

ANSWERS TO EVERYTHING

Final Report - Third Pass

This document presents all the findings of the local "Answers to Everything" SIG of Greater Los Angeles Area Mensa, which SIG began its weekly Monday meetings in January of 1997, and concluded them in April 2019, adding and adjusting certain conclusions on a correspondence basis until February 2022.

The mission of our SIG ('Special Interest Group') was to create a comprehensive and non-partisan Agenda comprising solutions to all of the political, economic, and social problems facing America today, as we had never seen one anywhere else. We did it!

This report includes all the main discussions and preliminary decisions which have led to our ultimate conclusions. A 'general summary' version of this document is also available, which skips the discussions and preliminary decisions, and focuses only on the Agenda in its finished form. In addition, a much-shorter 'executive summary' is available online which highlights our most fundamental conclusions.

IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER: The statements appearing in this document represent only the views of the local Answers to Everything SIG and some/all of its constituent members, but they do not constitute opinions held by Mensa (or any of its subsidiary chapters), which holds no institutional opinions on any subject.

The way that we completed our work was to review a pre-constructed outline of several hundred Questions, dealing with all the aspects of our social order that we could think of. This draft Outline was supplemented with some preliminary ideas which we had compiled up to that point, or formed during the drafting process. The 99-page document of initial Questions and preliminary ideas was printed and bound in a certain black binder which we used as our master guide throughout this entire Project, and which we frequently reference in this document as our 'black book'.

Proceedings of all the Monday meetings were recorded in three blue spiral notebooks which we collectively reference here as our 'blue book', and are transcribed below.

Although the original Outline was prepared in advance, the group could always add, re-arrange, or reject Questions as it saw fit, and did so numerous times; the Outline was created only as an initial framework to facilitate discussion, and certainly did so.

The original Outline began with a few introductory Questions which addressed the need for taking on the Project and the manner in which the effort should best be approached. The main Outline was divided into three Parts: Part I was for the political Questions (concerning the structure and operation of government), Part II was for the economic Questions (concerning the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services), and Part III was for the social Questions (concerning how people interact in all other settings). Each of the three Parts contained 6-8 Sections dealing with specific areas. Each of the Parts and Sections was constructed to start with general Questions designed to establish some basic and global principles on which we could all agree, and then gradually to introduce more complex and specific issues as we developed the foundation to tackle them.

It later became clear that we could not maintain that segregated approach indefinitely, because the topics in the different Parts turned out to interrelate even more than we had anticipated. We therefore will need extensive rearrangement of all these Questions before the final version can be published, such that each Question which depends on a particular Answer is placed afterward in the text.

Before that happens, the conclusions reached by the 'Monday group' will be compared and contrasted with the partial findings of other panels which also worked on this project, so some of the conclusions appearing in this document may not be reflected in the final version, so all observers should wait until the final version comes out before any taking action in response to any of our recommendations. The reconciliation of these findings with those of the other panels will therefore constitute the Fourth Pass of this project, and the rearrangement of the reconciled Answers into a more logical sequence will constitute the Fifth Pass. We will then proceed with compressing the material into a more digestible length for public consumption, and generally polishing the composition for maximum public impact.

One important 'ground rule' which should be remembered when reviewing this document is that no proposition was adopted into our model unless it met with the consensus agreement of all participants attending a given Session of the SIG.

Another important 'ground rule' was that all the Answers adopted by the panels were subject to subsequent reconsideration and modification at any point during the First Pass. It happened several times that the group would look at a certain Question, note that the Answer to that Question depended on the Answer to a certain previous Question, and then find that the Answer to that earlier Question needed to be re-evaluated. In those instances, sometimes the original Answer was upheld, and sometimes an argument was put forward which was sufficiently compelling to cause the group to overturn the original Answer. When the latter happened, the group also reviewed all subsequent Answers that may have been based on the Answer which was changed, and made further adjustments as appropriate. Those occurrences are all catalogued in this report as they happened.

With that, here is our story. Are you sitting comfortably? Then we'll begin.....

INTRODUCTION

Question 1

Do we need to review our existing order at all?

One of our more cynical participants opened discussion in Session 1 (January 1997) by noting that the Earth will explode in three billion years, and asked why we therefore should bother.

Second panelist noted that we should make society good for others, otherwise it comes back to us in the form of crime. Also, building a sense of community makes us feel better about ourselves and Life.

We observed that there are three factors which must be assessed in order to determine whether the investment of time and effort into this project is worthwhile, being (a) whether or not we are satisfied with the current political/economic/social

order, (b) the extent to which we may be empowered to make changes in the current order, and (c) how badly we want to try to do so.

Question 1a

Are we satisfied with the current political/economic/social order?

Tentatively agreed in Session 1 that we are not satisfied.

Question 1b

To what extent are we empowered to make changes in the current order?

Social change came from talking in the 1960's, so it is possible to do. Internet dialogue was also identified even in Session 1 as being helpful to exchange ideas without going through experts; highly possible that we now couldn't do without it.

A certain psychologist (Irwin Sessions of Humboldt State) was cited as claiming that an average of 28 years is needed to accomplish major change. Maybe, maybe not.

Panelist claimed that because we need to make improvements, it will automatically happen. Even if so, Moderator claimed that it would be only reactive, and thus bad.

Panelist introduced the expression of a 'critical mass of suffering' as being necessary to instigate change. Still, while it may be possible to enact our vision, there would be lots of luck involved. Most people tend to resist change.

Agreed, however, that anything is possible. [Of course, technology got better later.]

Question 1c

Do we want to try to make changes in our current order?

Panelist noted in Session 1 that 'the system' was serving the ultra-rich elite, and that we needed to 'do stuff' soon because the Baby Boomers were getting ready to retire.

Even the more cynical panelist allowed that when we see that something is doable, we are then motivated to try to do it.

Other panelist agreed that even if our planned book doesn't work, the effort may start the ball rolling such that other people will create and publish other models, generating a large-scale movement.

Therefore, it is good to review our current order.

Question 1.9

If we write a 'magnum opus' book, would anybody read or respond to it?

Non-author panelist asserted in Session 1 that most people are followers, partly from genetics and partly from generational teaching, living with 20,000-year-old survival skills, and with a tendency to 'follow the herd'. We therefore must make effective

use of advertising and the Internet and other outreaching resources to not only make people aware of our Agenda, but also make them feel safe to agree with it.

Question 2

Should we look only at isolated topics, or should we construct a 'whole agenda' covering everything?

In trying to look at Everything, panel noted in Session 1 that we don't want to (and will not) spend all our time looking at general topics, but rather will keep all our opinions on specific topics separate until we are done with All.

Question 1b (continued)

To what extent are we empowered to make changes in the current order?

Added in Session 1: Human experience and observation and maturity are essential to empowerment to make changes, as opposed to ivory-tower think-tank types.

Question 2 (continued)

Should we look only at isolated topics, or should we construct a 'whole agenda' covering everything?

Cynical panelist from Session 1 said to do both One-at-a-Time and Whole Agenda.

Question 1.9 (continued)

If we write a 'magnum opus' book, would anybody read or respond to it?

It was asserted in Session 1 that more people would respond to individual points than to a 'magnum opus', so potentially better to publish One-at-a-Time, even if we do so before considering Everything else.

Question 2 (continued)

Should we look only at isolated topics, or should we construct a 'whole agenda' covering everything?

Strategy might be to post intermediate topics on the Internet, and to get responses as part of the research project. However, we also need to address the counter-Question of what about the interrelation of topics, for which we will need examples.

Considering what we are now calling our Question 1.9* [*When any Question has a decimal number, that means that it was not part of the original Outline, but was added by the panels after opening of discussions in 1997.] brings up the point that a 'magnum opus' approach is good, because it allows concentration on general themes and Basic Principles first.

Possibility raised in Session 1 that the Answer is somewhere in-between, by piecing together those topics which interrelate, and treating and publishing those chains.

May be good to demonstrate how Everything interrelates, by attempting to create discrete topic chains, and FAILING to do so.

We therefore performed some 'brainstorming' in Session 2 (January 1997), creating preliminary lists of current elements of our order and how we then felt about them:

| <u>GOOD</u> | <u>?</u> | <u>BAD</u> |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| personal freedoms | housing tax/investment structure | financial insecurity (ee benefits) |
| lots of natural resources | education | no universal right of medical care ¹ |
| civil liberties & privacy | graffiti | not enough worker participation in economy ¹ (pension, capital asset) |
| tripartite government | free press | concentration of power in media |
| transportation | housing availability | using human resources for low-level office work |
| public beaches | bicameral legislature | emphasis on youth, beauty, wealth |
| federal system of U.S. govt | line-item veto | emphasis on tall males |
| modern conveniences | family life | contradictory attitudes toward rich & beautiful |
| | semi-capitalistic economy | absence of knowledge of why we do certain things or react in certain ways |
| | pressure to conform in workplace | prisons |
| | nothing to talk about ² | repressed sexuality |
| | teacher salaries | distorted view of entertainment value ² (necessity vs luxury) |
| | emphasis of money over utility | monopolies |
| | speed bumps | shorter work week ¹ |
| | Welfare | |
| | two-party system | |
| | Social Security | |
| | breakdown in Republican party ² | |
| | Internet | |
| | vandalism | |
| | intolerance toward different groups | |
| | tax system | |
| | child care | |
| | government spending | |
| | sexual activity at younger ages | |
| | executive salaries | |
| | no right to die | |
| | balance levels in 'basic sector' trade | |
| | heterogeneity of population | |
| | forced employee benefits | |

¹moved to '?' list in Third Pass, for being highly debatable

²dropped in Third Pass

Question 1a (continued)

Are we satisfied with the current political/economic/social order?

In consideration of the above listings, we concluded in Session 2 that we are not satisfied: Of course not!! Everybody is probably dissatisfied with something.

Question 2 (continued)

Should we look only at isolated topics, or should we construct a 'whole agenda' covering everything?

Panel suggested in Session 2 that we could address topics in the order of egregiousness or seriousness, such as Welfare - Education - Sexuality - Media.

Resolution: Most or all topics to be reviewed interrelate.

Agreed, therefore, that it is necessary to take an holistic approach to the Agenda.

More generally as to Part I, panelist in Session 2 suggested that we address a first Question of 'Do we want to be happy?', which we introduced at this time, viz.:

Question 0.8

Do we want to be happy?

Yes, but panel observed in Session 2 that being 'happy' means different things for different people, although there are some frequent similarities. Therefore, new Q:

Question 0.9

What (if any) are some things which make nearly everyone happy?

Panelists in Session 2 identified freedom from stress, freedom from tyranny, civil liberty, peace of mind, freedom to walk, simple pleasures, adequate sunlight, adequate green space (for most people), and peer approval.

Question 2.4

What is the best sequence for reviewing these topics?

We considered at this point of Session 2 that it may be more efficient (at least for the panels) to start with discussion of Government Organization, and then discuss all subsequent topics, and then go back to the Basic Principles as needed, rather than try to guess what Basic Questions must be addressed first.

Government Organization discussion probably depends on whether we want America basically as is, which in turn depends on whether we want multiple national governments or one or any. We used these points to build a preliminary topic chain.

More specifically, Economic and Social topics depend (we thought) on Government Organization, which depends on philosophy of America, which depends on existence of America among multiple nations, which depends on whether to have a one-world government or multiple governments, which depends on to what extent individual needs and desires impact one's sociopolitical structure, which depends on the relationship of the Individual to the State, which depends on Rights, which depend on the Source of Rights, which depends on the Source of People.

Panel noted in Session 3 (January 1997) that the topic of the existence of America among multiple nations is important because Isolationism is dangerous.

States sometimes need to protect certain Individual rights, but the Question becomes whether the State or Government or 'Ruling Class' has any rights or needs which supersede Individual rights. Noted to discuss Feudalism and Slavery.

David Stockman allegedly asserted that people don't necessarily have a right to Food and Shelter. Meanwhile, Calvinists have a view that we are our Brother's Keeper.

Good to raise controversial issues in print, because it raises dialogue. Otherwise, we would never know that there was anyone out there who had those ideas.

Agreement on main topic chain!

PART I - THE POLITICAL ANSWERS

Part I of the Outline as originally configured (again, all will need to be completely rearranged) had six Sections: Basic Principles, Government Organization, The Election Process, Executive Structure, Legislative Operations, and Judicial Reform.

SECTION I-A: BASIC PRINCIPLES

In order to be able later to achieve consensus on any complex or controversial topic, we needed to start with a point of common ground, on which everyone could be expected to agree. To do this, we found it necessary to go all the way back to some very basic philosophical questions, beginning with:

Question 3

Are we even here?

Non-author panelist in Session 3 said that we're here. She brought up the Cartesian tenet of "Cognat Ergo Sum" (I Think, Therefore I Am). We talked about Nihilism, but noted that we would need more background on variations, including Predestination.

She volunteered that it really doesn't matter on an operational basis, because our interactions with others appear to produce the same feelings in us (both good and bad) as we would have if we were indeed all real.

We also agreed that it makes no sense to create a fictional universe, complete with stars and planets located very far away, just for one individual's benefit or as a 'test'. It would make more sense to have a real-life universe with real people interacting.

Besides, even if you believe in a one-person universe (the Solipsism philosophy), and if you write down somewhere that you believe in it, then to whom are you writing?

Possible source of Nihilism (panelist talked about her childhood experience) is the idea is that we can't prove existence, so we must assume non-existence. It also could derive from how certain individuals deal with grief or loss through denial, so may need to be viewed in context of social problems experienced by its proponents.

Question 3.3

Now what? What do we conclude from the operating assumption that we exist?

Non-author panelist in Session 3 offered following rationale: The assumption that the Universe is real creates a sense of trust in the Universe, in that we are all relying continually on the presumption that different decisions which we make (or appear to make, depending on actual Answer 3) will tend to generate certain predictable results. (Drop a hammer, it falls to the ground.) This idea in turn creates in us a motivation to use that decision-making power to create a world that works, whatever that may end up translating to. It also means that we want to use that power to make our own individual lives as real and meaningful as possible, whatever that translates to. If we instead operate from fear (which would come from the absence of the previous assumptions), then we would put blinders on our compassion, and disregard the reality of others, and end up with a world which doesn't work.

Things work better if people are compassionate, but many people are not. Therefore, Compassion is not a function of Existence.

This had been listed in our original Outline as Question 4, but prior to Session 3 we had expanded the text of the Question to include "What can any individual do?", for which the 'black book' of preliminary ideas listed some basic human choices. However, we got no response to the latter element in Session 3. When we read the suggestions from the 'black book', panel agreed with them, but found that they were not easy to derive from the Questions as then drafted.

Problem with the original Question 4 was that it went to the issue of choice, which had not been established by this point, although a panelist had brought up the question of free will in Session 2. Agreed that we needed to address the question of free will first. Then, we could address the Q4 addendum by asking, given that we have the power of choice, what basic choices we have. We therefore decided to renumber the original element of Question 4 as Question 3.3, as shown above.

People sometimes let their kid crash in a car accident, and say that it was God's will. We need to address the freedom-of-will Question not just in the context of original Question 4, but also as relates to people's specific actions, and their reactions to events outside of their control such as sickness. People also question how God could allow certain stuff to happen, which we probably also need to address in this new Question, for 'Determinism is often abdication of taking a responsible and caring role in one's interaction.'

Question 3.5

The 'free will' question: To what extent does any individual have the freedom and power to make choices?

Non-author panelist in Session 3 suggested that we approach this Question similar to Question 3, that we may not have freedom of will, but can operate as though we do.

People sometimes claim Destiny in the context of romantic infatuation, but we observe that it is actually dangerous to believe it, because then they might be disinclined to maintain and nurture their relationships, allowing them to die.

Behavior and belief systems can be influenced by repetitive experiences that people have, or by happiness, or by social programming, or by Pavlovian training.

On the larger question of whether a Higher Power controls all events, there is a school of thought which says so, but it would be a very all-powerful god, and one who is highly motivated to control all events. We don't see that there would be much reason for God (or a god) to do so, since it wouldn't be much fun for such an entity, knowing in advance everything that's going to happen, and never really accomplishing anything. Besides, a God who wants worship or for people to love their neighbors is probably not going to be satisfied if these actions are either forced or predetermined. A more common (and possibly plausible, maybe even true) school of thought among Theists is that people control some events, and that one or more Gods might control some others.

Possible reason for believing in the Calvinist idea of Predestination is that it makes people 'feel good', by allowing them to avoid any responsibility for their actions.

Determinism is a good excuse for people to not get involved if they don't want to.

Moderator claimed that we needed to refute the argument that we Humans can not know what God's plan or motivation is. Panelist instead came back to the idea that we can operate as though we have Free Will, even if we can't prove it.

Biological argument: If our actions were based only on electrochemical impulses in our brains and bodies, then that would not explain Hope or other emotions or sensations, or the general feeling of Consciousness. We therefore are back again to "Cognat Ergo Sum".

Considering what may be needed to come up with a resolution for Freedom of Will, and considering why some people who are presumably conscious deny it, we considered that maybe some people have Free Will but others don't, and that maybe some lives are Predestined but others aren't.

Additional theological argument: If there is a god who knows Everything, then He [*sic*, it was 1997] must also know the Future, implying that we cannot hope to influence it. Our response is that there probably is no purpose to Existence if the Future is completely known, but that still doesn't address the apparent paradox. We therefore must question either the initial premise, or the line of reasoning, or both.

So, is God all-knowing? Problem area, since taking a position will likely alienate lots of people who believe or don't believe, or who have variations in their belief systems. However, we don't want to abandon the discussion entirely, because we need to address what choices exist, which we can't do without a discussion of Choice, and because people will make unhealthy choices (for themselves and others) if they give up to Predestination. Moderator noted that, while he may have had certain beliefs which he would like to spread, this probably was not the appropriate forum to do so.

Perhaps we can phrase Answer in context of if there is God, then etc. We may draw inferences from the possibility of God, and from the possibility of No God. If we can make the two sets of inferences come together to arrive at the same conclusion on Determinism and Freedom of Will, then we can settle and go from there.

People who don't believe in Free Will still make choices in their lives. Maybe it is sufficient to say that we have choices, anyway.

We planned for Session 4 to see if we could draw inferences from two (or more?) possibilities about the existence and nature of God, and reconcile them to the same conclusion on Freedom of Will. Before we could get back to that topic, however, a few new attendees wanted to revisit our basic approaches to the Project:

Question 2.4 (continued)

What is the best sequence for reviewing these topics?

Three new panelists in Session 4 (January 1997) expressed that we should hold off further specific analysis until we looked again at how we address the entire Project.

We reviewed the basic topic chain from Session 3. New panel noted that the topic of Individual-versus-State should include questions on Stability and Personal Freedoms, and asked what it is that we are trying to optimize. Discussion of America among other nations should include multinational corporations. Finally, how we manage Government Organization can influence other topics more than depend upon them.

Question 1b (continued)

To what extent are we empowered to make changes in the current order?

Panel added in Session 4 that putting out a webpage is equivalent to passing out leaflets in the 18th century. [We later did so.]

Question 2.4 (continued)

What is the best sequence for reviewing these topics?

