20. *The Constitution of Botswana* §61-62.

21. When the country's head of government dissolves Parliament, elections must take place within 60 days in Botswana and 66 days in Zimbabwe.

22. 'Within 90 days after the result of an election has been declared, every candidate at that election shall render to the returning officer a true return in such form as the Supervisor of Elections may direct' *(The Botswana Electoral Act 1993* §85).

23. Correspondence with Returning Officers showed that several members of the current Parliament in Botswana have not yet reported their costs incurred during the 1994 election campaign. This is largely due to the fact that the responsible authority for controlling the elected officials' adherence to these regulations has not conducted such an inquiry. If such an inquiry was conducted, some of the MPs could lose their seats in Parliament.

24. *The Herald, 23* March 1995; interview with Moven Mahachi, ZANU PF's campaign manager, 27 Feb. 1995, Harare.

25. *The Botswana Electoral Act 1993 §83; The Zimbabwe Electoral Act* 1990 § 18.

26. The calculation is based on a comparison of the 1994 GNP/capita of the two countries (USD 26,000 USD.600 x USD 4.5 million = USD 195 million).

27. This financial consideration will be more thoroughly examined when the political parties' organizational capacities are analysed.

28. Staffan Damolf, 'Critics or Megaphones? News Coverage During the Parliamentary Election Campaigns in Botswana 1994 and Zimbabwe 1995', *Democratisation*, 4 (1997); E. T. M. Rusike, *The Politics of the Mass Media. A Personal Experience* (Roblaw Publishers, Harare, 1990).

29. John D. Holm, 'Elections in Botswana: Institutionalisation of a New System of Legitimacy', in F. Hayward, (ed.), *Elections in Independent Africa* (Westview Press, Boulder, 1987), p. 130.

30. Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, *1995 Election Coverage Guidelines* (Harare, 1995) pp. 1-3.

31. Of the political parties that finally ran for office, only three met the requirements and therefore received thirty minutes of free air time. The other four political parties had to be satisfied with five minutes. The cost involved in purchasing one minute during prime time (6.00 PM - 11.00 PM) is as follows: TV 1 $5,070 ZIM; Radio 1 $790 ZIM; Radio 2 and Radio 4 $1,390 ZIM (Telephone interview, Mr. Machacha, Marketing Controller at ZBC, 30 March 1995, Harare.

32. Francis Kasoma, *Communication Policies in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland* (University of Tampere, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, 1992).

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The Scope of Democracy in the Selection of a Presidential or Prime Ministerial Candidate*

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Abstract

This article argues the following. Both practice and the exigencies of "high politics", such as the need for stability, have dictated at best a form of guided democracy in the selection of the candidates for the office of Head of State or Government. Direct democracy in such selection is desirable as an ideal of mass participation, and Tanzanian political parties would be playing a novel role in the expansion of the frontiers of democracy were they to opt for it. Whether the ideal can also become practicable is a different matter altogether. Many in reforming systems have found it wiser to democratise selection only gradually, and it is suggested here that the optimal choice might be that of marrying a significant amount of popular participation with the informed guidance of democratic party leaders in the selection of a candidate for the office of Head of State or Government.

1. Introduction

In these decades of a heightened push for the expansion and deepening of democracy, there have been calls for the re-examination of procedures, rules and regulations governing the selection of leaders who eventually stand for election to the highest offices in the land – such as those of Head of State and of Government. These calls are now spread more or less worldwide. In Britain, for example, there have been discussions on how to increase the involvement of ordinary party voters in the selection of parliamentary

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candidates, among whom eventually rises the party leader and, on winning a general election, the prime minister. In the United States of America, debates and actual reform in the selection of presidential candidates have taken place in the two major parties since the 1960s, and more particularly after the novel entry into the "races" of "minority" candidates like Jesse Jackson in the 1980s.

In Tanzania, ramblings within the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) against the hitherto "imperial" selection were heard in the first three years of the multiparty system, especially after the 1992 National Conference (NC) at Chimwaga. This selection started with the "naming" of the chairman, vice-chairmen and secretary-general, among whom the presidential candidate almost always emerged, and ended with the actual presidential nomination – both practically accomplished by organs of limited representation called the Central Committee (CC) and the National Executive Committee (NEC), and endorsed through a ballot by the larger National Conference. The concern with the limited popular participation in candidate selection in Tanzania has been extended to the practices of the opposition parties. After the introduction of multiparty politics in Tanzania in 1992, one of the most frequent criticisms of the actions of the new political parties has been about the procedures for selecting candidates for high offices.

