also named a candidate.

*[There will be no terms of office for House members and no periodic elections. The election process will be on-going. Since candidates won't be running against specific incumbents, campaigns will tend not to be negative.]*

If a representative dies or leaves office for any reason, the candidate with the most support immediately becomes a representative so that total House membership is maintained at 200.

When a candidate becomes a representative, he shall represent all electors who named him as a candidate. Until they choose a new one, the electors who were represented by a member who leaves the House for any reason shall have no representative.

**Election of the President and Vice President.** Any two citizens over 30 years of age may register as candidates for president and vice president. A registration fee of \$1000, adjusted yearly for inflation, shall be charged.

An elector may only vote directly for a president/vice president team of candidates; he may not vote through a representative. The elector may change his vote at any time.

On the first day of the month, starting in July of the last year of the 4-year presidential term of office, the number of candidate teams shall be reduced as follows by eliminating those with the least support:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Remaining Teams</u>
July	20
August	10
September	5
October	3
November	2

On December 1, the team with the most votes will become the president and vice president elect, and they will take office on January 1.

If a candidate team gets the votes of more than 50% of the electors any time before December 1 of the last year of the presidential term of office, that team shall immediately become the president and vice president elect and take office in 30 days. Their term of office shall be the remainder of the calendar year plus four years.

**Presidential Succession.** Should the president die or leave office for any reason, the vice president shall become president. Should the president die or leave office when there is no vice president to replace him, the member of the House of Representatives with the most support shall become president. The term of office shall remain the same.

*[With a real democracy, the president's power will be greatly diminished. He will have no veto power. There will be no squabbling with Congress (the House of Representatives) because the House now clearly represents the people. The president will be an administrator - a chief executive - rather than a political leader.]*