One of the new panelists in Session 4 made an eloquent case that we should redo our whole approach to the Project, according to the following three main phases:

1. Parameters - What factors define whether our society is good/acceptable
2. Values - What do we agree on which will help shape our actual parameters
3. Structure - How shall we establish those values in real life

Resolved by groups to reconsider our earlier approach, and start from Parameters. We therefore conducted another 'brainstorming', and recorded the following 90 Parameter suggestions from our whiteboard to our 'blue book' of Monday notes:

| | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| rewards by profession | substance/gambling abuse | availability of services |
| lawmaking limits/powers | prostitution | press freedom |
| punitive severity | crime rate | assembly freedom |
| concentration of power | - victimless v. victimful | taxation type |
| responsiveness of lawmaking | - violent v. non-violent | energy availability |
| minimum affluence level | literacy | natural resource utilization |
| intellectual property policy | employment rate | macroeconomic growth |
| teen pregnancy | elderly security | average workday/week |
| ratio of rich/poor | handicapped [sic] security | immigration |
| % of prison population | student achievement | population amt/density |
| % of suicide | divorce rate | minimum work age |
| % of homeless | marriage rate | size of military |
| % of income for housing | out-of-wedlock births | age of vesting of |
| amt of discretionary income | % death from various causes | personal freedom |
| gross income | indiv freedom/rights (privacy) | policy of military and |
| productivity | % of resources to undeserving | other public service |
| global production | govt spending | trade policy |
| domestic production | taxation amount | justice speed |
| infant mortality | ability to lawfully persecute | police authority |
| life expectancy | access to information | environmental conditions |
| nutrition | pornography | social harmony |
| medicine | rape | language |
| mental health | incest | cultural diversity |
| safety | property rights | communication |
| exercise | infrastructure (mail) | - verbal [sic], written |
| healthy lifestyles | disaster response | breadth of economic |
| affluence mobility | emergency services | interaction |
| child care | uniformity of service | price stability |
| litigiousness | concentration of wealth | wage stability |
| curriculum length | distribution of resources | transportation |
| parenting | religious freedom | vandalism |

We had another new panelist in Session 5 (February 1997), so we took a moment and recapped what we had been doing up to that point: Main thesis is that all political/economic/social topics interrelate with one another, either directly or indirectly, and that a single Agenda must be constructed in order for the Project to work. However, since the topics can only be discussed in real time (which is one-dimensional), we needed to arrive at a plan for systematic discussion of all topics. Sessions 2-3 had been used to develop a chain with Political topics leading to Economic, then leading to Social, and with certain basic Questions and topics to be addressed before looking at Government Organization. We had reconsidered our approach in Session 4, and were now endeavoring to lay out all those measurable or describable values which might be used to describe a good or satisfactory society, then agree (if possible) on what actual measures or qualities or other parameters should be used as goals for each value, then consider what structures to set up to engineer those parameters. We had developed the list of parameter elements as shown at that time on our whiteboard. Next steps were to see if we could group and/or prioritize them, and then to try to agree on specific parameters.

Further discussion of the two basic approaches. New panelist questioned whether the obviousness of 100% goals for certain items made it worthwhile to approach the Project in this manner. Possibility raised of comparing ourselves with other nations.

New panelist asserted that it is the "epitome of arrogance" to even attempt such a project. We responded that we are humble, and proud of it.

Some items on the current list appeared vague, and again the new panelist was not sure whether this was a worthwhile approach.

Comparative studies are useful if only to be able to answer any question as to why a certain result (such as the crime rate) is not as good as in Sweden or some other country, even though the comparison has little applicability in real life.

Panel decided to group our parameter listing into the five categories of P for Political, E for Economic, S for Social, H for Public Health, and Svc for Government Services. We do not need to specify the categorizations here (because we later abandoned the entire approach), but they are recorded in our 'blue book' if anyone is interested.

After the 'epitome' panelist retired at 9:11pm, we worked with the 'parameter' panelist to place the five categories into what we felt was a logical source of dependency. This time, we placed Economic on top, followed by Political, Social, Public Health, and Government Services.

Panelist suggested that the most fundamental Economic topics are Growth, Inflation, and Employment. He reported that the goal of full lifetime Employment had been achieved in Japan in exchange for no organized labor activity, resulting in low Inflation, but that the system was breaking down from involvement in the global economy. He also observed that the effect of the Fed's measures to control Inflation were to keep Unemployment at 5% or higher.

He suggested as more helpful to define our Economic goals first, and then build a Political structure to engineer them, but he also noted that Political and Economic are very close, and that we probably could address them in the original order.

We agreed that our goal was to minimize the likelihood of needing to go back and change resolutions in earlier categories.

He suggested that our next step was to consider how important each Parameter is. We were to prioritize them by assigning "importance values" (1 being most important, 5 least) to each Parameter (to give us a better indication of where a revised government organization should be focusing its efforts, given limited resources), and determine an ideal target for each.

We then broke down our Economic category into the eight sub-categories of GS for Government Spending, T for Taxes, WP for Wages & Prices, L for Labor, D for Distribution of Resources, P for Production, C for Commerce, and R for Resources. Allowed that we might re-designate our 'Service' category as a sub-category of P.

Having influenced our strategy so profoundly, he never came to another meeting.

Our previous 'cynical' panelist returned for Session 6 (February 1997), and we added three parameters to our list for Voter Turnout, Classroom Size, and Rate of New Citizenship. We then proceeded to build sub-categories for all the Political and Social parameters, figuring that we should do them all at once since we might determine in the process that an item should be moved to a different main category.

For the Political category, we established the four sub-categories of L for Legislative, J for Judicial, E for Executive, and P for Personal. For the Social category, we established the five sub-categories of F for Family, C for Crime, P for Population, E for Education, and I for Individual.

We finalized the grouping of all 93 parameters into their categories and sub-categories, and adjourned at 8:24pm. Again, we do not need to specify all the groupings here, but they are all in the 'blue book' if needed for historical reference.

We noted for Session 7 (February 1997) that our next step was attempting to prioritize our parameters, but also that if the approach appeared at any time to be unwieldy, we could Move to Reconsider and go back to the 'whole-agenda' approach. We wanted to make double-sure, since we didn't want to need to come back again.

After another new panelist joined us in progress, previous panelist noted that the people in the group need a sense of feasibility to move forward. People have remote controls, cars, and stupid jobs: Will they rally?

Question 1a (continued)

Are we satisfied with the current political/economic/social order?

Formally reconsidered in Session 7. We discussed the Good, Bad, and ? columns which we had compiled in Session 2, and agreed [again?] that we are not satisfied.

Question 1b (continued)

To what extent are we empowered to make changes in the current order?

Reviewed in Session 7. Most of us are only one person each, but some individuals can exert more influence than others.

New panelist was reminded of the lady who came home and told her husband that her ladies' group had discussed the Atomic Bomb, and decided to outlaw it. They were not empowered.

Historically, many changes have occurred through revolution. U.S. Constitution emphasizes individual liberties, as opposed to China. Even the lowest janitor has some power. Initiative process is doable. We are empowered.

Question 2.4 (continued)

What is the best sequence for reviewing these topics?

We readdressed our approach with two new panelists in Session 8 (March 1997), and felt that it was better to define the Role of Government, and other fundamental questions, before comparing Crime Rate with Literacy Rate.

Moderator moved formal Reconsideration of our approach.

One of the new panelists moved to accept our Political system basically as it then was, with minor adjustments as need to perpetuate Civilization, using morals common to the Bible and the Koran. [We later referred to this as the 'band-aid' approach'.] To support his argument, he referred to the League of Nations, but we claimed that it was necessary to look at such questions in a global context.

He claimed strongly that it is important to start from our current system, and not look from the top down, but the other two panelists disagreed. We claimed that we want to answer all questions which other people come up with, including as to one-world government. We asked this panelist whether he saw it as being worthwhile to consider whether to have a one-world government, and he said Yes. Therefore, it was okay to review from the top down. Consensus and Parameter approach bagged.

New panelist in Session 9 (April 1997) agreed that the top-down approach is best.

Question 4

Given that we appear to have Freedom of Will, what are the basic choices that we have as living creatures?

Three main choices identified in our 'black book' of preliminary ideas were to do nothing and starve, kill ourselves directly, or do whatever it takes to continue living. Panelist in Session 9 added that we can go on Welfare and still not starve.

Question 3.5 (continued)

The 'free will' question: To what extent does any individual have the freedom and power to make choices?

We recapped for Session 9 that this had been discussed but not yet resolved. We appear to have Freedom of Will, but a significant school of thought is out there that God either controls most or all events, or at least that Everything is predetermined. Latter proposition was then in dispute, because many people consider (correctly or not) that God is 'all-knowing', which would seem to imply that He [*sic*] knows all

future events. We claim that if God exists (which the Moderator noted at the time as believing, though he explicitly allowed for the logical possibility that he might be mistaken), then it wouldn't be much fun for Him to know Everything that's going to happen in perpetuity. Moderator further expressed belief that God's greatest gift to Man [also *sic*] is Freedom of Will. Need now to look at the two basic possibilities of the existence and non-existence of God, and to see what inferences can be drawn from each, and to see if we can come to the same conclusion on Freedom of Will.

If so, then we can go back to Question 4, and move to discussion of Rights and other topics. If not, then we will see how we feel about accepting Freedom of Will as an unprovable operating assumption.

We defined for the present discussion that 'a god is a transcendent being which has at least a partial capability to control events in our physical universe'. Agreed that it is possible (hypothetically, at least) for a god to exist.

If one or more gods exist, then again it wouldn't be much fun for them to control all events, or for all events to be predetermined; no point. Therefore, if one or more gods exist, then we probably have Freedom of Will.

If no god exists, then we still probably have Freedom of Will. Only possible counterargument is in the notion that just because a certain event happened, that it had to happen. In this case, though, it is difficult to see how the question of Freedom of Will could even be conceived or addressed.

Free Will accepted as an operating assumption, though our actions are constrained by physical and/or psychological limitations. On the other hand, we can still form a desire to leap a tall building in a single bound. However, the basic concept probably is okay, though there may be limits to what can be willed.

Question 4 (continued)

Given that we appear to have Freedom of Will, what are the basic choices that we have as living creatures?

Agreed later in Session 9 with three basic choices listed in the 'black book', though probably okay to allow for different effect of the first choice: Doing nothing may still result in staying alive, if society (or even just an individual or group) decides (for whatever perverted reasons they may happen to have) to try to keep you alive.

Question 5

Do different individuals have the authority to come up with different answers to these choices?

Still not sure as of Session 9 with phrasing or sequencing of these Questions.

Question 2.4 (continued)

What is the best sequence for reviewing these topics?

We confirmed while considering Question 5 in Session 9 that we wanted to try to address our topics in the sequence of Political, Economic, and Social. We agreed

that all Political stuff depends on the Role of Government. We therefore decided to skip ahead in our Outline to Question 17, viz.:

Question 17

Is it necessary to have any kind of government at all in modern society?

Previous discussion in Session 9 had shown that the Role of Government probably should be addressed before introducing Rights, which maybe could be held until the Social Part, but it was now suggested that Rights are Political.

Needed definitions: 'Economic' relates to the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services. 'Political' has to do with the structure and operation of government. [Written into the Introduction during the Third Pass.]

Question 6

What is a 'right'?

We defined in Session 9 that a 'right' is "that which may not be morally/justifiably taken from a person without their consent/permission", but we later changed it.

In any case, the existence of certain rights implies limitations on government. Therefore (we thought), the discussion of rights is a Political discussion.

Question 17 (continued)

Is it necessary to have any kind of government at all in modern society?

We claimed in Session 9 that a certain amount of government is necessary, because Rights need to be enforced. We also agreed with the points listed in our 'black book', as follows: There will always be some people who want the benefits of a quality life without having to put in their fair share of the work to achieve them, and who will therefore try to take wealth which other people have worked for. Also, insofar as it may be necessary for some people to interact in order to raise food or other comforts for the community, we may need some authority to be in place to maximize the fairness and effectiveness of the interaction. Finally, a community of individuals may possibly want to pool their resources to provide certain community services (such as fire protection) which cannot be handled adequately by private-sector organizations.

Question 18

What kind of government do we want?

We agreed in Session 9 with the 'black book', as follows: Answer depends on what kind of quality of life we want to have, but we probably can establish as minimum requirements that government should preserve each individual's rights, and prevent any one individual or group from taking unfair advantage of another.

We discussed in Session 10 (May 1997) a certain suggestion raised earlier (but apparently not previously recorded in our 'blue book'), that Force is a necessary component for Authority, and tentatively agreed to it.

Question 18.5

If a government is set up, and passes a law which an individual thinks is unfair, excessive, or otherwise inappropriate, then should she be allowed to disobey it?

This was introduced as Question 17.5 in Session 10. Feeling at that time was that it was premature to address what happens when an Individual disobeys Government, until we get a better handle on the Role of Government, so renumbered as shown.

Question 18 (continued)

What kind of government do we want?

Panelist in Session 10 suggested that the stated minimum requirements are the only Role of Government, but we observed that others disagree. That being the case, there were five possibilities to consider:

- 1) Panelist was right, and others wrong
- 2) Panelist was wrong, and others right
- 3) All partly right, somehow
- 4) All wrong, with Answer being some third thing
- 5) All okay for different governments

Third possibility is excluded if the two minima from the 'black book' are universally agreed as necessary for Government. Fourth possibility was excluded as disjunctive.

In course of discussion, we also cited several examples of Authority-oriented situations which do not rely on Force, including baseball games, board games, music, theatre/film, Mensa or a similar club, transfer of power to a new U.S. President, British bobbies, some churches, school (if no corporal punishment), parenting (if no corporal punishment), biosphere, space mission, lifeguard, crossing guard or traffic cop, usher, binding arbitration, rock climbing, and unarmed security guard. Force is not necessary when all agree to waive our Authority voluntarily for the good of all.

Question 14

Is it necessary/desirable for people to interact?

Agreed in Session 10 that it is necessary/desirable for people to interact at least somewhat. Added later: Reasons are not only to perpetuate the species, and not only because of the current density of our population, but also because failure to interact with others may tend to result in severe neural dysfunctionalities at the individual level. This principle is important for the topics of both rights and government.

Question 15

Is it possible for each individual to create personally all the comforts that he/she could possibly want?

Probably not.

Question 16

Even if it were possible, though, is it desirable for all people to remain totally isolated?

Ratified 'black book' in Session 10: A few individuals may want to do that, and perhaps they have that right, but most of us actively want to associate with others, in couples, in small groups, and in large groups. We voluntarily associate with others to work together, to play games, to satisfy romantic/sexual needs, to discuss the events of the day, to share the beauty of the world around us, and on and on.

Question 18 (continued)

What kind of government do we want?

Added later in Session 10 as to first possibility listed above: If government is taking on an additional role, then it is forcing someone to do something against their will.

Question 13

What does it mean to injure someone else?

Noted in Session 10 that injury includes causing a negative change in the *status quo*. It does not include leaving the *status quo* as is, as in refraining from helping.

Lower limit was seen to depend on the draft resolution entered in the 'black book' after Question 12, so we felt that we needed to establish that first, as follows:

Question 12

Can an individual do anything that he/she wants?

We proposed a resolution in Session 10, that an individual can do anything that he [*sic*] wants, provided that he does not injure one or more other people against their will, and does not otherwise infringe upon their rights. Panel initially agreed, but acknowledged that others might not agree on a *prima facie* basis. We were not immediately in position to back up the proposal with authority. Agreed as better to establish limitation of individual rights at the point where they are infringing on the rights of others. First phrase of the proposal required addressing Question 11, *viz.*:

Question 11

To what extent does an individual have power over his/her own life?

Panel agreed in Session 10 with the result predicted in the 'black book', that an individual has complete control over his [*sic* again] own life. He has the absolute right to live or die, to choose what methods he will use to survive, and to determine what manner or quality of life he will lead. Qualification added of the non-infringement policy established in Answer 12. However, it was not obvious to us that all others would agree with our proposal, until we addressed earlier questions on Rights, so we decided to go back to Question 6, *viz.*:

Question 6 (continued)

What is a 'right'?

Having made an initial pass at Questions 11-17, we entertained in Session 10 some additional candidates for our working definition of a 'right'.

Previous suggestion was that a 'right' is something which cannot justifiably/morally be taken away from one. Possibly better suggestion was that 'rights' are those conditions or qualities of an individual, without which a society's quality of life degrades grievously, but that felt pretty vague.

Another (pretty good) idea was that 'rights' are those things which should be granted to everyone, such that our aggregate long-term happiness is maximized. Basic idea is that, given the Existence established in A3, most organisms want to maximize the quality of their existence. If a class of organisms is considered to be free to do or have something, then it is for the long-term happiness of the class. That is a 'right'.

Question 6.3

Where do rights come from?

Suggested in Session 10 that rights can't come from government, because they allegedly preceded the existence of government. We therefore considered whether we should reference as 'privileges' any benefits which are decided by government.

I have a right if I belong to a class of organisms which possesses that right, but that still doesn't establish where the right comes from.

One non-author panelist suggested in Session 11 (June 1997) that all rights are natural. Another suggested that all rights come from a social contract. Before resolving, we tried again to define the base expression:

Question 6 (continued)

What is a 'right'?

Panelist in Session 11 asserted that Rights should be defined in terms of Property, which includes your body, your mind, and anything which you make or obtain without using force or fraud. Suggested that Land Rights should take John Locke's definition, that one obtains right to public property who first applies labor to it.

Suggestion: A 'right' is the allowance, by Society or any applicable authority, to take a certain action, or to receive/enjoy a certain benefit. Lack of Consensus

Decided that we would look up definitions in OED, and report back. Meanwhile:

Question 6.3 (continued)

Where do rights come from?

Agreed later in Session 11 that there are two different kinds of Rights, being Natural and those derived from a Social Contract.

Question 6.5

How shall we reference the different kinds of rights for this discussion?

Agreed in Session 11 with use of 'natural' and 'civil'.

Question 7

What rights (if any) are inherent in all human beings, regardless of where or how they choose to live, and which rights are only optionally agreed to by members of a civil society?

Following the suggestions offered in context of Question 6 above, one non-author panelist proposed in Session 11 that 'natural rights' include use of your body, your mind, and any property which you create (or an appropriate/negotiated share of any jointly-created property), and the land to which you apply the first labor. The set of 'civil rights' would include everything else which is negotiated within a given society.

Another non-author panelist suggested that 'natural rights' comprise 'anything you can get away with', but this raised multiple questions.

First panelist suggested that we should have a system where no one is imposing his will on anyone else. Otherwise, it comes down to an arbitrary definition on whose will is appropriate for imposition.

Agreed to adopt tentatively the first panelist's construction

Question 8

Does any right inherent in all human beings (referenced here as a 'natural right') automatically carry with it the right to waive that right, as the freedom to speak may carry with it the right to remain silent?

Panel's initial reaction in Session 11 was that all natural rights carry the right to waive, but further refinement was suggested on reflection. In particular, one may have a responsibility to continue living, particularly if one is a 'brain' or has children.

Question 6.5 (continued)

How shall we reference the different kinds of rights for this discussion?

New panelist suggested in Session 12 (June 1997) that what we call 'civil rights' are sometimes called 'positive rights'. We never adopted the latter expression.

Question 6 (continued)

What is a 'right'?

Allowability is an important element of Right. Justifiability should not be considered.

Agreed in Session 12 to Table until the new panelist brought definitions from other reference works. As it turned out, though, that guy never showed up again either.

Question 10

Which rights require that the individual accept certain responsibilities, as well?

Discussion in Session 13 (June 1997) of Responsibilities, and different scenarios where an Individual is culpable and where not. (One panelist claimed that "Everyone is responsible for the effects of their actions".) Hard to apply, though, in absence of a definition of Right.

Question 6 (continued)

What is a 'right'?

We repeated our working definition for a new panelist in Session 13, that a 'right' is the 'freedom to take a certain action, or to receive/enjoy a certain benefit'.

New panelist proposed that a 'right' is the privilege given to living beings, or classes thereof, which can't/shouldn't be taken away without serious cause.

Previous panelist stressed his original definition, though we had problems with the fact that his was more of a description than a definition.

Moderator decided to look at Westlaw books and *Black's Law Dictionary* [complex OED notes from Session 11 were filed on card in 'black book'], and come back again.