2. Democracy and Participation

Quite clearly a discussion of the appropriate procedures for selecting a candidate for the Head of State or Government is at the same time a debate on democracy – in particular it is a question of how much participation is desirable.

Democracy is defined and elaborated in so many different ways that a precise phraseology to describe it is never really attained by any individual writer or advocate, and would raise an unwarranted debate here if dwelt upon at length. A working definition to which many notions of democracy may relate, however, entails the participation of everybody in decisions that affect or may affect him or her, as well as the existence of an administration, be it government or otherwise, whose ultimate authority derives from and rests with the "people". Although historically this ultimate authority of the "people" and their participation have been abridged, thus moulding the character of democracy at each stage generally speaking, there has always been a notion of the "people" as having the last say and of each individual having the right to participate in making decisions that affect him or her.

The abridgement has usually entailed a notion of equality, and consequently of exclusion, which differed from one major human stage of development to another, or from society to society. Excluded in the notion of democracy were groups not regarded as equal to those awarded the entitlement of participation, or those notionally considered non-people for this purpose, strange as this may sound today. Thus in Aristotlean and Caesarean pre-feudal societies only a certain category of "citizens", notionally regarded as the "people" and equal among themselves, were considered to have rights of democratic participation. It was this notion of equality/non-equality and exclusion that was at play in the colonial exclusion of "natives" from political participation, and in the pre-1960s American abrogation of the civil and political rights of black people in practice and in the constitution. The American constitution defined a black person as a non-person, except for weighting the vote of its southern states, when, without himself or herself voting, a black would be regarded as $^3/_5$ of a person. The notion of non-equality (or was it perhaps that of non-people?) guaranteed that South African blacks were disenfranchised throughout the rule of the Nationalist Party, at the same time as those who did not suffer this abrogation of rights believed that democracy was at work there. The principle of exclusion of course delayed the universalization of adult suffrage by denying the vote to women – to which no less a prominent woman like the English monarch, Queen Victoria, was vehemently opposed – until after the 1st World War in the USA, and 1971 in Switzerland.

Throughout and along this arduous journey to the realization of democratic ideals, it was accepted that everybody and all the people were entitled to participate in decision-making, and to ultimate authority, as long as they were regarded as equal citizens and part of the "people".

In a general sense almost all societies in the world today accept the notion of the people to be equivalent to all humans, and that all citizens have equal civil and political rights, in addition, of course, to fundamental human rights. The acceptance of democracy therefore should equally be the acceptance of the principle of participation of all humans, on the basis of equality, in decisions that affect them, and of their ultimate authority over all administrations of human affairs. We know that the practice is not uniform, and that there are many areas in which there is no conformity to these principles. However, this non-conformity to democratic ideals is not merely a lacking in implementation in an atmosphere of total commitment to the ideal. Notionally the ideal of democracy as involving all people in decision-

making and governance continues to be questioned. This questioning is not done by remnants of a remote and antiquated pre-democratic past, although a few eccentric elements totally opposed to even the minimum principle of "rule by many" may be found, but by modern theorists and political practitioners who regard themselves as true democrats and who have a completely different set of considerations in questioning the wisdom of not limiting political participation. Let us briefly examine these.

3. Realism and Participation

In the debate on whether in the modern state participation has limits, theorists can for convenience be grouped into two - realists and idealists. The basic assumption of realists is that political phenomena, including participation, should primarily be examined and analysed in terms of *how it is* rather than *how it ought to be*. Most observe that there is an increasingly lower level of involvement in important aspects of participation, such as voting, and, conversely, that there is a coalescence of a few active elites who dominate political decision-making - despite, and often as a consequence of, modern-day extension of democracy.