Question 8.1

May/should prisons prevent suicide attempts?

Agreed while preparing to consider Question 8 in Session 13 that prisons may prevent suicide attempts, in order to keep a prisoner alive and working.

Question 8 (continued)

Does any right inherent in all human beings (referenced here as a 'natural' right) automatically carry with it the right to waive that right, as the freedom to speak may carry with it the right to remain silent?

Agreed in Session 13 that a prisoner waives one or more of his rights by virtue of his bad act(s), including the right to commit suicide. Therefore, at least some rights can be waived.

Question 7.9

At this point, we need to talk about the subject of waiving rights. How shall we define 'waive' for the purpose of this discussion?

Definition of 'waive' offered during Session 13 in connection with Question 8, and packaged as a separate Question during the Third Pass. We define 'waive' for our purpose here as 'to elect not to exercise, to refuse'.

Question 9

Does any right agreed to within a civil society (referenced here as a 'civil right') also carry with it the right to waive that right?

We established a 'yes' answer pretty rapidly in Session 13, and applied this basic rule to 'natural rights' for Question 8 as well. In sum, any right carries with it the right to waive that right. For an alternate phrasing, any right may be waived.

Question 7 (continued)

What rights (if any) are inherent in all human beings, regardless of where or how they choose to live, and which rights are only optionally agreed to by members of a civil society?

Question raised in Session 13 as to whether we have a Right to Life. New panelist suggested that all rights are constructed. However, if I am far away from any society, then I can pat my head on the road without fear of restraint or punishment, so I clearly have that 'right' under that circumstance. In this instance, society is not granting me the right, but might seek to take it away if I get too close.

=====

New panelist suggested in Session 13 that discussion of Rights is 'useless and unproductive'. Semantics in general are not bad, if not overdone. We therefore began to reconsider whether discussion of Rights is necessary for Role of Government. Some discussion of the new panelist's 'conflict resolution' system, but nothing new adopted at this time. Tentatively agreed to drop Questions 6-13 into Section III-A, on the theory that the topic of Rights would be better addressed in the context of a Social discussion than a Political one. Having dealt with Questions 14-16 in Session 10, we would attempt to deal directly with Question 17-18, etc.

Previous panelist thought that a discussion of Rights may still be necessary for Role of Government or other Political topics, but was prepared to try it this way, provided that we could call the Questions back when needed.

=====

Question 6 (continued)

What is a 'right'?

Moderator shared in Session 14 (July 1997) his notes from different law books, as recorded in our 'green book' of general research material, as follows:

Dictionary of International and Comparative Law: Human Rights are basic principles which are purported to protect people.

Ballentine's: A 'right' is that to which a person has a just and valid claim, whether it is land, a thing, or a privilege of doing something.

Black's: Several attempts, but nothing really good (involving actions of others); however:

- Natural Rights are those which grow out of the nature of Man and depend upon personality (Life, Liberty, Privacy, Good Reputation), as distinguished from such as are created by Law and depend upon civilized interaction.
- Civil Rights are such as belong to every citizen of the State or Country, or -- in a wider sense -- to all its inhabitants (Property, Marriage, Equal Protection, Freedom of Contract, Trial by Jury), and are not connected with the organization or administration of government. Alternately, they are rights appertaining to a person by virtue of his citizenship in a State or Community.
- Political Rights (Citizenship, Suffrage, Holding Public Office, Petition) consist in the power to participate, directly or indirectly, in the establishment or administration of government.
- Personal Rights (Life, Limb, Body, Health, Reputation, Personal Liberty) are the right to personal security. We noted that three of these had been listed under Natural Rights.

These notes had no effect on our plan, for we re-agreed to defer Q6 to III-A.

Question 18 (continued)

What kind of government do we want?

We reviewed in Session 14 a non-author panelist's two-page document on 'The Responsibility Principle' (filed in the 'black book'). Notes (optional reading) follow:

N1) Paper suggested that individuals and groups could volunteer to be part of a 'conflict resolution network' which would apply a mediation process to all pending issues, but was unclear on how the central coordinating body would be established.

N2) Paper claimed that People should compensate Society. But, what society? At what level? Was not stated in document, but proposal was for a unitary society.

N3) Statement that Society works best when People's actions align with Society's interests seemed rather Communistic.

N4) Agreed that the interpretation of the (N3) statement is that when one is simply acting in his own interests, the overall effect to Society is bad. However, we did not agree on the substance of that claim.

N5) If the Land is rented from the Earth, then why does the community get the \$?

N6) Paragraph on community fund said no elections, but referred to those representatives with the most votes.

N7) As to Co-Ops, if I have enough cash to start a business, but I need laborers who have no capital, then what do I do?

N8) As to Defense, no matter how equitable we make Society, people within and without the system will try to abuse it.

N9) Paper referred to a 'free market police'. Did this mean vigilantes, or what?

N10) If money is loaned to a student, then the student must pay it back [or so we thought at the time] and ultimately bear the cost of his/her education. This is tantamount to private schools.

Here are the Answers provided in Session 14 by the author of the paper in question:

A3) Agreed that it is not effective to try to legislate devotion to Society's interests, as the Soviet Union fell. Therefore, necessary to get People to agree.

A5) Not saying that the Earth is the owner of itself. Agreed that Humans are the owners of the Earth [?!?], and that the system described is similar to Property Tax.

A6) Agreed that chosen representatives are similar to elections. His use of 'elections' was more limited.

A7) Proposal was basically to encourage profit-sharing, okay. A particular business can waive profit-sharing, also okay. System fundamentally depends on voluntary participation, so it is an honor system, but also relies on an enforcement mechanism.

A8) Goes to the main idea that the Collective mindset needs to be changed first, which Moderator claimed would be very difficult.

A9) Expression referred to private security organizations, but we would need to 'police the police' if we have any reason for police at all.

Correction noted that the society proposed in the panelist's paper was not entirely unitary: Can have subsets within the overall society, and can owe liability to multiple levels, if multiple levels are affected. Still, the proposal was not adopted.

Panelist suggested that the transition to model system is best accomplished from the 'bottom up', but we disagreed; lower levels are constrained by existing higher levels.

Question 17 (continued)

Is it necessary to have any kind of government at all in modern society?

Agreed in Session 14 that we want/need some kind of government; that is, one or more people who make decisions for the rest of the community.

Question 18 (continued)

What kind of government do we want?

The 'document' panelist never showed up again, so we used Session 15 (August 1997) to advance this Q with a new panelist. We found that the Q depends largely on whether we want government to be all-inclusive or out of people's business.

Moderator suggested that multiple governments may be necessary/desirable, in order to accommodate different people's perspectives on what kind of society is preferred. We offered the conclusion by the Wednesday group* that we should have multiple governments with multiple roles for people to choose from. Present panelist countered that this suggestion stems from a world-view of Individualism, which was inculcated into all of us in America (he used the word 'biased'), and which may not be the only valid or desirable viewpoint.

[*Third Pass: This refers to the non-Mensa panel which we had working on this same project concurrently. Original idea of the two panels was that they would operate independently, and then we would compare and contrast their results later. If they separately arrived at the same conclusions, then we could feel much more robust about the results. If they ever arrived at different conclusions, then we would need to figure out why. However, our 'blue book' reveals that there were several occasions during the course of the Project (this was only the first) where we mentioned Wednesday results during a Monday meeting. Perhaps it helped to spur thinking and discussion, but it also may have tainted the process. We note each such instance in this report, and we allow the reader to evaluate.]

Panelist suggested that government should reflect the needs of humanity. We responded that perceptions of humanity's needs widely diverge among people in different parts of the world, and even within a given society. We therefore would need either to come up with a list of needs which can apply to everyone, or else to recognize the reality of differing perceptions, and construct our A18 accordingly.

Counter-suggestion was that we may need to consider the needs of clans or countries or the entire 'human species' as part of this Question.

At this point, the non-author panelist began to feel that this discussion probably depends on the earlier discussion of Rights, which was theoretically deferred to Section III-A, but we attempted to continue on current course.

Possibility raised that American government evolved completely from principles of human rights. Countered that some government institutions may arise from the desire of some people that government should perform certain additional functions, such as postal delivery. Countersuggested that all such additional functions may still actually stem from protection of Rights (such as the right to have mail delivered accurately and on time), but we did not achieve consensus on that point, because such 'civil' rights are only optionally agreed to by the civil society in question.

Government might also need to deal with Education, Currency, Securities Regulation, Parks/Libraries, Infrastructure Maintenance, etc., and therefore should not be strictly limited to Rights enforcement.

We read the notes from the Wednesday group on Question 18, including the same conclusion that the Role of Government is based on the needs and desires of the community, which will change over time and over different areas of the world. Panelist liked that, but still questioned the aspect of choice, suggesting that it may yet be helpful to have Government 'guide the masses' rather than respond to them. Humans are 'gregarious', and like to associate in groups, where some people like to lead and others follow, leading to a 'group consciousness', which is not always accurate. Such inaccurate group conclusions may therefore need correction.

If true, then must the correction come from an alternate 'group consciousness'? If so, then how do we know that the alternate is not also faulty? Agreed on these points, and that the Government therefore needs a self-correcting mechanism.

There was much discussion on the suggestion that Government should define its own role, with the tentative conclusion that Government should not be completely self-regulating, for reasons brought out in the Wednesday group's discussion on the candidacy of The State as the owner of Life: Complete self-regulation can lead to abuse of power, as we have seen many times in history. Individuals outside the government should have some amount of influence over the government. On the other hand, if people can do whatever they want, then we might end up with situations as we had already seen in certain American regions, where minorities could get beaten up, immigrants could get arrested, or other bad things.

To balance all these factors, we agreed that the Role of Government probably should be somewhere in between the extremes of totally minimalist and totally pervasive, as both approaches lend themselves to corruption and misleading.

Panelist in Session 16 (September 1997) argued in favor of a 'police state' sufficient to control people who cannot conform to society in an acceptable manner, whether from criminal behavior or just abrasive personality, either of which might inflict mental/psychological injury to others, possibly starting a chain reaction, such as that an angry driver might be as dangerous as a drunk driver. Abrasiveness could be assessed by juries of 100 or so, and failure to pass could be remedied by drugs or other physical means, or by some method of behavior control which increases people's self-awareness. Some of these elements might carry over into our final

model, but the group was generally not persuaded that an all-inclusive 'police state' would always (if ever) be net-beneficial.

Discussion of to what extent the pursuit of selfish motivations is injurious to Society.

Distinction drawn between taking fair advantage and taking unfair advantage. Agreed that taking fair advantage of others or of society by contributing more and earning a greater share of profits is acceptable. Talent and diligence may be important in considering whether the advantage is fair or unfair.

Likely that we should have a system where each individual is entitled to the fruits of his own labor, and where taking what others have earned is bad.

The 'police' panelist suggested at this time that one's voting power should be weighted according to one's value to society, but we agreed that the level of self-awareness of many people is insufficient for them to assess the value of others.

Suggested that Hitler could have been eliminated in advance by assessment of his personality. Countered that a jury of contemporary Germans would have passed him. Moderator noted that eliminating everyone outside of one 'standard deviation' from whatever standard you may establish for anything would mean eliminating lots of people. In addition, we observe that most people are part Good and part Bad.

This exchange made us question again whether we should bring back Questions 6-13 regarding Rights, since the concepts of personal eliminations and forced medications might amount to violations of human rights, but we continued on current course.

If someone is receiving Government benefits, then they should contribute labor back. System where Government is taking assets away from Individuals who contribute and earn is unfair, but some amount of Taxation may yet be needed.

Agreed that it is appropriate for people to work and contribute and earn in their own behalf, that they can even be encouraged to do so, and that pursuit of selfish motivations can be good under some conditions. Therefore, earlier sentiment -- that selfish motivations are always bad -- is not accurate.

Question 13 (continued)

What does it mean to injure someone else?

Correction offered in Session 16: Statement now was that selfishness is bad, where 'selfishness' refers to self-promotion at the expense of others.

Some discussion of the phrase 'at the expense of others', general idea being that taking personal property or slandering or physical injury is bad, but appears to go along the lines of not infringing on people's rights, whatever they are.

Question 18 (continued)

What kind of government do we want?

Consideration given later in Session 16 to the point about forced conforming of other people's behavior and/or personality:

Example of indecent-exposure laws may be helpful: Societal norm was for people to wear clothes, which panel agreed was stupid. Therefore, we can't rely on societal norm or a 'jury of 100' to determine whether people should be eliminated or forcibly medicated. The 'police' panelist agreed, suggesting that we build an "elite council of wise people" to make those calls. Panel countered that an individual might put on best behavior in a hearing before the council, but misbehave the rest of the time.

Suggested that we should rely on innate feelings of right and wrong. Countered that innate ideas diverge too much to be reliable. Rather, we should agree as a society (as planned for Section III-D) as to what behavior is acceptable, educate our kids accordingly, and enforce those decisions as needed with our penal system.

To the extent that we seek to control anyone at all, agreed that behavior should be controlled, not personality. However, psychological testing can go a long way toward detection and prevention of bad behaviors, and should be performed at an early age. Further agreed that extreme corrective measures (lobotomizing, forced medication, incarceration, execution) should not be taken on the basis of testing alone.

Different panel agreed in Session 17 (September 1997) that building juries to judge abrasiveness is not good. Behavior should be monitored, not personality. Variety of personalities is good and should be encouraged. Conformity is dull and boring.

Two of the non-author panelists leaned toward limited government. Third non-author panelist also leaned toward less government, "but, unfortunately, we need a big government." Government keeps us from killing one another, takes care of the needy, sets up schools for problem children, and tries to mix people of differing demographics. Should be bigger than totally minimalist, but smaller than now.

Tendency of government is to get bigger, so it needs to be controlled in order to prevent excessive size. [Confirmed this observation in the Third Pass: As with each generation of soldiers wanting to prove that they're as tough as their ancestors, such that we have not been able to break the cycle of endless war, so too each generation of legislators is reluctant to drop any of the institutions created by their ancestors (why should we substitute our judgment for theirs?), but yet is eager to make its own mark by creating new institutions.] Federated system seems to work well.

Agreed finally that the Wednesday group's Answer 18 carries: Needs and desires of different areas of the World are different, and will change over time. Governments should be responsive to the needs and desires of societies, so we should have different governments, with different roles and scopes, which should be prepared to change over time, according to the changing needs and desires of their societies. Monday panelist suggested further, meeting with consensus, that having multiple governments in place at once allows them to try different ways of doing things at the same time, and to learn from one another, and to copy one another's methods.

Question 19

The 'One World' question: Could we get away with one government for the entire world, or is it necessary to have more than one?

It was established during the latter part of the Q18 discussion in Session 17 that multiple governments should be in place around the World.

From this point, panel agreed to address Questions 20, 26-32, 21-25, then the rest.

Question 20

How shall we determine how many governments we are to have, and over what territory they will have jurisdiction?

Suggested in Session 17 that groups of people can be clearly identified as having similar needs and desires. Introduced following notes from our 'black book':

Easy in the old days, when they had localized clusters of people who already had similar ways of life and lots of space between the clusters. Now, in a world of six billion people [we had compiled this back in the mid-1990's], which has already evolved into a group of nearly two hundred 'nations', not as easy to get what we may want. We see five choices:

- 1) Accept the international borders that we have, and give the remainder of our concentration to what's happening in the U.S. as currently configured;
- 2) Use the current borders as a starting point, and peacefully make whatever adjustments are seen to be fairest and most desirable;
- 3) Scrap all current borders, and start from scratch (even if possible in real life, would need to discuss mechanisms, and allow for real possibility that most people would gravitate toward current set-up, anyway);
- 4) Scrap some or all borders entirely, and allow people to group themselves together according to philosophy and culture, and not require their residences to be geographically contiguous (hopefully avoiding, since would be nice to know that a certain set of rules applies when an individual is on a given point on the globe);
- 5) Combination of bordered and borderless areas.

Agreed that Option 3 is not workable, and leaning toward Option 2. Agreed that the concept of a borderless society is "nowhere", since there is no motivation for people to obey rules of a distant government, and also no basis for forming any rules in the first place. [We reconsidered this position later.]

Further discussion deferred until after Questions 26-32, since an 'international oversight organization' ("i.o.o.") might need to be involved.

Question 26

If multiple sovereign governments are in place around the world, can/should there be an international oversight organization ("i.o.o.") that could set and enforce laws affecting the entire international community?

Panelist in Session 17 suggested, with consensus, that the term 'sovereign' in this Question implies that there can be no higher level of government. Moderator suggested that having an "i.o.o." defeats the purpose of having multiple governments where people can have choice. Also, one reason for having multiple governments is the possibility of corruption, which is also possibly allowed with an i.o.o. Any such organization would therefore need to be extremely limited in power and function, and the mechanism for forming and maintaining the organization should minimize the possibility of corruption.

We would not need an i.o.o. in order to have agreements by treaty for weapons, prisoners of war, etc. However, a non-author panelist thought that an i.o.o. might be able to eliminate war, and the conditions which lead to war.

Leaning toward the possibility of an international congress which makes laws (such as not crossing a border with military force) but which does not enforce them directly, instead authorizing anyone else in the international community to 'take out' any offenders. However, also suggested that the possibility could still allow escalation into world war, if Council C supports Nation A invading Nation B.

Counter-possibility suggested that the remaining international community could only push an invading Nation back to its own borders, with response that there may not be enough losses from that exercise to motivate the invader to desist. It may not be necessary to 'take out' the entire invading Nation, since it may just be a given leader who supports invasion, and not the People. Agreed that judgment should be made on a case-by-case basis as to what steps are necessary to deter further aggression.

Suggested that we should keep military power from the I.O.O. for only a hundred years or so, and then grant it to them. Countered that we probably will not need to grant military power to the I.O.O. once human knowledge and wisdom sufficiently advance.

Agreed that it would be good to have an international body of a discussing/advisory nature, establishing policies for the international community to observe, and authorizing (somehow) the remainder of the community to enact reprisals (of some kind) against an offending nation, said international body to have no enforcement power of its own, since we can't trust it. [We modified this position later.]

Question 27

Should an i.o.o. set laws for the entire world, or just for those nations who choose to be members?

A new panelist suggested in Session 18 (October 1997) that the question of whether an individual or nation may or may not attack another is not a question of Right and Wrong, that Right and Wrong do not apply here, and that questions of Right and Wrong are more applicable in situations of friendship and parenting. Not agreed.

We utilized the exercise of considering what our societal rules would be like if we had only six hundred people in the World instead of six billion, and then seeing what changes might need to be made for a larger population. Panelist suggested under this condition that Council C has an "absolute right" to prevent Nation A from attacking Nation B, since the species would be endangered, in which case perpetuating the species would need to be considered an "absolute right".

At this point, we figured that we almost certainly needed to bring the Rights-related Questions 6-13 back to their original place in the Outline, since it appeared almost impossible to address this series of Questions except in terms of Rights.

Two previous panelists agreed in Session 19 (October 1997) to re-introduce Questions 6-13 into Part I.

Question 6 (continued)

What is a 'right'?

We read the previous candidates in Session 19, as well as the notes from the law dictionaries which we had introduced in Session 14. Suggested and agreed that a 'right' is the 'freedom to take a certain action, or to receive or enjoy a certain benefit'. We may need to expand on what we mean by 'freedom', including what causes people to feel good or bad about a certain action or reprisal being taken.

[Added later: It was also suggested to define 'right' and/or 'morality' in terms of general acceptance, acceptability, or consistence with established norms or basic principles. However, sometimes a civil society agrees that something is a 'right' which actually should not be (slave ownership is one historical example), or agrees that something (such as the power to vote) isn't a 'right' which actually should be.]

Question 6.3 (continued)

Where do rights come from?

Agreed in Session 19 that there are two kinds of rights, those existing independently of any society/government, and those assigned to members of a particular society.

Question 6.5 (continued)

How shall we reference the different kinds of rights for this discussion?

Agreed in Session 19 on use of 'natural' and 'civil'.

Question 6.8

What distinguishes 'fundamental rights' from 'non-fundamental' rights?

Decided in Session 19 to skip this Question for the present.

Question 7 (continued)

What rights (if any) are inherent in all human beings, regardless of where or how they choose to live, and which rights are only optionally agreed to by members of a civil society?

Reviewed previous ideas in Session 19 on natural rights, particularly as to land policy. Some discussion of tribal tradition.

Corporate rights must be only civil. Nations can be thought of as corporations.

Agreed that a natural right may not be abridged by civil authority. This could impact capital punishment, except for our waiver idea.

Nations may not be able to kill their own or other people, under any circumstances. May enable incursion by i.o.o.

Suggested (with a big star in the 'blue book') that every possible natural right has been abridged justifiably in history, which would mean that they were not natural rights to begin with. Therefore possible that there are no natural rights, which would mean that we can't go in and punish nations which kill their own citizens.

Suggested that it may possibly be reasonable for a government to take the life of a citizen, but this goes to Question 11.

[Side discussion of perceived difference between certain gender and racial groups, where the Moderator defended Egalitarianism.]

On further consideration, determined to be appropriate in some cases for any natural right to be abridged by civil authority. We asked several times if we're sure that we want to say this, and they said yes! (Some interesting things should follow.)

Agreed that it logically follows that any right at all is finally subject to adjudication by civil authority. Agreed that it also logically follows that it is not necessary to speak of 'natural rights' as a separate category, since they are all subject to civil authority.

[This result was confirmed in October 1999, but it was overturned in January 2011, as detailed in Section I-F below.]

Question 8 (continued)

Does any right inherent in all human beings (referenced here as a 'natural' right) automatically carry with it the right to waive that right, as the freedom to speak may carry with it the right to remain silent?

Rendered 'n/a', in light of finding in Session 19 that there are no natural rights.

Question 9 (continued)

Does any right agreed to within a civil society (referenced here as a 'civil' right) also carry with it the right to waive that right?

Agreed in Session 19 that any right carries with it the right to waive that right.

Question 10 (continued)

Which rights require that the individual accept certain responsibilities, as well?

Suggested without opposition by non-author panelist in Session 19 that all rights carry the responsibility to respect the rights of others. We read our notes, and no one wanted to say anything further about Responsibilities at this point.

Question 11 (continued)

To what extent does an individual have power over his/her own life?

Original notes in our 'black book' of preliminary ideas suggested that an Individual has the absolute right to live or die, etc. However, discussion as of Session 19 indicated that Society may have some rights beyond those of Individuals.

Moderator asked, if a Society is composed of Individuals, and exists for the benefit of those Individuals, then how can Society's rights/needs exceed those of Individuals? Response was that the needs of many Individuals exceed the rights of one or a few.

What if a group of people decides to '86' an Individual for no real reason? Response was that it is not always okay.

Moderator suggested that these two responses are contradictory.

Where are our ideas of Right and Wrong coming from? One non-author panelist suggested that the 'natural order of things' is for the majority in a community to make calls as to Right and Wrong, and to balance the needs and desires of Society against those of Individuals. Therefore, it would be appropriate for smaller groups to make their own calls, but with the ability to appeal any such decisions to higher authority, which would then be justified in enforcing its will on the smaller groups.

Did we want to suggest any standards of (Right & Wrong) or (balance of needs/desires of Society versus those of Individuals) for higher organizations to consider? Panel suggested that there are too many possibilities to list out, that every situation is different, and that we can't anticipate the conditions which will cause a particular Society to act one way or another. Also suggested that most of this discussion has already been undertaken, with the result being what we have now in the World. Question raised on whether what we have in real life is sufficiently good to accept, with response that no we are not satisfied (as observed in Answer 1a) with the totality of previous thought, and that it probably was worthwhile to see if we could come up with a few standards.

Panelist in Session 20 (November 1997) noted that the strongest people rule; no dispute. He suggested that we probably didn't need to spend a whole lot of time at this point thinking about guiding principles, since most would come out in discussion of other Questions. However, he suggested that Society should have some control over Individuals, and that even a totally free society would eventually develop rules.

Second panelist offered that Society should be able to control Individuals, and that Individuals should be able to do whatever they want if not impacting Society or other Individuals. Response offered that these statements appear to be contradictory, leading to extensive discussion on the relationship of the Individual to Society.

While recognizing that Societies and Governments are going to make rules about what their People may and may not do, we yet decided to provide certain guiding principles to illustrate whether such rules are appropriate or excessive.

Consensus reached that an Individual may do anything that he/she wants, provided that he/she is not injuring other Individuals or Society. For the present, we called this a "conditional natural right". [We later modified our terminology.]

Question 12 (continued)

Can an individual do anything that he/she wants?

Reviewed some discussion points from Answer 11, and carried them forward here. Noted that we would eventually need a more complete argument to justify concept of Individuals having absolute rights, probably taking a lot from the Wednesday group's

discussion, and analogies and thought experiments with having only a few people with no society, gradually moving toward more people and more organization.

Question 13 (continued)

What does it mean to injure someone else?

Panelist made good point in Session 20, that impacting someone else's ability to enjoy rights (whether natural (if there is such a thing) or civil) is an injury. In other words, if I am compromising your ability to do things that you would be able (either physically or legally) to do otherwise, then I am injuring you.

Further discussion on direct and indirect injury: What about setting a bear trap, smoking tobacco, or doing something to someone monetarily? Smoking tobacco does have a direct impact. Monetary effect goes to our note in the 'black book' about defeating someone in Monopoly, extending to any real-life financial contest where the risks are known and fully assumed by all parties; in other words, any monetary transaction (including gambling) is okay as long as all parties consent beforehand, with the important limitation that each party must be an adult of sound mind who can make informed decisions. Setting a bear trap is similar to drunk driving, in that the act is causing immediate and serious danger to the life and safety of others, and so should be considered inappropriate on that basis.

Question 27 (continued)

Should an i.o.o. set laws for the entire world, or just for those nations who choose to be members?

Since the I.O.O. did not have any enforcement power when we reconsidered this Q in Session 20, it couldn't really 'authorize' any nation to take a reprisal action, for there would be no alternative. However, they could still issue a statement condemning the action by non-member Nation A. If other member nations initiated reprisals against Nation A, consistent with the policies and procedures established by the I.O.O., then the I.O.O. would agree not to condemn such reprisal actions, and would condemn attacks by other nations against Nation B for performing a reprisal against Nation A.

Question 28

If there is to be an international oversight organization, then should it have its own geographic territory?

Especially because it was only an advisory body when this Question was first considered in Session 20, no reason was seen for a separate geographic territory. This would be the case even if the I.O.O. had any enforcement power, since the enforcement arm probably would be made up of the militaries of member nations.

Question 29

If there is an i.o.o., then should each nation -- no matter how big or small -- have an equal vote in matters coming before it?

As of Session 20, the U.N. General Assembly gave equal voting power to each member nation, but also contained a Security Council of the stronger nations.

One non-author panelist suggested that each nation should have equal voting power, but another countered that a big nation could buy and control a small island, and declare it a 'nation' in order to stack the vote. First panelist reconsidered her idea.

Voting power could be proportionate to amount of money invested, but then tending toward an environment where 'he with the gold makes the rules', which may not be consistent with actual needs of the international community.

Concurred that this Question is still important even if the I.O.O. is only advisory, since it still could have an impact on what happens in the World. However, the degree to which this Q is important depends on how much real-life influence the I.O.O. has.

How many nations were then becoming independent for the main purpose of securing seats in the U.N.? It was suggested that there probably were a lot in Africa and the Caribbean, but that it probably would be worthwhile to check later.

Considered note in 'black book' that Question 29 depends on Question 25 regarding secession, but thought now that Q25 relates more to what constitutes a legal nation, which relates to Q20 etc., which we had agreed to address after the I.O.O. Questions.

Agreed at this time that a bicameral approach would be good, because some issues will impact what nations may and may not do, whereas other issues will affect larger nations (geographically and by population) more than others.

Question raised on whether representation in a proportional house should be based on numbers of people or numbers of voters, on the theory that the latter approach encourages democracy and wider suffrage. Question also raised on whether proportion should be based on geographic area.

On the geographic idea, one argument is that some issues (like atmospheric pollution, global warming, fishing rights, etc.) affect larger geographic areas more than smaller ones. Suggested that people are masters of the environment, not the other way around, so any impact on environment carries only insofar as it impacts the people who live there. Also suggested that the Brazilian rainforest affects the whole World, so we should not give extra authority to the small number of people who live there. [Neither of these two concepts survived into the final model.]

Considered a voting system giving weight based on people, voters, geography, age, and other factors. Counter-suggested that this would be too detailed for an international advisory body.

Moderator felt that encouraging nations to adopt democracy, or to adjust their health-care policies, or to make any other such decisions, is beyond the scope of the I.O.O., for we do not want to create the perception or reality of favoritism. Besides, if we grant any extra weight to larger voting populations, then nations might grant the franchise to children or others not really qualified.

In further thought on bicameralism, since some issues affect Nations and some affect People, it might be good to have a 'steering committee' to address all issues to one

house or another. If some issues have ramifications in both dimensions, then they can be addressed in both houses.

We also discussed without resolution whether small nations need to have representation in the proportional house, and we considered that such removal might also be appropriate for the U.S. Constitution.

Possibility raised in Session 21 (February 1998) of basing the proportionate house on established military strength, although that may violate the purpose of bringing together nations peacefully. Additional possibility was introduced of using established economic power, but both are not very reliable.

Noted that the idea of a population-based house occurred because the fact that more people will be affected in larger nations implies that they should have greater say in the decision-making process.

May be human nature for a nation with more military power to want to have more influence, but doesn't mean that it should. Agreed that such a set-up might tend to encourage nations to build up militaries in order to get more influence, a situation which we agree would not be good.

If we base voting power on economic influence (even if could be reliably determined, also in doubt), delegates would continually be expelled and added from different nations, because economic power shifts quickly, and this may adversely affect constructive consideration of any questions before the house. It also allows the possibility of embargoes or economic wars on the basis of disagreement in the I.O.O.

Population is relatively stable, and fairly reliable, and there is a logical basis for basing a proportionate house on population. Economic and military powers can already wield global influence without specific voting power in the I.O.O.

Agreed that the population-based house should not involve numbers of voters, for the reasons indicated in Session 20. Agreed that the 'point system' is way out, for impracticality and/or other factors.

Moderator suggested that no nation having a small population should have a delegate in the population-based house. Other panelist agreed, but independently made the same suggestion (hooray!) which came out of the Wednesday group; that is, groups of small nations can band together to select regional delegates.

Question raised of whether each delegate in a house of 100 representing 60 million people means that a nation like America might get rooked by having 10 million left over. Suggested that one delegate could represent part of America and part of Mexico. However, this would necessitate international drawing of district boundaries, leading to the possibility of gerrymandering, or at least an inefficient and inaccurate reflection of actual regional interests. Further, the interests of residents on either side of the Rio Grande (for example) are probably better represented by separate delegates, owing to different cultures and different political/economic systems. The problem of having leftovers is better solved by having more delegates (possibly 200 or 400), so that the principle of Integral Calculus takes over, where the area of a curve is more closely approximated by using more rectangles of smaller width.

Initially suggested that both houses should be involved in every issue, so that all interests are always represented. Otherwise, the other panelist asked, what would be the point of having multiple houses? [We modified that position later on.]

Question 30

If there is an i.o.o., then how should its leaders be chosen?

It was suggested in Session 21 that each house could select its own leadership, but another panelist noted this may represent a more Western view. Counter-question: How else would the leadership of each be determined?

Basing leadership designation on seniority is bad, since it would encourage nations to leave delegates in place until they are old and senile.

Rotational approach might be better, since it avoids the political hassles of campaigning.

Random selection of leaders is probably not good for an international body, even if it is only advisory.

Question 26 (continued)

If multiple sovereign governments are in place around the world, can/should there be an international oversight organization ("i.o.o.") that could set and enforce laws affecting the entire international community?

Some discussion in Session 21 of whether the I.O.O. should really be advisory only, leaning toward confirmation of previous position that yes it should.

Question 29.5

If there is an i.o.o., then how should its delegates be chosen?

Question was raised during consideration of Question 30 in Session 21. Idea was offered that we should establish certain minimum requirements for each delegate. Response was accepted that each nation would be motivated to select the most qualified person, so we don't need specific requirements.

Question 30 (continued)

If there is an i.o.o., then how should its leaders be chosen?

Overall leadership of any deliberative assembly (especially the I.O.O.) involves more substantive decision-making than simply ruling on points of order. We therefore should want only reliable, knowledgeable, and trustworthy people making those decisions. How is this determined, if not by election? Consensus approach probably would be bad, both for this issue and generally, because there are so many people, often with partisan agendas: You will have some dissension. On the other hand, voting implies an endorsement for one type of political system over others, which we don't necessarily want to do.

Final tentative consensus in Session 21 on voting for the overall leadership.

Question 29 (continued)

If there is an i.o.o., then should each nation -- no matter how big or small -- have an equal vote in matters coming before it?

Given that the population-based house of the I.O.O. will have Nations which are too small to have their own delegates band together to select Regional delegates, and assuming 200 delegates, each representing 30 million people, we recorded the following suggested breakdown in our 'green book' between Sessions:

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Afghanistan | 1 | Ecuador | Peru | Libya | N Africa | Sao T. & P. | C Africa |
| Albania | Balkans | Egypt | 2 | Liechten. | C Europe | Sau. Arabia | Arabia |
| Algeria | 1 | El Salvador | C America | Lithuania | Baltic States | Senegal | W Africa |
| Andorra | Iberia | Eq. Guinea | C Africa | Luxemb. | BeNeLux | Seychelles | Ethiopia |
| Angola | 1 | Estonia | Baltic States | Macedonia | Balkans | Sierra Leone | Guinea |
| Antig./Bar. | Caribbean | Ethiopia | 2 | Madagas. | Mozambique | Singapore | Indonesia |
| Argentina | Patagonia | Fiji | Australia | Malawi | Angola | Slovak Rep. | C Europe |
| Armenia | Caspian Sea | Finland | Scandinavia | Malaysia | Indonesia | Slovenia | Yugoslavia |
| Australia | 1 | France | 2 | Maldives | Sri Lanka | Solom. Isl. | Australia |
| Austria | C Europe | Gabon | C Africa | Mali | W Africa | Somalia | Ethiopia |
| Azerbaijan | Caspian Sea | Gambia | W Africa | Malta | Italy | South Africa | 2 |
| Bahamas | Caribbean | Georgia | Caspian Sea | Marshall Isl. | Indonesia | Spain | Iberia |
| Bahrain | Persian Gulf | Germany | 3 | Mauritania | W Africa | Sri Lanka | 1 |
| Bangladesh | 4 | Ghana | 1 | Mauritius | Mozambique | Sudan | 1 |
| Barbados | Caribbean | Greece | Balkans | Mexico | 4 | Suriname | Venezuela |
| Belarus | Baltic States | Greenland | Scandinavia | Micronesia | Indonesia | Swaziland | S Africa |
| Belgium | BeNeLux | Grenada | Caribbean | Moldova | Ukraine | Sweden | Scandinavia |
| Belize | C America | Guatemala | C America | Monaco | France | Switzerland | C Europe |
| Benin | Ghana | Guinea | 1 | Mongolia | Russia | Syria | Levant |
| Bhutan | China | Guin.-Bissau | Guinea | Morocco | 1 | Taiwan | 1 |
| Bolivia | Brazil | Guyana | Venezuela | Mozambique | 1 | Tajikistan | Uzbekistan |
| Bos./Herz. | Yugoslavia | Haiti | Caribbean | Namibia | S Africa | Tanzania | 1 |
| Botswana | S Africa | Honduras | C America | Nauru | Australia | Thailand | 2 |
| Brazil | 6 | Hong Kong | China | Nepal | China | Togo | Ghana |
| Brunei | Indonesia | Hungary | Romania | Netherlands | BeNeLux | Tonga | Australia |
| Bulgaria | Balkans | Iceland | Scandinavia | New Zeal. | Australia | Trin./Tob. | Venezuela |
| Burk. Faso | W Africa | India | 32 | Nicaragua | C America | Tunisia | N Africa |
| Burma | 2 | Indonesia | 8 | Niger | N Africa | Turkey | 2 |
| Burundi | C Africa | Iran | Persian Gulf | Nigeria | 5 | Turkmen. | Caspian Sea |
| Cambodia | Indochina | Iraq | Persian Gulf | North Cyprus | Levant | Tuvalu | Australia |
| Cameroon | Nigeria | Ireland | British Isles | Norway | Scandinavia | Uganda | 1 |
| Canada | 1 | Israel | Levant | Occ. Isr. Ar. | Levant | Ukraine | 2 |
| Cape Verde | W Africa | Italy | 2 | Oman | Arabia | U. Arab E. | Persian Gulf |
| C. Afr. Rep. | C Africa | Ivory Coast | Guinea | Pakistan | 4 | U. Kingd. | British Isles |
| Chad | N Africa | Jamaica | Caribbean | Panama | C America | United States | 9 |
| Chile | Patagonia | Japan | 6 | Papua N.G. | Indonesia | Uruguay | Brazil |
| China | 45 | Jordan | Levant | Paraguay | Patagonia | Uzbekistan | 1 |
| Colombia | 1 | Kazakhstan | Russia | Peru | 1 | Vanuatu | Australia |
| Comoros | Mozambique | Kenya | 1 | Philippines | 2 | Vatican City | Italy |
| Congo | C Africa | Kiribati | Indonesia | Poland | Baltic States | Venezuela | 1 |
| Costa Rica | C America | Korea N | China | Portugal | Iberia | Vietnam | Indochina |
| Croatia | Yugoslavia | Korea S | Japan | Qatar | Persian Gulf | W Sahara | W Africa |
| Cuba | Caribbean | Kuwait | Persian Gulf | Romania | 1 | W Samoa | Australia |
| Cyprus | Levant | Kyrgyzstan | Uzbekistan | Russia | 6 | Yemen | Arabia |
| Czech Rep. | C Europe | Laos | Indochina | Rwanda | Uganda | Yugoslavia | 1 |
| Denmark | Scandinavia | Latvia | Baltic States | St. Ki. & Ne. | Caribbean | Zaire | C Africa |
| Djibouti | Ethiopia | Lebanon | Levant | St. Lucia | Caribbean | Zambia | Angola |
| Dominica | Caribbean | Lesotho | S Africa | St. Vi. & G. | Caribbean | Zimbabwe | S Africa |
| Dom. Rep. | Caribbean | Liberia | Guinea | San Marino | Italy | | |

No objection stated in Session 22 (March 1998) to this distribution of delegates for the population-based house. [We still redid everything later.]

Question 31

If there is an i.o.o., then how should its enforcing arm be staffed?

Originally considered 'n/a', because our original vision of i.o.o. was as an advisory body only, with no real enforcement power. [We modified this position later.]

Question 32.0

If specific border disputes arise, then it is better for the affected nations to deal with it themselves, or to refer to the I.O.O.?

If the I.O.O. is only advisory, then it should simply take a position on any matters coming before it. But, if two nations go to war over a border dispute, is that okay?

In considering whether to reconsider the advisory nature of the body, a non-author panelist in Session 22 painted a scenario of three schoolboys, two of whom find a candy bar and dispute its ownership, the third trying either to mediate the issue or to force them not to fight, idea being that it is probably better to allow people to set their own destinies. [We would modify this position later.]