They argue that, as guarantees of rights of participation have been extended to just about everybody in modern times, there has not been a corresponding actual participation by the majority. This has led to several conclusions that sit uneasily with the ideal of democracy. First, that the general "masses" of people do not have a permanent disposition towards political participation, and, second, that the poor groups among the masses harbour such undemocratic tendencies that when participating they sometimes throw up undemocratic results. According to Berelson and others (1954), the average citizen does not have enough sustained interest in political affairs to participate sufficiently to make democracy work in the ideal sense. And Lipset (1963:92) has written:

> The poorer strata everywhere are more liberal or leftist on economic issues; they favour welfare measures, higher wages, graduated income taxes, support of trade unions, and so forth. But when liberalism is defined in non-economic terms - as support of civil liberties, internationalism, and so forth - the correlation is reversed. The well-to-do are more liberal; the poorer are more intolerant.

It is further argued by realists that democratic norms, including free speech, are only weakly supported, and are sometimes opposed, by the majority. Ironically, such norms are courted and vigorously applied by a small elite of

judges and like-minded people within the legislature and the cabinet (Dahl, 1971). This leads to the view that the vital elements in the sustenance of a democratic system are the democratic culture, standards and enforcement competence of a few influential people, opinion leaders and political activists. It is imperative therefore that in a democracy the training of future elites be undertaken (Dahl, 1967).

This realist distrust of the masses has in a way 'flown off on a tangent', as witness the co-existence of the desire to increase the participation of those least participating, and the fear of losing consensus with such participation, in the view of Dahl (1967). It is argued by Sartori (1962:32) that a democratic society is not compelled to keep extending democracy, since once it is established the threat to it is not from a powerful few but from the masses. Democracy may destroy its own leaders, thereby creating the conditions for their replacement by undemocratic counter-elites or demagogues, who appeal to the emotions or prejudices of the masses to further their own personal ends. Echoing Sartori, Huntington (1975) has lamented the increase in democracy, seeing it as a cause for worry since it lowers the capacity for the governance of democracy. He has argued that a danger to democracy is posed by professional moralists who devote themselves to the destruction of leadership and the disrespect for institutions, leading to an atmosphere in which political systems are perceived as illegitimate. He has concluded that there are potentially desirable limits to the indefinite extension of political democracy.

Other writers in this genre have predicted the advent of rule by "authoritarian" elites in modern society, not because of a takeover by demagogues, but due to the increasing specialization of knowledge and the necessity of planning in a modern state, which render "rule by (a few) experts" inevitable - the classic expression of Michels (1968) about the oligarchic tendencies of modern democracy.

In the view of realists, none of this means that the idea of democracy and participation is doomed. Michels himself has this to say:

> The defects in democracy are obvious. It is none the less true that as a form of social life, we must choose democracy as the least of evils. Nothing but a serene and frank examination of the oligarchical dangers of democracy will enable us to minimize these dangers, even though they can never be entirely avoided."

He concluded:

> The question we have to discuss is not whether ideal democracy is realisable but rather to what point and in what degree democracy is desirable, possible and realizable at a given moment.

Another realist, Gaetano Mosca (1939) added a voice to this, confirming that although "direct democracy was a pure myth, a representative system was not illusory.[1]

According to realists, all this means that democracy is redefined in terms of *process* rather than results, in terms of method rather than goal. In a democracy the exercise of power need not be equal; what is essential is equal access to power. Democracy is less a government *by* the people, more a government embodying the will of the people and therefore a government *approved* by the people.

4. Pre-Reform Reality in the Selection of Candidates

Realists appear to push their scepticism about the full blooming of democracy and political participation to hysterical heights. Nevertheless there is a basis, and sometimes a rationale, for saying that in reality elites continue to dominate political processes, and that the full democratisation of everything at once may not always bear the fruits of democracy. Thus, in relation to the practice of selecting candidates for the offices of Heads of States and Governments, political parties have until recently resisted extending full participation to ordinary members.

The question of internal party democracy in candidate selection for high office revolves around two main issues: Whether selection is the preponderance of the centre in relation to local units, and whether power in a decision-making unit is monopolized by a few or widely distributed among the unit's members (Ware, 1996:259). Additionally, it may involve the consideration whether selection procedures are expressly stated and widely known within the membership.

[1] On this question Mosca was at times more cynical in his characterization of a representative system as an instrumentalist measure, performing a self-preservation function for the system by ensuring "a slow but continuous modification of the ruling classes, preventing poor circulation in Government and guaranteeing the immortality of the political organism.