Question came up of whether the I.O.O. could exclude nations that they didn't like; added to Outline at this time.

Question 27.5

Should the I.O.O. have the power to exclude nations from membership?

While it appears to be contrary to the purpose of the I.O.O. to exclude nations that it doesn't like, yet it might be a good lever to lay on nations to get them to do stuff, as long as the body is advisory only. However, this approach may encourage other nations to ally themselves together, and set up a competing i.o.o., or Axis and Allies, or NATO/Warsaw Pact. Probably better to have one forum that anybody could go to.

Non-author panelist in Session 22 suggested that the impulse to War is inbred in us, which may all go to Question 32.0 initiated above.

If the I.O.O. leadership is sincere, then they should have no motivation to exclude anyone. However, just in case a leadership gets selected which is goofy or corrupt or something, there probably should be a bylaw to prohibit exclusion, though we can still have a recognition procedure for alleged new nations. [Modified later.]

Question 32.0 (continued)

If specific border disputes arise, then it is better for the affected nations to deal with it themselves, or to refer to the I.O.O.?

More specifically, if two nations agree to binding arbitration, then what if one nation breaks the ruling? Could be a problem if we have no enforcement power anywhere at the Global level. Therefore, there could be no 'binding arbitration' in the originally-proposed environment of severely-limited Global authority.

In the originally-proposed environment, conflicts between individual Nations could still affect others, so any delegate should be able to make a motion to take a position on any conflict. Group can deny the motion if it doesn't want to take a position.

Agreed that I.O.O. should basically stay out of small squabbles, and save themselves for bigger-ticket items, since otherwise we all might get tired of the I.O.O. This way, more weight will attach to rare decisions, making each decision more of an event.

Question 32.1

Do we want to discuss specific potential policies, and/or specific remedies that the I.O.O. would allow?

Agreed in Session 22 not to bother with specific issues at that time.

Question 32.2

Is it appropriate for the I.O.O. or individual nations to punish nations for crossing borders with military force, or should they stop at pushing aggressors behind their own borders?

Even though the I.O.O. was considered only advisory in our model as of Session 22, we still did not want individual nations enacting unilateral reprisals all over the place, since they might initiate for petty causes, like a kid throwing a rock. Therefore, our model at that time held for no unilateral police action.

Question 32.3

Should the I.O.O. get involved in a nation's alleged violation of human rights?

If the I.O.O. is only advisory, as it was in our model as of Session 22, then they can go ahead and make a statement, we guess. Why not?

Question 28.2

If the I.O.O. does not have its own geographic territory, then do we want to designate where it should be?

We considered rotating locations, with the feeling in Session 22 that it might be confusing, and that the I.O.O. would get more respect with one location, in that a unified image helps make any organization stronger. Besides, periodic movements could be a logistical nightmare (Moderator recalled the headache involved when one of his old employers merely moved across the street), so probably not rotating. Suggested that the U.S. might be good for reasons of technical support, but countered (even in 1998) that probably could also get support in other nations.

Whatever considerations or needs they have, there probably are many locations that could accommodate them, so we did not see the need to decide at that time.

[We did make some specific recommendations on headquarters locations when we submitted to the Swedish competition on global governance in 2017.]

Question 32.4

How should the I.O.O. be funded?

Moderator suggested in Session 22 that member nations provide their shares of funding in proportion to population. Another panelist suggested to base funding on Gross National Product (GNP), but that is hard to audit at the global level, and may provide a counter-incentive to produce.

A nation which is short of funding could always (or usually) get other nations to lend them money in order to 'stay in the game'. [Rethought later.]

Consensus achieved on changing the math to base funding on total number of delegates, since they are using up office space and donuts. If a nation has a fractional delegate, then its portion of the subsidy can be based on population.

Question 32.5

Should i.o.o. sessions be public?

Suggested in Session 22 that public viewing might allow freer discussion. Countered that closed-door sessions can still occasionally happen, and that private discussions would still take place, as with any deliberative assembly, especially the political ones.

Most of us (it was felt at the time) would trust the results from a 'black box', without knowing all the pros and cons of each argument.

Agreed to make formal debates and voting public.

Question 21

Does an individual need to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual may be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

[This was by far the most complex Question that the Answers to Everything SIG ever treated. It was first taken up in Session 23 (April 1998), after we had completed our first pass through the I.O.O.-related questions, and ended up taking 10 months and 14 meetings to finish. We would later reconsider the Question formally no less than three times, upholding our original results each time. We then overturned our decision during the Second Pass.]

Asked initially if not having citizens, then what is the purpose of having nations? We addressed the matter at this time, and packaged it as a separate Question later, viz.:

Question 17.5

What is the purpose of having nations?

We defined in Session 23 that Nations are places where certain laws apply to all persons, although we also considered that a Nation could be defined as a 'club' for people with certain cultural or ethnic commonalities.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual need to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

Reference was made in Session 23 to a recent Proposition 107 on the California ballot, relating to denial of State services (Health, Education, etc.) to illegal aliens, on the grounds that they allegedly cost too much.

What if the illegal aliens work and pay taxes? Are they supporting the system? Possibility raised of national sales tax, which we initially thought could require contributions from everyone. [Modified later.] Another panelist asserted that the Income Tax was created to keep the social classes separate.

Citizenship is tantamount to designating a sub-class within a society. Is this good?

Citizenship may involve voting privilege, education, health care, where you can live without a permit, and welfare.

What would happen if we opened all borders around the world? Panelist suggested that everyone would come to America. If this would drain our limited resources unduly, then we possibly could annex additional territory from current Mexico.

Special protection abroad is one benefit to Citizenship.

Who gets to make calls as to the establishment and enforcement of laws if we do not have Citizenship? Alternate possibilities considered.

Possible downside to Citizenship is that it tends to foster an atmosphere of contention among individuals of different Nations.

Even if we have a Citizenship model for purposes of distributing limited resources, some resources and services still would be used by non-citizens, such as freeways, police/fire protection, national defense, and emergency medical care. Is it totally fair toward citizens to have non-citizens benefitting from citizen resources? If not, then it may be better to require participation by all persons benefitting from services. Also, it may be unfair toward non-citizens to deny them certain benefits, on basis of being born in the wrong country or something.

Agreed that we would need to make arrangements for all functions of Citizenship if we eliminate it.

Possible benefit of Citizenship is belonging to a group.

Possible point against simply annexing part of Mexico might be that the land is not as desirable/livable as current America, but we felt that a lot of it could be fixed.

So far, we had identified one potential upside and three potential downsides to Citizenship. Any more? Given that we can discharge the functions of Citizenship without actually having Citizenship, and given possibility of managing our existing limited resources, possibly through annexation, there appeared to be none.

However, a couple of new panelists joined us for Session 24 (May 1998), and offered fresh insights.

One pointed out that if you have Nations, then a Nation has to mean something, and everyone in it has to be a member of the Nation.

Citizenship was seen to mean less in 1998 than before, since we were by then more of a 'global village', with widespread travel and communication and multinational corporations. Nevertheless, panelist felt that it is important to belong to something small, something that you can 'touch and feel'. On the other hand, one can get a sense of belonging to a Nation without Citizenship, just as one belongs to a particular City and County and State without a separate Citizenship in each.

Second non-author panelist cited multiple procedural problems with maintaining visas, and agreed that abolishing Citizenship would make life easier.

First panelist questioned our ability to institute abolition of Citizenship worldwide, if we have multiple sovereign Nations. We responded that we probably could still do it, but that in any case we can do it within our model.

How would we deal with voting power without Citizenship? We could do it with either a residency requirement or an education requirement, or both.

Question 418

Of these basic types, which is the fairest method of taxation, or is it appropriate for more than one type to be levied at once by a single jurisdiction?

Discussion of taxation initiated in Session 24 while the panel was considering Question 21 on Citizenship: Panelist suggested that a national sales tax would be 'regressive', by which is meant that every dollar of income earned by a poor person would be taxable. We responded that overall tax liability would be less in a sales-tax environment, because rich people would pay more of their own fair share. Tentative agreement if the taxed items were discretionary, and excluded Rent, Transportation, basic Food, and other necessities. (To be evaluated in Section II-C.)

Additional reason for Sales Tax as opposed to Income Tax is that it discourages Sales, not Income, to conserve resources.

Question 313.6

What kind of policy shall we establish as to extradition between jurisdictions at various levels, including internationally?

Discussion of refugees initiated in Session 24 while the panel was considering Question 21 on Citizenship: Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Japan can operate with high efficiency because they have low geographic area. Panelist protested that Mexico might not want to let the U.S. have any of their land, but Moderator claimed that it might actually be advantageous to them, or else could be worked out peacefully.

Question 220

Shall there be one or more languages with which every resident/citizen of a given nation shall be expected to have some working familiarity?

While the panel was considering Question 21 on Citizenship during Session 24, non-author panelist suggested that should have one language [within a given country] in the absence of Citizenship. No argument offered. [We reevaluated later.]

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual needs to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual may be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

Second non-author panelist agreed at this point of the discussion that Citizenship is not necessary, but first panelist was still fuzzy. First panelist noted that she would have no problem with No Citizenship if we had no Nation-States, but believed that the two institutions are tied.

She further suggested that elimination of Citizenship would make things much more fluid, but we countered that this might be a good thing. She asserted that the border of a Nation-State implies Citizenship, but we countered that borders can imply only what laws are in effect.

How do laws get established? By people who have lived in an area for a certain number of years, and have demonstrated a commitment to make good decisions for the community.

Population densities will find their own levels, like liquid in a fixed container.

First panelist suggested that if one nation has a better system, then we might see a 'seesaw' effect of large population migrations to more popular nations without a Citizenship requirement. We countered that a ruler who sees many people leaving might try to fix his bad nation so that some would come back, resulting in fewer areas of excessive population density.

Residents banding together in a given country could decide to force people to leave, or to bar people from entering, or to keep people from leaving.

First panelist offered that it's just like Marriage: Do you really need a certificate?

She finally stated that she had no strong objection to dropping Citizenship, but wanted to wait until the next Session to mull it over and confirm. However, she had no objection if a future Session decided it in her absence.

She did appear at Session 25 (May 1998), and we discussed a long letter sent during the week on Citizenship. Moderator suggested that a No Citizenship environment is similar to the existing environment of being able to move around different States with minimal hassle. Panelist would like for a No Citizenship environment to work, but didn't think that it would. She was afraid that the standard of living might go down, but this was not clearly founded. She acknowledged that heavily-guarded borders tend to contribute toward mistrust and non-cooperation.

The two recent panelists appeared again in Session 26 (June 1998), and we brainstormed 6 possible reasons to keep the institution of Citizenship:

- L1) consistent with defined borders
- L2) people are used to it
- L3) sense of belonging
- L4) relief of overcrowding in certain areas
- L5) better governmental control from reduced threat of migration
- L6) racial integrity

We also came up with 7 possible reasons to eliminate the institution:

- R1) creates adversarial environment
- R2) individual freedom of choice
- R3) reduction of procedures and paperwork
- R4) unfair to citizens by giving some of their resources and services to non-citizens
- R5) unfair to non-citizens by locking them out of certain resources and services
- R6) elimination would encourage people to migrate to the most popular nations, so that we could see what works
- R7) reduction of expense from what was previously needed for border guards, passport/visa officials, etc.

Noted that if we could invalidate all the items in one column, then the conclusion should be for the other column.

Noted that the sequence of looking at the reasons probably doesn't matter much.

First panelist suggested looking first at what reasons in both columns related to one another. We started with L4 and R6.

Moderator painted following scenario: Assume two countries, one Good and one Bad. In their present condition (Stage 1) with the institution of Citizenship, they are of approximately-equal size, and their population densities are approximately equal. If we eliminate the institution of Citizenship (Stage 2), then a mass migration would occur from the Bad country to the Good, leaving one country overcrowded and the other near-empty. At that point (Stage 3), there are two possibilities for what would happen next; either the Bad country would Reform and the population densities would even out again, or else the two countries would negotiate a Sale of enough territory to cover the migrants and restore the population densities to equilibrium.

Second panelist brought example of Vietnamese refugees causing overcrowding in Hong Kong.

Moderator suggested that California and other jurisdictions wanted to retain people; first panelist protested that she was concerned about corporations leaving, but we suggested that concern for corporations stemmed from concern for people staying and generating tax revenue; if people are leaving a 'ghost town', then there was much waste of time, effort, and resources.

First panelist suggested being more proactive than reactive, but agreed that this may mean that we would be favoring more governmental regulation and control, and less free-market economy.

Question 440

But, if an employer is allowed to hire non-citizens, then won't many employers be motivated to hire aliens who are not subject to minimum-wage restrictions, and won't this tend to divert jobs and resources away from Americans?

While we were considering Question 21 on Citizenship during Session 26, non-author panelist noted that Hong Kong did not then have a minimum wage. Moderator responded, "No wonder they're doing so well!"

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual need to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

As to the Hong Kong issue raised above, why didn't they get more territory following the Vietnamese immigration? How would they do it?? Buy it. From where? Vietnam. But, far away! There have been many instances in history where one nation holds a remote colony, and where territory may be peacefully purchased.

Second panelist asked: "Why should Hong Kong set up a colony elsewhere?" Noted that many refugees had been 'sent back' after some years.

First panelist suggested that when a country reaches a saturation point where it needs to discharge people to another country, it is reactive (which Moderator again claimed may be good), and it also creates an environmental danger by wearing away topsoil. Moderator objected, but panelist defended that they would need to cover arable land in order to build housing and other support structures.

Second panelist thought that people in a saturated country would suffer for many years before the population would level out. Also, an influx of people from a different culture can cause a clash.

Discussion of problems with Overpopulation, most not applying to a temporary shift.

First panelist suggested that many people are chained to urban areas, but agreed that computer technology would fix it.

Discussion turned toward Sense of Belonging (L3), but we countered with the example of States in the U.S., which have belonging without separate Citizenship.

New panelist in Session 27 (June 1998) added:

L7) participation in government

We evaluated that L2 and L3 go together, since it is in human nature to be jingoistic.

We also added:

L8) social consistency

L6: Racial identification is a way of cultural identification, even though people have been living in the same culture for generations. Agreed that the higher proportion of black criminals is less a result of their being black, and more a result of victimization and the culture of the white man. We defined 'stereotype' in this context as whether my interaction with someone else is based on skin color.

Panelist asked what if 10 cops in a row hassled me: Would I be distrustful of the 11th? He liked my answer that I will not wait for the 11th cop to hassle me; I will first fix whatever the problem is. By extension, I will not assume that the 11th black (or whoever) will be the same as the others, I will address the issue and move on, meaning -- if necessary, and it probably is -- to fix Race Relations permanently.

Question 663

To what extent -- if any -- should any of the foregoing apply differently to different races, ethnic groups, religions, gender identities, sexual preferences, hand preferences, political persuasions, areas of the country, or any other groups?

While we treated Q21 on Citizenship in Session 27, Moderator noted his belief that there is no logical justification for interacting based on race; it is injurious to all parties, since the individual whom I am dissing may be able to help me out.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual need to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

L8: We put forward in Session 27 that society was becoming truly global, and that we benefit sooner and more when we get over our desire to build and maintain fences and walls among ourselves. Panelist pointed out that multiple groups like to maintain ties to their cultural base as a means of acquiring political power; sometimes good, sometimes bad, but generally fragmenting society. We added that whether the cause is good or bad, such banding together is bad. Generally agreed.

L6: Moderator claimed that insofar as Citizenship tends to foster racial integrity (which assertion he seriously disputed), it is bad. Agreed to X it. Genetic inbreeding (such as we heard had happened in West Virginia) is another good reason for not maintaining racial integrity.

L4: We talked about the points raised in previous Sessions, including the scenario with multiple stages of population shifting, raising the example of the populations of West and East Germany shifting after reform, and that of America purchasing territory from Mexico. Panelist pointed out that 'Stage 2' would result in food shortages and other problems; true, but hopefully it would be only short-term.

Noted in discussion that Citizenship is not used to exclude people as much as make it harder for them to establish residency, presumably motivating some of them to stay home. Panelist offered that if Citizenship is used as a 'throttling mechanism', then he would be reluctant to get rid of it.

What if strangers pitch tents on my front lawn? Shouldn't be a problem if we require immigrants to buy or rent existing land. If it is unavailable, then they'll go back, or be taken to an orientation/help center, which concept we discussed briefly at this time. Panelist wanted to have some mechanism to control in-flow and out-flow; we claimed that out-flow is curtailed by reforming government or agriculture or whatever to motivate some people to stay, and that availability of housing and jobs and other resources will act as a natural filter of immigration to a manageable level.

Considered further in Session 28 (September 1998), with two new panelists:

L3: First new panelist noted that, even if one is born somewhere else, one would have developed a sense of affinity here if moved here while young.

L4: Second new panelist suggested that increased immigration would be a problem, but acknowledged that it might be okay if production increases with the higher number of consumers. First panelist also hinted that the extent of the problem might depend on the ratio of professional immigrants to laborers.

L5: We looked with new panelists at the example of people leaving East Germany.

R5: First panelist reported that a non-citizen cannot buy property in Mexico without going through lots of hassles, including paying fees to a lawyer.

R7: First panelist noted that if we get rid of border guards then drug traffic would go up. This led to discussion of drug use.

Question 624

To what extent shall actual drugs be legalized?

Consideration of Q21 on Citizenship during Session 28 led to discussion of drug use in general, with sympathy toward the idea that Answer 12 (an individual may do whatever he/she wants if not injuring or threatening others, reflected as R2 in the Q21 analysis) can apply to drug use, though we agreed that drugs should continue to be kept out of the hands of kids, which would be easier for police to enforce if they're not trying to arrest adult users and those who sell to adults. Further, drug dealers have less motivation to sell to kids if legally able to sell to adults.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual need to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

If legalizing drugs (as suggested in preliminary A624), then no problem for drug dealers to come across the border, and no problem to remove the Border Patrol.

We also considered that the Border Patrol can generally help to keep criminals out, but we were unclear in Session 28 as to how much of a difference it really makes, since we already had so many domestic criminals to deal with.

However, seems to be the same idea as having a registered sex offender outside of a given community. Moderator suggested that they wouldn't let me out on the street

if they thought that I was still a potential problem, but second new panelist noted that they make mistakes sometimes. However again, Moderator noted that the penal system could give more attention to such people if they were able to devote attention formerly given to "non-criminals". Second new panelist perceived this presentation as being "very logical". First new panelist made sad note that "we should do something about the judges."

Question 208

Should all immigration be considered legal?

While panel was considering Question 21 on Citizenship during Session 28, first new panelist suggested that we still should consider having all immigrants go through a screening process upon entry, for disease as well as for criminal records. Possible compromise solution. [Of course, this was before the big terrorist attacks of 2001, and also before the big detention-center issues began hitting the news in 2019.]

Moderator asked why we couldn't have open borders all over, just like the U.S.-Canadian border: Second new panelist suggested interesting possibility of the U.S. not seeing Canadian immigration, disease, or criminal population as being a problem.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual needs to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual may be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

Moderator asked general Q: If we did have checkpoints, then would we still need the institution of Citizenship? Second new panelist said yes, but couldn't say why.

We discussed the population-density figures from the Wednesday group*. [*We continued to be very concerned in the Third Pass as to the frequency of cross-pollination occurring between two groups which were intended to operate independently, but there's not much that we can do about it now, other than faithfully report it for reader evaluation.] Agreed in principle that density may smooth out more than current if people are allowed to relocate freely.

Question 208 (continued)

Should all immigration be considered legal?

We also agreed in Session 28 with the idea that countries with many emigrants are motivated to fix their systems in order to get people to return, and that such emigrants will be motivated to repatriate, both because they like their original country and because they don't want to live in an overcrowded country.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual needs to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual may be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

First new panelist in Session 28 noted that certain sensitive jobs involving national security may need citizens or people born in this country. On further discussion,

though, we determined that it may not really be necessary, using the example of Japanese soldiers fighting for the U.S. during World War II.

Some discussion of how we would engineer elimination of the institution of Citizenship, going to some of the I.O.O. decisions. Also brought up the anarchy Question, with our Answer.

In general, it seemed to be that multiple apparent reasons for keeping Citizenship could be rendered 'not applicable', while multiple solid reasons exist for dropping it.

We agreed to consider further until next Session, and then see how we felt.

Those two panelists never came again, so we considered the matter further in Session 29 (September 1998) with another new panelist.

That new panelist suggested that chaos may result if people can come over the border freely.

Noted in 'blue book' that participation in government makes one a citizen, especially registering to vote, but this seemed flimsy as of the Third Pass.

Panelist made point that an individual may choose to be a non-citizen, but then may call upon Society to provide emergency medical care. Therefore, an individual with the expectation of Society taking care of him should probably expect to make a contribution.

Question 418 (continued)

Of these basic types, which is the fairest method of taxation, or is it appropriate for more than one type to be levied at once by a single jurisdiction?

Discussed the national sales tax again in Session 29 within the context of Question 21 on Citizenship, with further sympathy to do that.

Question 180.1

Does any government have the right to withhold water, or is water a 'natural right' for anyone born on the planet?

Question came up in Session 29, while we considered Question 21 on Citizenship. Pending any questions which we may have on Utilities, tentative agreement reached that everybody should be entitled to a minimum share of water, any additional use to be subject to surcharge. Referenced as Question 180.1 during the Third Pass.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual need to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

Moderator mentioned to open Session 30 (October 1998) a seminar which he had attended that day, where multiple people were looking at the concept of Citizenship.

R1: Yet another new panelist made good point that we probably would continue to have an adversarial environment in the absence of Citizenship, though possibly not as much. R1 X'd out.

R2: Panelist considered that other countries might exclude immigration for other reasons, but the argument would be invalidated if an international law were passed.

R4: Wouldn't the problem be made worse if we get rid of Citizenship, since non-Americans could get even more stuff? No, because we probably would be going to a sales-tax environment, so that everyone contributes fair share, and would deserve any benefits.

L4: Potential reasons for checking* [*This meant a good thing, where we put a check mark next to the item on our whiteboard, indicating that we had reviewed and evaluated it, and found it to be a valid reason which should be kept and actively considered.] are that multiple countries like India and China could lose up to half their population and not sweat it, and that governments of countries like Mexico may not be losing that many people now, but most surely are aware of people's desire to leave, so probably would not be that much difference. Some people might like having fewer people spread out over a large area. Countries like India and China, however, would still be densely populated, and so could yet benefit from having fewer people, who could still be serviced better than currently. We cited figures from the Wednesday group's Session 54, so that people coming here would yet smooth out the worldwide population density. Still a little fuzzy as to the degrees of short-term and long-term impact.

L7: Agreed that people can participate in government to the extent desired in the absence of Citizenship, so X'd out.

L8: Discussed social consistency, and agreed that our society would be impacted at least somewhat by immigration, but that it had been a pattern of American history for 300 years, and that we benefit from diverse cultures. Still not sure, though, whether that was sufficient grounds to X the item.

L3: Moderator mentioned that a sense of belonging would still apply regardless of whether we have Citizenship; panelist responded that -- while that's largely true -- there may be a minority (of indeterminate size) for whom that would not apply. Further, those immigrants who go through the hassles of becoming citizens feel a much greater sense of belonging once they achieve it, which is probably good.

Moderator asked whether this latest new panelist wanted to keep the institution of Citizenship. He responded that he probably would, main reason being that he was used to it [our L2], and that results uneducatable [not sure in Third Pass what that meant, but moving on]; could create more harm than good to drop it, but maybe the other way around, so not sure. Also noted that dropping it probably would be good for the World overall, because of population smoothing out as people migrate to the U.S. and other Western countries, but potentially bad for said Western countries.

Question from the Moderator: Is it bad for such countries, since they theoretically have more laborers and consumers? Taking that reasoning to its logical extreme suggests that families should have babies in superabundance, which is probably not actually a good thing. Panelist noted that this goes to a larger Question of whether it is good or bad to require people to get off Welfare by giving them jobs currently held by others. Moderator's response to the general question was his entire Economic

model [as then pre-constructed], including all assumptions of reduced Defense needs, reduced Administration, elimination of Welfare and other consumption-based entitlements, a more equitable Taxation system where more people are able to retain more of their produced resources, etc. Should result in shorter workdays but increased production and standard of living for everyone, provided that the overall population does not reach a Malthusian point of saturation and nonrenewability. Panelist agreed, provided that all the assumptions are valid. [Big If!](#)

L8: Panelist brought question of Language. Agreed that it could be highly problematic for people to come from all over who speak different languages. Also agreed that it was already problematic at that time. Led to larger discussion:

Question 220 (continued)

Shall there be one or more languages with which every resident/citizen of a given nation shall be expected to have some working familiarity?

During further consideration of Question 21 in Session 30, we reached a preliminary conclusion for each nation -- including the United States -- to designate one and only one official language (for America, it probably would be American English), and for that nation to tell everyone that they must be expected to have minimum facility with that language in order to do anything in that country, because we were no longer going to print everything in multiple languages, except maybe in airports and at the diplomatic corps. We felt that such a rule should make it easier to drop Citizenship, if we are going to do that. [We modified that conclusion as part of the Second Pass.]

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual need to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

Previous panelist asked in Session 31 (October 1998) whether any nations then had no institution of Citizenship. We were not sure, might research as needed.

L4: Moderator presented his theory, to which panelist responded that people like to be together (which we can arrange with referral services), and that Wyoming (presented as an example of low population density) is too cold and mountainous to live in. We pointed out that Minnesota and Michigan and New York are cold, and that Colorado is mountainous.

Some nations may want to keep the institution of Citizenship. What would happen if one nation did that? Panelist was not sure.

Also noted that Canadians are citizens, not subjects.

Panelist noted that Glendale CA had a homeless facility similar to our orientation-center idea. Entry in 'blue book' looks like "Fernando Court", but in any case was located near San Fernando Road and Los Feliz. Flagged for us to check out. [We did so during Third Pass, but did not find "Fernando Court" or related place online.]

We can refer people from the same countries or with similar language or culture to the same area. [Agreed to X](#). Added two new potential reasons to keep Citizenship:

L9) source of tax revenue
L10) availability of personnel for military drafting

We X'd L9 immediately, on assumption that we will move to a sales-tax environment, but we noted that we would reconsider if agreeing later to retain Income Tax.

L10: Difference of opinion as to whether military service is good for everyone, but we yet agreed to X it, apply same reasoning as L7, viz., that we can still draft based on residence and what The Man knows about an individual's age, marital status, etc.

Panelist also brought up example of an Argentine citizen living in America, who avoided the draft on claim of Argentinian citizenship. Moderator claimed that if we must have a draft at all, then that guy should be compelled also to protect the system of which he is presently taking advantage.

L8: Moderator pointed out that, in addition to the short-term nature of the problem, and not knowing they mean by disrupting social fabric anyway, the entire history of America has been to assimilate immigrants from different areas of the World.

Panelist wondered if more crime arises from moving people from different areas of the World, using the example of people now needing to put bars on windows, but Moderator claimed that the main reasons for this are the Economic System and Prison Overcrowding from victimless crimes. Panelist agreed with these ideas.

L5: Moderator claimed that the threat of people leaving is actually beneficial, since it motivates a country to make itself attractive, but panelist suggested that it may be beneficial only for the people leaving, not for the country left behind. What if a country is too bad off to correct itself? Then do like East Germany and merge with a better country, or adopt our Agenda.

Panelist noted that the Soviet Union (and possibly other countries, too) wanted some people to stay, either because they held key government positions, or because the country had spent so much on their education. Moderator claimed that any such country should therefore try to make itself more attractive. If they don't want to stay, then I don't want them.

Question 591.5

Should we require or even allow the Pledge of Allegiance to be recited each day in schools?

In discussion of Question 21 during Session 31, we talked briefly about the Pledge of Allegiance as brainwashing. We therefore added Q's 591.5 & 591.6 at this time.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual needs to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual may be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

L3: Moderator made his *spiel*, panelist agreed, and we X'd it.

L2: Panelist brought up good examples of the typewriter keyboard and calendar as inefficient institutions which probably are yet good to keep, because we're all used to them. Also brought up the Metric System and other examples -- would Citizenship fall into the same category? Not sure.

New panelist asked in Session 32 (November 1998) about the value of Dual Citizenship, with Answer that it may depend upon the rights and responsibilities of Citizens, and may represent a conflict of interest.

L8: New panelist asked the background of the 'social consistency' argument; given. She didn't think that there was a lot of benefit in 'social consistency'. She noted that Dante opposed Citizenship in *De Monarchia*, but that the work also proposed a one-world government, so we deemed it not relevant to our discussion.

Panelist was tempted to hit a Home Run immediately and declare against Citizenship, but we agreed that it would be unfair to other who previously spoke in favor of it.

L2: Even though we were saving action-planning for much later, simply knowing that we have multiple alternatives in implementing an elimination of Citizenship meant that this Great Shock to the System need not be. Therefore, L2 n/a and X'd.

L5: Panelist suggested that people from A moving to B, and people from C moving to A, allow the government of A simply to be controlling different people, and that Malthusian mechanics will have the population evening out. Moderator responded that Malthusian mechanics are most relevant in L4, and that he had a problem with the premise of C moving to A, since there probably was something wrong with A since some people were moving to B, but panelist said not necessarily.

We agreed that the purpose of government is to maximize the aggregate quality of life of its population (cf. Answer 17), which it may not be doing if it is forcing people to live there against their will. If people are leaving (or threatening to leave), then those are people whom you may not want to have around, anyway. For both those basic reasons, probably better to have the option for people to leave. X'd

L8: If a given community does have a certain social fabric, and if large numbers of people from another area of the World move there, then they are likely to congregate in a suburb or other place where they can have their own social sub-fabric, making the overall social impact not as severe as some people might fear. Possible counterexamples (Cubans in Miami, East Germans in West Germany) are not really so, since their problems are not really social as much as logistical.

L1: Panelist claimed that borders define Citizenship, so L1 is circular; Municipal borders have less impact than County borders, which have less impact than State borders, etc.; where you have no borders you have no Citizenship. We responded to third point that we could have a one-world government with no borders and multiple classes of Citizens, similar to the Roman Empire. Problem with second premise was that Municipalities can be more important, like the Greek or Italian city-states, or that individuals may prefer to pay more attention to local matters. [Started to make second response to second point, about what we thought we had found in what we had originally called Q17.5, but discovered at this time that we apparently had never addressed it!] On first point, since we agreed that we can have Citizenship without borders, panelist conceded that she was no longer prepared to assert circularity.

We drew a picture:

| | | |
|--------------|-----|-----|
| Borders? | Y | N |
| Citizenship? | | |
| Y | v | v |
| N | TBD | n/a |

Lower-right "n/a" because we wanted some borders, and at least some government.

Noted to allow for possibility of an individual having no Citizenship, like the fictional Philip Nolan or someone like Noriega who might not be accepted in any country.

L1: At this time, panelist asked for Moderator's thinking on whether it is reasonably possible to have Borders without Citizenship, and Moderator presented his model, where all functions for which one might want Citizenship can be discharged without the institution, and that the institution may have certain negative impacts, depicted in the R column. We therefore did not immediately see (though we might have been missing something) that there is "an indelible logical connection" between the two institutions. Panelist concurred with Moderator's assessment, and we X'd L1.

R2: To assess this point requires assessing two elements, being the value of Freedom of Choice and the extent to which removal of Citizenship tends to expand such freedom. Earlier definition of a 'conditional natural right' suggested that we want to maximize Freedom of Choice, at least within certain parameters. It is trivial that making it easier to exercise options with reduced hassle expands our Freedom of Choice, but we also must address the definition parameter of whether we are injuring others. By our Answer 13, injury compromises a person's ability to do that which he [*sic*] is physically and legally able otherwise to do. If I live in Mexico, and move to Texas, and bid on a house at auction, then I may be compromising a local Texan's ability to buy that house at a reduced price, and therefore may be injuring him. Panelist brought up example of exposure to Typhus or other disease.

Panelist also brought up the Question of what happens when an individual commits crimes in multiple jurisdictions: Who has the right to punish/execute him? This goes to the Question which we had skipped, on the extent of a government's control over its jurisdiction. Agreed to pick up the skipped Question [which we had introduced and deferred in Session 10] in the upcoming Session, and adjourned at 10:11pm.

Question 18.5 (continued)

If a government is set up, and passes a law which an individual thinks is unfair, excessive, or otherwise inappropriate, then should she be allowed to disobey it?

Panelist noted in Session 33 (November 1998) that "There's such a thing as voting with your feet", meaning that humans and other critters have a long history of relocating (either singly or *en masse*) to where conditions are more favorable, so we would be foolish to try to repress that option at this late stage.

Example raised of Muhammad Ali, who objected to the military draft of the 1960's, suggesting that it might be okay in some instances not to obey a given law. We countered that this stance might be problematic, since it might tend to remove the force of Law, and the power of Government, violating Answer 17.

Conversely, are we saying that it is necessary for everyone to obey all laws rigidly? Not necessarily, though possibly.

Is it possible to outline instances in which it is okay for people not to obey laws? What if refusal to obey is based on religious grounds? This point led us to take another Question out of original order, viz.:

Question 598

Whatever prohibitive laws we end up still having after going through the list, shall we be prepared to allow exceptions on the claim of 'freedom of religion'?

Agreed on discussion in Session 33 that any act which injures or endangers someone else against his/her will, or infringes upon his/her rights, is unacceptable, and continues to be unacceptable if called an 'act of religion', if for no other reason than that I can label as 'religious' any violent or dangerous act, and we immediately degenerate into a lawless jungle, which we are trying to avoid. Peyote consumption is an example of a allegedly-religious act which possibly should be legal, but not because it is an allegedly-religious act, but because under appropriate conditions it is not harmful to others. Questions on practices involving animals were still considered fuzzy at that time, because we had not yet attacked the Questions on animal rights, then scheduled for consideration in Section III-A.

Question 18.5 (continued)

If a government is set up, and passes a law which an individual thinks is unfair, excessive, or otherwise inappropriate, then should she be allowed to disobey it?

Panelist believed at this point of Session 33 that Answer 598 would seem to invalidate draft-dodging, and she was not inclined to disagree with any points of our model, whereby the Government set up in Answer 17 makes a law, and everyone is required to obey. However, she was not inclined yet to agree, either, prompting Moderator response that we need affirmative consensus before we could continue.

At this time, she suggested a model where Government continues to have power to make and enforce laws, but allowing for an individual to disobey if he [sic] can justify in court why the law is bad, or why he should be exempted from that law either generally or in that specific instance.

She brought up as an example a situation where as a nurse she was required by the doctor to administer 10mg of morphine to a patient who was not on a respirator, even though such action may be lethal, for under then-current law the nurse must always obey the doctor. It is possible in some instances that the nurse might have important information which the doctor doesn't have, but if so then why was that law passed? Panelist asserted that it was because the American Medical Association (AMA) constituted a powerful lobby and encouraged that law.

So, bad laws do get passed, for multiple causes. And, we agreed that it would be nice to have a mechanism enabling me to skate around such a bad law. However, do we trust the Court to make and break laws, given that they are usually constructed by hundreds of elected representatives, working for thousands of hours to research, draft, and debate them? Goes to the topic of Judicial Review, originally scheduled to be taken up in Section I-F:

Question 303

To what extent (if any) should a judiciary be involved in approving laws duly passed by an elected legislature?

Agreed in discussion during Session 33 on an element of Legislative Review over judicial decisions affecting the validity or impact of a given legislation. Agreed in principle that a bad law is passed for one of two main classes of reasons, either insufficient technical knowledge by the Legislature or undue political/economic influence. However, a single judge is even less trustworthy, since he would be unlikely to have more technical knowledge than the entire combined Legislature, and since it's easier to bribe one official than a hundred. Panelist suggested simply allowing higher levels of the Judiciary to treat appeals, but this may not be sufficient, not only for the above reasons, but also since the partisan political philosophy of a few high-court officials can have unduly large sway.

Therefore, we are giving the Legislature a further chance to assert themselves, but not simply to write a new law, since it likely took multiple years to write the first one, and their calendar is still over-full. Easier is that if a Judge interprets, modifies, or expels a certain law, then the People as represented by the Legislature should have an opportunity to overrule such judgment, perhaps by having the entire Legislature override the Judicial veto by a 2/3 vote, or having one house of a multicameral Legislature do so, or even having a Judiciary Committee place a stay on execution of that judgment. Perhaps the judgment can be automatically thrown out if there is no Legislative action by a certain time, or more likely be upheld if there is no Legislative action by a certain time. Details can be worked out in Section I-F, after we have worked out the Legislative structure and process. But, we liked the idea in principle that the Judiciary -- whose job is only to apply (and, to some extent, interpret) laws created by elected representatives -- is subordinate to the Legislature, and should be accountable to them, since the Legislature is accountable directly to the People, and since members of the Judiciary are frequently appointed, and even when elected don't always represent the People, who frequently have no idea who they are.

Question 18.5 (continued)

If a government is set up, and passes a law which an individual thinks is unfair, excessive, or otherwise inappropriate, then should she be allowed to disobey it?

If we accept the above element of A303, and allow Legislative Review over Judicial rulings, then we are prepared to accept the suggested model of allowing individuals to violate a given law, if they can demonstrate to the Court that the law in question is unfair, excessive, or otherwise inappropriate, or that they should be exempted from that law on either a one-time or ongoing basis. If the Judge agrees that the law is inappropriate, then decision should automatically alert the Legislature, which then has opportunity (details to be worked out later) to uphold the Judicial ruling or override the Judicial veto; if the latter, then Accused would be punished as normal.

Question 208 (continued)

Should all immigration be considered legal?

New panelist asserted in Session 34 (November 1998) that the then-current system was bad. America was felt then to be more liberal than most, but still far away from

ideal. She offered example of a Japanese national who tried to be a film director in L.A. When he went back to Tokyo to work, panelist couldn't stay with him for more than 15 days at a time, without leaving the country and re-entering, even if for only a few minutes at the airport! Idea was that they were trying to make it as difficult as possible for a foreigner to stay in the country, while not making it impossible.

If we restrict all immigration, then it is bad for businesses which want access to international markets. If we remove all restrictions, then it might be bad for our desired social structure. Current group model seemed to represent best balance.

Also, increased immigration -- or immigration from different areas -- is good for local businesses, to have more people to sell to.

Panelist suggested that American immigration laws were on path of being tightened further. What happens in that tighter environment if an American citizen falls in love with a foreigner? Hard-ass response might be that one shouldn't fall in love with a person of another race or nation, but even if desirable that objective may not always be thoroughly realistic. Topic scheduled for further discussion in Section III-G.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual need to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual may be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

Panelist in Session 35 (November 1998) raised general question of how Government could mandate flu inoculations and other public-health measures in the absence of Citizenship, with response that local governments can lay on everyone any mandate -- subject to Judicial override per Answer 18.5 -- which would (otherwise) be incumbent on everyone, whether they are citizens or not.

R7: Would we generate more expense by eliminating Citizenship than we would save by dropping border guards, etc.? Possibility that we might see short-term increase in prison population during initial period of increased immigration.