In Australia, the party leader, who becomes the Head of Government on winning an election, is chosen through a meeting of a section of the parliamentary caucus, usually after a lot of "in-camera" backroom manoeuvring. This was also the case in the major British political parties before the recent formalization of election by party parliamentarians, leading to the well-known (but now ancient) Tory Party dictum: A leader is not elected; he (or she) simply emerges.

It has also taken more than a century for the major American parties to evolve presidential candidate selection procedures that are as close to direct participation as can be in the foreseeable future. By the 1960s the Americans already had the national party convention format in place. To the convention were sent delegates from states to vote on presidential hopefuls. Usually delegates were appointed by party leaders, and were pledged to support a particular candidate. At the convention, however, party leaders wheeled and dealt until they decided on a compromise candidate, at which point they called upon the delegates to "deliver" their votes according to the agreement. It is to be noted that, alongside the apparent consensus, and the manufactured balloting at the convention, real selection was done by a small circle of party leaders.

In many parties throughout the world, procedures for selecting candidates for the highest offices are not democratic at all from the point of view of ordinary party members. There is at least what can be considered so extreme a disdain for participation that their typical selection procedure must be looked at as an aberration by modern democratic standards. The case of the perpetually ruling PRI of Mexico, in which selection of the new presidential candidate starts and ends with a mere anointment by the outgoing president, resembles this culture of an elite disdain for popular participation in candidate selection for high offices.

This indicates what the reality of participation at the primary level of the electoral process was, even in countries long perceived to be democratic. It does not by itself vindicate the cynicism of realists, since this limitation in participation was to a large extent deliberately anti-democratic rather than inevitable, but it shows that certain areas of democracy are not tackled in a one-blow job, only gradually. There is also something to be said about, perhaps, the historical necessity of keeping such an important decision as selecting a possible Head of State or Government firmly within the control of the most politically actively group, and the most knowledgeable in national

A potential prime minister must first be party leader, which in turn means being a member of parliament. Sometimes the critical moment of selection, therefore, is when there is consideration for a parliamentary seat. In the conservative party a few local party leaders in the executive committee has usually appointed a still smaller selection committee, which draws up a short-list of parliamentary hopefuls. Actual selection is done by the executive committee. It has been argued that this list almost always coincides with the wishes of the party electorate (Ball, 1987:191). Eventually the "parliamentary party", made up of members of both houses of Parliament, chooses the party leader by a majority of votes. But this case of guided democracy in the selection of leaders can certainly be democratised further (Holme and Elliot, 1988; Webb, 1994).

For the labour party, since 1974 there has been a gradual loosening of control of selection procedures by the National Executive Committee (NEC) in favour of increased local autonomy, even though the NEC still endorses selection in principle. But, as with the Conservative Party, selection is still done primarily from a list prepared by party officers, which is not fully democratic even when fully responsive to the wishes of the party electorate.

In the USA the hold of party bosses on convention delegates has rapidly declined as a response to increased demands on more meaningful forms of participation. Though not fully achieved yet, the move has been towards direct election of these delegates. Delegates are now voted upon by members in party primaries or state conventions, though some are still chosen by local party caucuses. Corresponding to these developments has been the increase in the use of presidential primaries to make an early gauging of candidate strength prior to the national convention, which nominates the presidential candidate of a particular party. By 1980, presidential primaries had increased from 18 in 1960 to 37 (Hamilton, 1982). In these primaries party voters, and in some states any group of voters regardless of party affiliation, cast direct ballots to indicate their preferences for particular candidates showing willingness to contest. Such balloting does not directly affect the outcome of selection - which occurs at the convention - but greatly influences the choice of delegates, which, in the case of the Democratic Party, may be proportionate to the primary balloting. None of this shows a case of direct democracy in the classical sense, but it is one of the ways representative democracy can approach direct democracy in candidate selection.

The particular circumstances and nature of political parties in contemporary USA accounts in part for the deepening of the Primary as a candidate selection measure, and consequently for that extension of democracy. Such circumstances include the relative weakness of political parties as permanent organizations, the prominence of other political actors, most notably the candidates themselves but also including the media and the campaign organizations (Katz and Kolodny, 1994:3; Schlezinger, 1994:10). This may mean that such extension of democracy, without the American conditions, may be difficult to replicate in other polities.