Some discussion of the duration of any short-term increase in U.S. population. Non-author panelist suggested two generations or 33 years; Moderator quoted Irwin Sessions' 28 years from Session 1. Noted entered about a prediction of 25-27 years from Alvin Toffler, possibly in his book 'Future Shock', but maybe somewhere else. [We looked for this reference in the Third Pass, but did not find it.]

Panelist also brought up the example of the Israelites' 40 years in the wilderness. However, we agreed that more people today are more accustomed to rapid changes in technology, as from Radio to TV to Computers to the Internet.

In discussing the ramifications on prison population (remembering about how we should be looking at it on a global basis), we considered that it may decrease because fewer people would be convicted of alleged violations of immigration laws, but may increase because more there would be more people in the U.S. (where we may yet end up with a more liberal penal system than Israel or Russia, once we get through Section I-F), and because of a general increase in sociopathic behavior during periods of tremendous social change. On the last point, we found it true that sociopathy follows social upheaval, but (1) we are not making any statement yet as

to how long implementation will be (only what the end result will look like), and (2) we may (depending on the results of Section III-D) have more available police, courts, and prisons to deal with any sociopaths.

We still needed to come back to the question of prison population and expense, but we looked at this time at any other potential sources of significant expense in a No Citizenship environment. Panelist pointed out the possibility of increased health-care cost, because of lowered ability to monitor or control the introduction of foreign diseases such as Bubonic Plague. We asked the panelist for clarification of what the biological reasons are for needing checkpoints, but got only a few extreme examples, Mad Cow having the most potential. However, we agreed that we could accomplish a lot more, with a lot fewer resources, if we were either to prohibit unsafe practices and/or to quarantine areas where diseases originate. However, however, panelist still felt that 'disease-screening checkpoints' might be desirable at border crossings and ports of entry, as a double-check. She admitted, though, to the possibility of bias, since she worked in the healthcare industry. We therefore added:

Question 20.9

Should we have disease-screening checkpoints at border crossings and ports of entry?

As to the possibility of quarantine, concern was raised in Session 35 about certain nations (such as Iraq, Iran, and Libya) which may not allow international authorities within their borders to perform any monitoring or controlling of any kind. In theory, we could define the I.O.O. as having sufficient power to force its way in for public-health reasons, but at this stage the group had defined the I.O.O. as being an advisory body only, so we felt that this point might need further consideration.

We were still hoping that localized monitoring and control would yet prove to be sufficient to check the worldwide spread of infectious diseases, but in the absence of further research into the topic, we felt that we probably should err on the side of caution. We therefore were now prepared tentatively to go along with the notion of mandating disease-screening checkpoints at border crossings and ports of entry, with some paperwork system (similar or identical to the current passport system) to monitor diseases caught, countries visited, inoculations and tests taken, etc.

On further reflection, panelist stated that she did not believe that government in the absence of Citizenship is likely to be compromised in its ability to discharge the disease-control function (assuming that there is one). Fine.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual need to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

Looking generally at R7, if we either (a) do not implement other changes, but implement the elimination of Citizenship gradually enough to allow the Criminal Justice system to catch up, and mitigate the appearance of sociopaths, or (b) implement other changes as anticipated in our Outline, and implement elimination of Citizenship as quickly as we please, then as of Session 35 we did not see any significant additional expenses involved in such elimination. We figured that we

should re-look in the next Session to make sure, before checking R7 as valid, but that we also should review how much savings there would be if we continue to have disease-screening checkpoints and passport systems.

Question 20.9 (continued)

Should we have disease-screening checkpoints at border crossings and ports of entry?

CDC publishes periodic summary of disease occurrences in different areas of the Nation and World. We were generally opposed as of Session 36 (December 1998) to government intrusion into individual privacy issues, but felt that we might wish to make an exception for Public Health. We therefore could envision a system where anyone entering the country must either submit to a physical examination or submit documentation (from either the WHO or the CDC or some other internationally-recognized body, although we added during the Third Pass that individual Nations may opt for purposes of expediency to recognize certain other national agencies as well) proving contraction of no infectious disease. However, we considered that this might present too much hassle, because all individuals would probably need to have a new physical before each entry, since we can't be sure that they didn't contract some disease during temporary travel abroad, even if we require them to document whenever they visit a foreign doctor, because they might not have occasion to do so.

Panelist suggested that Interpol might be a good match with WHO, even though not then set up to deal with health issues, but could get into any country when needed. Objection raised that we had decided to protect national sovereignty, so we shouldn't allow or encourage any international agency to cross a border unilaterally. How could we then prevent the spread of disease from any nation not willing to let in any global agency? Answer was that they couldn't get in, but could prevent other people from coming out, suggesting a 'quarantine' or 'blockade' under certain conditions.

However, it appeared after some discussion that disease-screening checkpoints are independent of the topic of Citizenship, since someone who catches a disease abroad will do so whether he is a Citizen or not, and will spread it around here whether he is a Citizen or not, to both Citizens and non-Citizens. Whatever the I.O.O. or WHO does is likewise independent of Citizenship, as are any internal measures taken by a particular nation. Also, whatever WHO might do may need to focus on a small portion of a larger nation, or with an area crossed by a national border, so such activity is essentially borderless, and so they should be permitted to do whatever they need to do, wherever in the world they need to go. Any nation prohibiting them would need to be subject to quarantine, economic sanction, or other reprisal. Additional steps taken by individual nations should be left up to them, based on current funding, technology, demographics, climate, travel patterns, etc., etc.

Question 6.8 (continued)

What distinguishes 'fundamental rights' from 'non-fundamental' rights?

We had decided in Session 19 to skip this Question for the present. However, we did note in Session 36 that there are legal expressions in place of *malem in se* for violation of natural rights, and *malem prohibitem* for violation of civil rights.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual need to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

Because the expense of disease-screening checkpoints and/or passport/visa systems are to be left to individual nations to figure out, there may or may not be sufficient savings to warrant the checking of R7. Panelist claimed in Session 36 that R7 was then incorporated so much in the remaining items (particularly R3, R6, and R2) that it did not merit a separate place on our list of reasons, but withdrew the assertion when Moderator clarified the meaning of R7, *viz.*, 'elimination results in less expense than was formerly needed...'.

Question of whether now to eliminate R7 was seen to go to how well we could predict such savings. We saw that we could look at how much of current expense goes to disease screening, and how much to other transactions. [Noted in Third Pass, though, that we had decided that we still want disease screening whether we have Citizenship or not, which was why we had made sure to place current Question 20.9 ahead of current Question 21, so we do not actually need this research.]

Discussion of this point led to discussion of Extradition. Panelist claimed that it would be difficult to have Extradition without Citizenship, but Moderator claimed that it would be very easy, by each nation having standard reciprocity agreements with other nations, as would be in its interest to do, if wanting to get back criminals who flee to other nations. However, panelist pointed out that an individual or nation (she offered herself as an example!) who strongly disagreed with the penal system of another nation might prefer to let local criminals go free within their domains, rather than condone the other nation's system by sending their criminals back. [Noted at the time: This is the very reason that we had these groups, since that never would have occurred to me!!!] Apparent, therefore, that we cannot rely on voluntary mutual Extradition to solve all our problems for us.

Where did this leave us? We still had to worry about international and non-international crimes. Looking now at non-international, would retention of Citizenship help the problem, and -- if so -- how? Panelist: No, any solution need not rely on retaining Citizenship; agreed. It was suggested without objection that Extradition may actually be harder in a Citizenship environment, by making it harder to get a Citizen of another nation back here.

Panelist indicated that she was not sure that Citizenship would have much impact on Extradition. Further discussion conducted on Extradition, Bad Acts, I.O.O. authority, and other stuff. We might have a system where A commits a bad act against B while on A's soil, and A's government takes no action because it doesn't like B's nation; if B is a Citizen of B's nation, then B's nation (or B herself) can appeal the case to the I.O.O. But, we would need the institution of Citizenship to make this happen. For international crimes, Extradition is not a problem, since all spots on Earth are part of the competent jurisdiction of the I.O.O., if it ends up having any.

Only possible reason, then, that Citizenship gives any potential benefit to Extradition is not really related to Extradition, but rather concerns the victim of a crime in a given nation which refuses to prosecute. Then, the nation of which the victim is a Citizen could appeal the problem to the I.O.O., if they have any judicial authority.

However, the case could also be appealed by the nation without Citizenship, or by the individual herself (assuming in either case that the I.O.O. has any authority). Therefore, Extradition should not be affected by Citizenship.

Agreed to add L11 *ex post facto*, and X it:

L11) facilitating extradition

Further evaluation of R7 was seen to depend on how much of current expense goes to Disease Screening, and how much to other stuff. This item was added to our research list, R7 to be enclosed in parentheses until the info was obtained, or until decision reached without that info. Same thing done with R3.

As to R2, Moderator made following presentation, with concurrence by panelist: I like being able to move around the U.S. as much as I want, with minimum of hassle, and this greatly enhances the quality of my life. Fundamental goal of our overall effort is to maximize the aggregate quality of life for everyone, to the extent possible or practical. It would greatly enhance everyone's quality of life to be able to move about the World as readily as we move about the States. We do not all have that freedom in current environment, but would if we eliminated Citizenship. This factor is a valid reason for eliminating the institution of Citizenship, and was now checked.

[Of course, after having experienced the attacks of 11-Sep-2001, we realized that this option is not actually as savory as it previously appeared, so we reversed the finding much later during the Second Pass.]

R6: Agreed without a lot of difficulty that this is a valid reason, using East Germany as a perfect example. Checked. Adjourned at 12:33am. [Reversed during Second Pass, because people can still migrate to other nations while we have Citizenship.]

For completion, we added L12 in Session 37 (February 1999), and X'd it:

L12) disease screening

R5: Definition of who is deserving is going to vary with one's constituency (new panelist offered example that one can't be considered a real Jew unless having a Jewish mother), and appears to be largely arbitrary, and not altogether valid. Some of the reasons for maintaining Citizenship are to recognize that an individual has a certain genetic heritage, or was born within a certain country, or fulfilled some religious consideration or other condition not within the individual's control, or that he failed to do so. Agreed that we shouldn't have an institution based on totally arbitrary factors, but may yet determine that a merit-based system can be maintained. We may have a problem convincing people and nations where religion is very strong, and where religion calls for class separation.

Added L13:

L13) protection in foreign countries

Potentially good point, but we may be able to have similar safeguards without Citizenship.

We could have a setup where it is incumbent upon each nation to provide orientation to all incomers on all their laws, but who would enforce it? Besides, many travelers will ignore or bypass such regulations, and many others will not have the mental power to absorb all that information, especially in nations like America which have many complex laws.

We might rely on people to solve their own problems when traveling abroad, but there is much to be said for having an embassy which can provide legal counsel, a translator, and diplomats who can convince the locals that the traveler only recently arrived and didn't know the laws and should be given a break. It therefore may cause too many problems if we eliminate Citizenship, but we may end up with an embassy model which is based on Merit instead of Citizenship.

Is it possible still to have embassy protection if we base it on location of principal Residence and not the nation of Citizenship? Panelist suggested that nations might still bar from relocation into their borders those whose current principal residences are outside. We probably would need to agree that we couldn't force a nation to accept immigrants whom it does not wish to have.

What would happen if we have a Citizenship model where Citizenship is earned? Then, if a Citizen and a non-Citizen travel to some foreign country and get into trouble, would the applicable embassy actually refuse to help the non-Citizen? We doubt it. If not, then we could do it on the basis of Residence only. However, a nation with some Citizens and some non-Citizens might arrange for only enough embassy staff to help the Citizens, and give non-Citizens only secondary priority when available. [This goes back to R5.](#)

Would it be considered fair to lock out people who fall short in a Merit-based system of Citizenship? This would depend on what they would need to do.

Panelist mentioned an individual who started a movement to use passports identifying the bearers as 'Citizens of the World'. More and more nations were gradually accepting these passports, though still not universally.

Good point raised that people with learning disabilities or other uncontrollable obstacles may not be able to achieve all the requirements needed to earn Citizenship in a Merit-based system, or would require a longer time to do so. Also, different nations have different qualities of Education, so a given individual might never learn what is necessary. Appears, then, that a Merit-based system would also be unfair: It's one thing to disallow voting, since an uneducated person might make bad policy decisions, but it's something else to deny emergency assistance, which we provide not because a person is educated, but rather because we're nice people, and because we have a stake in each person, and want to get each person safely home.

If arbitrary and Merit-based systems are both unfair, then [R5 is valid](#). Even at that time, though, we explicitly reserved the right to change our minds on this point, if we could once think of a Merit-based system which is fair.

L13: [Agreed](#) that (a) it is possible to have a mechanism of embassy protection for people whose Residence is within a given Nation, and (b) that a given Nation will be motivated to do so (to some greater or lesser extent, depending on budget availability, how nice the Nation is to its own people, etc.), since it should be interested in having their people return to productive lives on their home soil, and in

maintaining good relations, and in just being nice. No reason, therefore, to require Citizenship only for this reason, and X'ing.

R4: In looking at what resources and services would be diverted in a Citizenship environment, we brought up again the notion of a network of 'orientation centers' [later 'help centers'], with further preliminary support. Question raised of whether we would allow local police here to provide assistance to foreign travelers in this country. Panelist had good idea that we could do so and then send a bill to the traveler's home government. [Panel rejected that concept later.]

Finally occurred to us that R4 could be X'd for the same reason as L9, viz.: If we go to a Sales Tax environment as projected, then all persons [noted in Third Pass that there may be some exceptions] will be contributing their fair share to the tax load, and so would be paying for Police, Fire, emergency Health Care, public Education, Infrastructure maintenance, etc., so diverting of resources would not be a problem, especially if we also eliminate Entitlements. Therefore, R4 X'd.

[In sum, we invalidated two of the seven reasons for dumping Citizenship, and found three others to be valid and internally consistent. These were R2, that elimination of the institution would improve people's freedom of choice, by allowing them to move about the world more freely, as we currently move about the States; R5, that the institution of citizenship is unfair to non-citizens by arbitrarily locking them out of certain resources and services; and R6, that elimination of the institution would encourage more people to migrate to the most popular nations (as occurred when so many East Germans migrated to West Germany after the Berlin Wall was removed), so that the other governments would have an opportunity to see what systems appear to work best. The other two possible reasons (R3 and R7) were found to merit further research, but we yet determined that we had enough information at hand to conclude that the institution of Citizenship should be eliminated.]

AGREEING TO DROP CITIZENSHIP!!!! FINISHING Question 21, after 10 months.

[We later revisited this Question several times, and eventually changed our position.]

Question 22

What rights and responsibilities attain to a 'citizen' of a given nation?

Rendered 'not applicable' on basis of previous elimination of Citizenship from model.

Question 23

What rules and procedures -- if any -- should govern the changing of individual citizenship from one nation to another?

Rendered 'not applicable' on basis of previous elimination of Citizenship from model.

Question 24

What rules should govern the citizenship of a newborn child?

Rendered 'not applicable' on basis of previous elimination of Citizenship from model.

Question 25

Under what conditions (if any) could an individual, group, or geographic segment of any size elect to secede from the national government having current jurisdiction over it?

Panelist postulated in Session 38 (April 1999) that it would be okay if a majority of the population of that segment feels that their needs are not being met or represented adequately. Under this premise, it might have been okay for the Southern States to secede in 1861. We also noted the modern examples of the states seceding from the Soviet Union (an event widely praised at that time within the United States), and territories breaking off from the former Yugoslavia. Additional example noted of the American Colonies seceding from Great Britain.

Question is whether the larger jurisdiction has any vested interest in the smaller jurisdiction, since they presumably had developed and protected it over time. If we force areas to stay together, then it may result in war (as seen in history), or at least the inability to get along and accomplish things within the legislature. Any segment hell-bent on seceding will attempt to do so regardless of whether they have permission, and will succeed if they win any resulting war. Question then may become whether the larger jurisdiction has a legal basis for initiating war, but then wars will get initiated with or without legal justification.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual need to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

We had a confirmation discussion during Session 38 on the Question of Citizenship. Panelist suggested various objections which we had already treated, including the sense of loyalty and belonging, but accepted our response that we can have these in the absence of Citizenship. She still had some doubts, though, but did not have a strenuous enough objection to warrant formally reopening Question 21.

Question 25 (continued)

Under what conditions (if any) could an individual, group, or geographic segment of any size elect to secede from the national government having current jurisdiction over it?

We reviewed during Session 38 the results of Answer 18.5, which suggested that governments do not have unlimited 'eminent domain'. Groups therefore can be allowed to secede without justifying armed aggression to keep them in by force.

Panelist mentioned that seceding group would need to have sufficient infrastructure, or else they might experience population remigrating back to the remainder of the original country. Moderator claimed that this is not a sufficient problem to warrant adjusting our model, since it reduces to the old problem of people migrating to a better country, motivating the source country to change or combine with another.

If they do want to recombine at some point, then would be up to the original portion to agree to re-admit the seceding portion, though they probably would want to.

But, what if the affluent part of a jurisdiction decides to make its own group, and to leave the poorer group to fend for itself? Agreed that it would be rotten, but should we disallow it for any reason? We initially thought probably not, because the worst that would happen is that they could become incorporated into the parent jurisdiction again, like any other Territory which can't make it anymore, depending on the conclusions of Question 39. Panelist asked what would happen if most of the country secedes, leaving only one small block; Moderator claimed that it was rather unrealistic, but no big deal in any case, since we currently have small unincorporated jurisdictions. Panelist still thought that it would happen a lot, but we claimed that it would not be that bad, since [again] it reduces to the old idea of people migrating to more popular territories, motivating others to change, recombine, or be deserted.

[This rationale seemed a little meandering when we reviewed it during the Third Pass. Perhaps more important is to consider that many rulers actively seek more land wherever -- and however -- they can get it, because even a barren landscape still provides natural protection against invading forces, so any leadership which gives away huge tracts of land for free might be rather dumb.]

Agreed for the moment that there should be no conditions or limitations on Secession. Then, we considered the possibility of a 2/3 majority, and agreed that it would be good to adopt this into our model, since it would be a while before the administrative structures for police and fire and other public services are in place, and public health and safety might be endangered in the short term, and largely because you want to make sure that your people really want to proceed before you place them at any type and level of risk. Also reduces the risk of countries dropping their poor sections willy-nilly; adopted. [Reconsidered during the Third Pass.]

Question 25.5

How shall we define 'treason'?

Any action which is intended to undermine or subvert the existing government by a resident of that jurisdiction, not to include encouraging a segment to secede.

Question 25.7

What penalties shall be levied on traitors?

Panelist suggested in Session 38 that Death or Life Imprisonment would be appropriate, but Moderator noted a basic premise expected of our penal model, that we should not levy such penalties because of the possibility of error, though we agreed that the penalties should be the stiffest available, or close to it.

Question 33

Once a national government is set up, and its geographic jurisdiction clearly established, under what conditions (if any) may one government attempt to acquire territory currently controlled by another government?

In the absence of an i.o.o. with enforcement authority, we would need to rely on individual nations to defend their own borders, and/or to bind together in non-aggression pacts or mutual-protection pacts, which as we have seen are not always

honored. For, any rogue nation which wants to incur into another nation against its will will do so regardless of what our group or an international advisory body says.

Consensual transfer of territory is okay to be left up to agreement of the parties.

Question 34

What if we want to have a multilateral treaty, but one or more nations don't want to play?

While the Moderator questioned the meaningfulness of this Question in Session 39 (May 1999), a new panelist noted the example of a recent attempt to enforce an international convention on Human Rights, which some nations did not want to observe. [More recently, the American government decided to withdraw from the 'Paris agreement' on environmental protection.] Question therefore is meaningful.

Question 25 (continued)

Under what conditions (if any) could an individual, group, or geographic segment of any size elect to secede from the national government having current jurisdiction over it?