7. Legislative Selection in Older Democracies: A Comparative Overview

In dealing with the question of democracy in candidate selection, a comparative examination of selection for legislative positions yields conclusions similar to those obtained for the higher political offices of President and Prime Minister. The trend has been an increased call for popular participation in candidate selection. This has often won acceptance, but, just as often, it has usually been followed by a counteracting call for limiting such participation. Sometimes a real reversal of such a democratic gain has occurred.

In Denmark, Bille (1994) demonstrates that candidate selection procedures have, over a thirty-year period to 1990, favoured the autonomy of local units, but in practice six of the eight major political parties he examined had a form of central approval of candidate selection introduced late in that period (Bille, 1994:202). Data from Norway indicates that, though unsuccessful in the case of that country, leaders of political parties seek to centralize candidate selection as competition grows (Svasand 1994:318; Fink-Hafner and Svasand 1994:119-120). Ireland exhibits a clear centralization in candidate selection in all major parties. In two of them, the Fianna Fail and Fine Gael, the highest central organs have the power to control the entire legislative nominating process, including a rejection of candidates proposed by constituency organizations, as well as the modification of the candidate list. In two other Irish parties, the Labour Party and the Workers Party, such central power in legislative candidate selection is obtained more by influence than by formal prescription (Farrell, 1994:225-227). In the case of the Irish Green Party, centralization of candidate selection became a reality when it became a serious political competitor, starting in 1989 (Farrell, 1994:228). It is interesting, perhaps even paradoxical, but consistent with earlier discussion in this paper, that this centralization of legislative candidate selection occurred not before but later on the historical continuum - in other words, as

we moved further forward into the era of increased democratisation. There seems to be a clear demonstration that the electability of candidates, a party's potential electoral performance and the party's survival generally coalesce to circumscribe the imperative of further democratisation in candidate selection. When political competition or any similar cause for a heightened alert for self-preservation is present, parties feel the need for a tighter co-ordination of candidate selection, which in turn translates into the centralization of the exercise.

The march of candidate selection is not inexorably towards centralization. A combination of party history, laws and regulations, as well as electoral systems, have sometimes produced decentralised candidate selection systems which, though not reaching direct democracy, have come close to full popular participation. The evidence, here, however indicates that such moments remain novelties even in the foreseeable future.

8. Legislative Candidate Selection in Tanzania

Before 1995 the critical stage of legislative candidate selection in Tanzania was a kind of "primary" carried out at the district level. Here all aspirants within the single party presented themselves to a conference of delegates from wards/branches and received votes according to the preference of that electorate. The candidature list, prepared in accordance with the number of votes received by each aspirant, was often commented upon by other district as well as regional sittings, but it is the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the party that had the final say in candidate selection. The NEC routinely endorsed most district preferences, presumably because enough work went into the preparation of possible candidates at the branch level to satisfy both the district "preferential" and the NEC (Mcauslan & Ghai, 1972:201; Luanda, 1994:258). About 4% of the first and second choices of the district "preferentials" were rejected by the NEC in the single-party era. This was equivalent to 2.5% of the eventual total number of legislators. In any case, the critical point is that a central party organ retained the authority of legislative candidate selection.

A liberal CCM innovation that came with the multiparty system is that each of its legislative candidates is now voted upon by conference delegates to all party wards within his/her constituency. This is one level of hierarchy lower than the district conference, has more party voters than the latter and has, therefore, extended participation comparatively. The procedure is analogous to a party primary for that group of candidates. Basically any ordinary

member may put up his/her candidacy and enter the "primary" campaign. Since the campaign takes place in every ward and lasts several weeks, there is unprecedented local conscietization and participation that vastly differs from the district "preferential", which took place away from the localities and was done on a single day. The overall result of all this has been to stir up anxiety within CCM about its ability to keep control of the process, especially to ensure that the heightened politicisation of selection continues to produce reliable and competitive candidates. The NEC, though, still retains its final say on candidate selection.

As regards the new parties, they have not been able to extend participation in candidate selection to local units. This is partly due to deliberate party policy and partly the result of a lack of written formal rules and procedures for candidate selection.

9. Presidential Candidate Selection in Tanzania

9.1 The Status quo of 1965-1990

In the period 1965-85, when the party leader (officially the Chairman) would also become the presidential candidate, not by any written party rule but by convention, winning selection to the party position invariably meant securing selection to the presidential candidacy.[2]

The candidate for the party chairmanship would be first proposed in the Central Committee (CC) of the party (CCM, 1992:97), and then nominated by the party's National Executive Committee (NEC) - in both cases by a consensual acclamation. At the next stage, the National Conference (NC), the nominated candidate would be voted upon by secret ballot by a total of 1,000 to 1,200 party representatives from all its organizational levels and units. Formally the order in which these central/national organizational units are mentioned here was also the order of authority, with the NC as the most authoritative. In reality the CC and NEC had more power through their preponderant elite influence and monopoly of information. The two party vice-chairmen, as well as the Union and Zanzibar presidential candidates, were also selected in the same way. These party nominations and elections were routinized and regular, as indeed were the overwhelming NEC and NC electoral endorsements of candidates first proposed by the CC. All three

[2] In the ensuing single-party presidential election, consisting of a choice between endorsing and rejecting the single candidate, the leader invariably won with a handsome majority.

central party organs sat under the chairmanship of the party leader, who in nearly all cases was the candidate for the top party and government positions. Membership in the CC has ranged from 25 to 30 and in the NEC from 215 to 230. In the CC members secure their positions mostly on the basis of their party functions. It is the same for some members of NEC, but nearly 50% are directly elected to that membership by the NC.

These arrangements endured until the 1985-90 interlude, when there was a slight variation, with the party chairman and the presidential candidate being two different people.

The mode of candidate selection and the distribution of power among the organs remained the same (CCM, 1995:86-106). The absence of a challenger to the single candidates for the five top party and government positions, the orchestrated selections, the overwhelmingly compliant electoral endorsements, the dominance of a few leaders (including the chairman) through their membership or leadership of the CC, the NEC, the NC and the state organs clearly made candidate selection for the highest offices "imperial", though not secretive.

9.2 *The Multiparty Reform in Presidential Candidate Selection in Tanzania*

In the first multiparty election of 1995, which coincided with the constitutional limit of the term of the outgoing Union President, none of the CCM presidential aspirants had the top party or government post. The absence of incumbency partly facilitated a debate on the possibility of party reform of candidate selection for the highest state offices. CCM decided to open up the candidacy at the initial stage by inviting virtually every constitutionally eligible member to fill a candidature form. In 1995 this produced 17 CCM Union presidential aspirants. But actual selection is still the exclusive preserve of the three central/national organs, with the CC and the NEC playing vital gate-keeping roles. Although the CC does not eliminate any name from the candidature list, it provides the NEC with crucial evaluations of the candidates. The NEC is mandated to select no more than five aspirants, to be voted upon by the NC (CCM, 1998:24-26). With regard to the Zanzibar presidency, CCM has introduced a change in which that candidate is scrutinized by a special Zanzibar Committee of the NEC, then the CC, and finally the NEC.

The selection procedures of the new parties are more or less a replication of this centralised CCM procedure, except that they have not yet opened up the

initial stage of aspirant expression, with party leaders assured of their candidature for the presidency without a challenge.

It seems that in Tanzania, despite CCM's liberal reform in the direction of expanded participation in candidate selection for the legislature, and a significant opening up in presidential candidate selection within the party, centralized procedures still dominate. It also seems, as in the case of some older democracies mentioned here, that the rationale for avoiding direct democracy in candidate selection is to keep control and coordination of the process in the face of political competition.

10. Conclusion

Democracy is highly desirable, and a full direct participation in the selection of party candidates for high state offices would be among the lofty ideals of democracy to pursue. If Tanzanian parties chose this path it would be quite commendable. It certainly is a possible path. However, it is not a probable path. First, the very definition of modern democracy is that it is mostly representative, not direct. Secondly, full and direct democracy would multiply the number of elections overall, and the costs involved, of course – none of which is feasible or even necessary. Thirdly some kind of loose veto by party bosses on presidential hopefuls is inevitable and advisable on account of their superior knowledge and active political roles, making them alert on issues of electability in an atmosphere of real competition, and on questions of national cohesion and stability. Finally, it seems regrettable but almost self-evident that such a delay in the march towards full and direct democracy in candidate selection is warranted, "pending" a full political education on the civic involvement of "the masses" in the political process.

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