What if a smaller group wants to secede, but the larger group won't let them? This will frequently happen. In our paradigm, with our Answer 33, we found in Session 39 that the smaller unit should be prepared to allow for armed defense of the original structure. Other nations may decide, however, whom to support (if anyone) based on who is perceived to be Right or Wrong, under the rule in Answer 33.

Question 34 (continued)

What if we want to have a multilateral treaty, but one or more nations don't want to play?

Response to the decision not to play depends on the severity of the case: If they are simply not following certain drug laws, then maybe the response need not be so bad. If a nation is guilty of genocide, even within its own borders, may be something else.

Agreed after discussion that it is acceptable to enforce treaty provisions which attempt to enforce Answer 12 (also because our model of the elimination of Citizenship presumes that people would be physically able to leave the country when they wish). That is, a nation should be allowed to do anything to its own people which does not cause injury or the threat of injury to them.

But, what about the claim that enacting drug laws constitutes injury, in compromising against their will what people can legally do? Panelist cited that this topic goes to Situational Ethics. Discussion of Proportional Response. Agreed that the Response shouldn't be more than Proportional, but should it be that much? Maybe we shouldn't be crossing their borders at all, rather than worrying about what we do once we're there. [Suggested in the Third Pass that some types of laws maybe should not be enacted at the global level at all.]

Maybe we can have some international laws on Non-Violence, Human Rights, etc., but how can we do that in the absence of an i.o.o. with legislative power? Panelist

suggested that if we don't have one on book, then an informal multilateral organization probably will develop on its own. (If the UN won't do it, then NATO will.) Noted that maybe we should rethink our resolution on the non-legislative authority of the I.O.O.

Non-author panelist liked the idea that could cross border if the loss of life or home is sufficiently "huge", but how much is that? We may generally prefer 'continualism' to 'dualism', such that everything is relative and adjudged on a sliding scale, but crossing a national border is a singularity which needs to be justified at some point.

Also, thinking about the point that discipline of a child by force only encourages the child to exert force later in life. To what extent might this apply to nations?

Possibility raised that a government might restrict the freedom of its own residents in protest of freedom restrictions elsewhere, like requiring people to boycott South Africa or Cuba due to their (perceived) restrictions on the freedom of others.

Appears more 'enlightened' to rely on persuasion and diplomacy, and possible economic sanctions. Someone flying over another nation's space with his hand on a rocket trigger might not be as 'enlightened' as we might prefer.

Much to be said for keeping within one's own borders, and setting an example of Peace and Harmony and Non-Violence, but we also want to protect other people. Worthwhile to consider any nation's violation of Answer 12.

To summarize our feelings from our initial treatment of Q34, we appeared to have mixed feelings. On one hand, we liked the idea of national sovereignty, and letting nations do whatever they want within their own borders. On other hand, Answer 12 speaks to individual freedom with the provision that others are not being injured or threatened, so we might have needed to revisit our definition of 'injury', at least as it applies to nations or the residents thereof. Also, seemed possible that certain bad acts are so clearly a violation of basic moral principles that they warrant international intervention. However, what we consider to be morally obvious may seem equally reprehensible and evil to our counterparts. May be better to have an international body to make certain promulgations that would be binding on the whole world, but we were still worried about a powerful i.o.o. effectively becoming a one-world government. However, we yet felt motivated -- and had decided -- to formally reconsider our A26, with prejudice, and to see if we could agree on having an i.o.o. with certain limited legislative powers, while maintaining the principle of subsidiarity.

Question 26 (continued)

If multiple sovereign governments are in place around the world, can/should there be an international oversight organization ("i.o.o.") that could set and enforce laws affecting the entire international community?

Noted in Session 39 that maybe we should reconsider the non-legislative power of the I.O.O. Non-author panelist repeated from discussion of Question 34 that, if we don't make the I.O.O., then groups of nations will band together on their own. It may damage America's political power base, but maybe that's a good thing, considering our then-recent actions in Kosovo.

What if we make a statement that an international cartel should not form which will invade borders? How much impact would that be likely to have? Goes to larger question of Empowerment. Might have impact, but non-author panelist considered that the pattern of historical evolution appears to lead toward larger and more centralized government. He asserted that Jefferson's ideas of individual rights have largely been 'trampled on' over time.

We questioned his statement about the historical pattern, citing that we had recently seen some binding together (like the European Union) and also much balkanization (like the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia). It may continue to flip-flop for the foreseeable future. Also, we have the potential power to change any historical trend.

Panelist asked whether Moderator favored allowing an international authority to make some rulings on certain international issues, such as Environmental Protection and Endangered Species. Moderator said maybe one, but maybe not the other.

Agreed to look further into reasons for not giving power to the I.O.O. (Moderator mentioned at that stage [why did I do that??] that the Wednesday group had resolved in favor of limited legislative power.) Panelist noted that it would help if we had a mechanism to withdraw authority when it is being abused. Agreed that it might work if we are limiting the topics over which I.O.O. would have jurisdiction.

We reviewed our notes from Session 17 relating to Question 26, and found that our biggest issue with allowing the I.O.O. any legislative authority appeared to be the relative trustworthiness of an empowered I.O.O. Agreed, however, with the principle of subsidiarity [though not formally introduced until the beginning of Section I-B], and that it has a reverse side, that certain functions are appropriate to be handled at higher levels. In such case, why stop at national? Tentatively agreed, then, that we should actively consider changing our ruling on Question 26, but also that we should do so in the next Session, both to make sure that we're making good decisions and also to evaluate the impact on any other Questions and Answers.

This panelist never showed up again, but another non-author panelist not present for the original deliberation responded Yes in Session 40 (May 1999), on grounds that we need someone to control dictators who commit serious crimes.

In order for us to say Yes here, we would need to settle two additional questions: (1) Who would control the I.O.O.? (2) What about national sovereignty? For the first question, we would need to set up a system with checks and balances and divided powers, similar to the U.S., except actually working well.

Second question is tougher. Panelist suggested that if a nation doesn't do what it is supposed to do, then it can impact other nations and therefore become an international issue. Moderator thought that this may be flawed reasoning. Possible reason that the reasoning might be flawed may itself be flawed: We don't like, in the kind of country which we want to have in America, that higher-level jurisdictions can intrude on lower-level jurisdictions. But, then, we realized that we are trying to arrive at Basic Principles covering the whole World.

On further thought, Moderator proposed following reasoning: We do not appear to have concluded that complete national sovereignty is a Basic Principle, and in fact the language of this Question suggests that it is an open possibility. While we like the general idea of sovereignty, we must believe that the needs and rights of one

nation end with injury to one or more other nations. Proposed new resolution, referenced at the time as "Resolution #1A", as corollary to Resolution #1 [that is, Answer 12], but repackaged as Answer 25.9 during the Third Pass, viz.:

Question 25.9

What limits (if any) should be placed on national sovereignty?

Derived our Resolution #1A, that a nation generally gets to do what it wants, provided that it is not injuring or threatening another nation against its will.

Question 26 (continued)

If multiple sovereign governments are in place around the world, can/should there be an international oversight organization ("i.o.o.") that could set and enforce laws affecting the entire international community?

Given the resolution achieved in what we are now calling Answer 25.9, we must have international oversight to determine when international rights violations are occurring, so we should have an i.o.o. with at least some enforcement power.

Also agreed with earlier note that i.o.o. should have limits and checks and balances, to mitigate the possibility of evolving into a one-world government. Primary limit is to uphold Answer 25.9, possibly with one or more exceptions to be determined later.

Question 27 (continued)

Should an i.o.o. set laws for the entire world, or just for those nations who choose to be members?

Agreed in Session 40 that the World has an interest to protect itself, and that it is now far easier for one nation to do nasty things which can injure one or more other nations, or the entire World. Therefore, reasonable for the I.O.O. to cover the entire World, provided that limitations on power are always in place to prevent abuse.

Question 27.5 (continued)

Should the I.O.O. have the power to exclude nations from membership?

Feeling as of Session 40 was that if we are making laws for each nation, then each nation should have a voice in what laws get made. Any exceptions? Probably not.

Whether or not expelling a nation would constitute a violation of that nation's rights, it is in the interest of the remainder of the international community to keep that nation in, so that we can continue dialogue: They can tell us why they're doing what they're doing, and if appropriate we can try to persuade them to change course.

Question 27.6

What if a new nation is formed from a Yugoslavia-type breakup?

Same idea: If each new nation appears poised to operate as a separate nation, with the power to trade and make treaties and do other international things, then it

should be able to participate in the decision-making process, so the I.O.O. should recognize it, and install it as a member, as soon as it demonstrates that it is actually functioning as a separate nation.

Question 27.7

What if a USA-type nation decides to break up into multiple constituent states, in order to increase representation in the I.O.O.?

Panelist made good note in Session 40 that we could review that society's existing federal structure. If it still is in full operation, then a snow job would be apparent, and we may choose not to recognize separate governments (though the main government could still be represented). If not, then we can/should recognize them with dispatch. However, we should allow for the possibility of an economic or military confederation, such as NATO or the European Union. Adjourned at 9:37pm.

Question 28 (continued)

If there is to be an international oversight organization, then should it have its own geographic territory?

Panelist in Session 41 (May 1999) thought at first that it might be good to do, like the District of Columbia (or whatever we may rename it later) in America and the *Distrito Federal* in Mexico. But, do we really need it? We remembered the panelist's earlier story (probably from the Wednesday group) that an accident occurring on Federal territory couldn't be processed efficiently, since local police had no jurisdiction. Could have a leased building.

Panelist suggested that neutrality is important. But, why is it important, and how would it be achieved only with separate geographic territory? She made potentially good point that the I.O.O. might favor the host nation (as some say has already happened with the UN being headquartered within the US). But, then, we could make sure that they are on a border or coastline or island, or we could make sure that the territory is neutral through international treaty like Antarctica, or we could place it within a nation which is declared neutral like Switzerland.

Question 28.2 (continued)

If the I.O.O. does not have its own geographic territory, do we want to designate where it should be?

Because we had begun to lean toward a neutral territory for the I.O.O. as of Session 41, this Question became 'not applicable'. [However, as noted above, we did later make some specific recommendations on non-neutral headquarters locations when we submitted to the Swedish competition on global governance in 2017.]

Question 29 (continued)

If there is an i.o.o., then should each nation -- no matter how big or small -- have an equal vote in matters coming before it?

Since the I.O.O. as of Session 41 had some limited legislative authority, and since some of its rules would affect nations of different sizes to different extents, there

should be a house based on geography to address those. Therefore, we agreed to bring in model proposed by the Wednesday group [again, did this cross-fertilization constitute skewing of the experiment? whole idea was for panels to be independent, but anyhow that's how it happened in the real life, largely because the one non-author panelist who was present for Session 41 was also a panelist in the other group, so we both already knew about the proposed approach, and could not easily act as though neither of us knew about it], to have three houses, with a steering committee deciding which house(s) would address each issue.

Question 30 (continued)

If there is an i.o.o., then how should its leaders be chosen?

Again, additional responsibility implies that we should have greater safeguards in the process, to maximize likelihood that the leaders are actually well-qualified.

Agreed in Session 41 that we didn't need to get too detailed on the selection process. We may leave that up to the whims of each house, which may also elect its own leaders. Should have an Executive Committee (ExComm) to decide questions pertaining to the whole I.O.O. ExComm and Steering Committee are to be selected by the whole group, using procedures decided by the whole group. Delegates are to be selected by each nation. [Details added for the Swedish competition in 2017.]

Question 31 (continued)

If there is an i.o.o., then how should its enforcing arm be staffed?

Agreed in Session 41 that it needs an enforcing arm, or else multiple nations would flout their findings. Agreed that every member nation should provide a portion of the force. Panelist suggested that the proportion should be based on the size of each nation's military, then shifted to geography and/or population, then went with some combination. How would you measure the size of a military? She suggested relying on the 'honor system', but this would be incongruous with the fact that this enforcement arm exists to deal with nations who don't want to play by the rules. May base it on the number of military bases, which can be derived from satellites, intelligence reports, onsite inspections, etc.

Noted that it is generally in the interest of your nation to make potential opponents think that your forces are weaker than they actually are, so that you can surprise them if they attack. [However, also noted during the Third Pass that some nations may want their opponents to think that they are stronger than they actually are, in order to deter them from attacking.] There would be even more reason in this case, since some nations would not want to devote more resources to the global pool than they must (just as we want government protection but still try to minimize our taxes). Panelist thought that independent observers could do a lot of estimation.

Even if we can measure military strength accurately, there still is something to be said for the idea that a nation which does not want to contribute that much military resource shouldn't have as much military as they do, and that all nations might therefore have a motivation to reduce their military, which would be good for everyone. There may be one or more reasons not to, but we tentatively went along with it. [We didn't like this concept so much during the Third Pass.]

Question 32.0 (continued)

If specific border disputes arise, then it is better for the affected nations to deal with it themselves, or to refer to the I.O.O.?

Moderator noted opinion in Session 41 that the Falklands War was “way cool”, because we let them just fight it out, and agreed with previous position that the I.O.O. should basically stay out of local squabbles to the extent reasonable, to reduce the likelihood that they will escalate into global issues.

Question 32.1 (continued)

Do we want to discuss specific potential policies, and/or specific remedies that the I.O.O. would allow?

No change as of Session 41; still not bothering with specific issues at this time.

Question 32.2 (continued)

Is it appropriate for the I.O.O. or individual nations to punish nations for crossing borders with military force, or should they stop at pushing aggressors behind their own borders?

Panelist noted in Session 41 that Answer 32.0 as recently upheld implies that no punishment would be appropriate at all, since we would be letting nations deal with their own problems. Does this make sense? Should we have left Iraq alone after the Kuwait invasion? Should we have intervened in the Falklands? What’s the difference between those two situations, or do we need to adjust our paradigm? Panelist suggested that Saddam Hussein was a “bad guy” and “international criminal”, but we countered that this could be a media-generated perception, and that we need to apply any laws fairly and consistently. She also suggested basing our decision on whether the nation/leader is perceived as a “world threat”, but we claimed -- with her agreement -- that our revised Answer 26 is that the I.O.O.’s legislative authority is limited, so the global community would need to decide the conditions under which the I.O.O. may act, or else it becomes an arbitrary one-world government.

If you allow any nation to gobble up smaller nations around it, then it creates a bad quality of life for everyone. It also violates our Answer 25.9, that no nation may interfere with another nation. But, what if one nation claims that a certain other territory is really theirs? The I.O.O. must make this call, and determine at the outset which nations are sovereign, and which borders are uncrossable. Unauthorized border crossings would constitute violation of Answer 25.9, and therefore would be illegal, but this finding meant that we needed to re-examine Question 32.0 again.

So, should we modify our Falklands paradigm? We guessed so, though we preferred not to. Agreed, though, that we could add an item to our model that if the I.O.O. hasn’t ruled on the ownership of a particular territory, then they have no basis for interfering in a dispute-resolution proceeding, however it may be conducted. Panelist also brought up the example of the Six-Day War.

Agreed that it is reasonable for the I.O.O. and/or an individual nation (especially that which was attacked) to enact reprisals for unauthorized border crossings, since the other nations would otherwise feel that they had nothing to lose.

Question 32.0 (continued)

If specific border disputes arise, then it is better for the affected nations to deal with it themselves, or to refer to the I.O.O.?

Modified our position during the latter part of Session 41, viz.: The I.O.O. should recognize to which Nation each area of the World belongs. If for some reason it has not been done in a particular case, then the Nations may decide the issue between themselves. Where it has been done, unsanctioned border crossing is illegal, and the offending Nation shall be subject to reprisal.

Question 32.3 (continued)

Should the I.O.O. get involved in a nation's alleged violation of human rights?

New non-author panelist suggested in Session 42 (June 1999) that we give nations a time limit. If a nation is unable to resolve its own problems within a reasonable time, then it is the responsibility of the I.O.O. to step in, otherwise human nature might permit 'jungle law' to be maintained within that nation. It reduces to the I.O.O. saying, "Don't make me come over there!" There is a lot to be said for this idea, but a few questions came to mind:

First, how do we reconcile this concept with the idea of national sovereignty? Agreed that people should be allowed to escape any nation that they wish.

Second, can we trust the I.O.O. to make these judgments? Not really, we would need to put guidelines into place. One additional guideline on I.O.O. authority is that a national government should not be able to inflict injury on its population without just provocation; we probably can trust the I.O.O. to do that.

Third, how do we deal with different definitions of morality? Panelist noted that a modern i.o.o. should be able to reach consensus on situations like Hitler, but we countered that still are different standards of morality in China and certain Muslim nations. Agreed that we don't want to bomb nations because they have a different moral view, but that we should be responsive to requests to help people leave their nation who don't want to live under that system. Agreed that -- in most cases -- this should be the extent of i.o.o. involvement.

Question 32.4 (continued)

How should the I.O.O. be funded?

What if a poor-but-populous nation like India can't afford delegates? We reviewed our previous Answer during Session 42, and a non-author panelist suggested that neighboring nations might be disinclined to loan money for this purpose. Suggested to have an international 'flat tax' based on spending, so that richer nations would contribute according to their capacity to spend. We noted that this would require a separate administrative structure, and that the total expense might not justify it.

Panel agreed that we don't want to have a separate international Sales Tax, but still liked the idea of somehow assessing a portion of each nation's tax. Not sure at this point whether each nation measured its Gross National Product.

General agreement that we should look at where expenses are coming from, and assess appropriately. Nations can pay the salaries and travel expenses of their delegates, but who buys the donuts? Nations can fund the military in proportion to their military contribution.

Agreed with reasoning from previous decision that basing subsidy amount on numbers of delegates provides a disincentive to forge population figures.

Other overhead expenses would come from the I.O.O. having its own territory, so that would need a separate economy; may be able to raise funds through the efforts of local growers and merchants. On the other hand, funding may be submitted by non-monetary means, such as by supplying food or other essentials, or by people providing janitorial or other services.

Leaning toward idea of funding overhead in proportion to number of delegates, and funding military in proportion to military sizes, as noted in Answer 31.

If some nation doesn't want to send delegates, then we will make decisions for them. Hoped that overall administrative expense would not represent a very significant portion of national budgets; Moderator said that he would be surprised if it exceeded 1/100 of 1%. Allow for non-monetary means of providing subsidy.

Also allowed for possibility of a single monetary unit for the whole World, but that matter was scheduled for decision in Part II.

Seemed like a "fuzzy result" at the time, and we noted that we "may need to adjust later", but that we were okay for the moment. [We apparently did not revisit the Question after that, so we resolved the Answer in the Third Pass, as shown below.]

Question 32.5 (continued)

Should i.o.o. sessions be public?

We felt in Session 42 that we don't need to allow the public in their sessions; might hinder discussion. But, the public should be able to access info on issues and votes.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual need to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual may be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

We reviewed the citizenship model a second time in Session 42, after completing the changes to our Answers on international oversight organizations, and found that no changes to the model were needed. Furthermore, new panelist pointed out -- and Mod agreed -- that our new A32.3 supported our original A21, since we said that we actively want people to be able to leave their nation if they wish, so we can't have a nation claiming ownership of a person because he/she is a 'citizen'. That's neat.

Questions 22-24 therefore continued to be 'not applicable' at this time, although we would come back to this topic yet again later on.

Question 25 (continued)

Under what conditions (if any) could an individual, group, or geographic segment of any size elect to secede from the national government having current jurisdiction over it?

New panelist cited in Session 42 that people should be able to set their own destinies if they're able to contribute to the I.O.O. and provide for their own infrastructure.

We still liked the idea of people being free to travel in and learn about different countries; builds greater sense of community. No reason to change. Whew!

Question 25.5 (continued)

How shall we define 'treason'?

At first, new panelist in Session 42 saw no reason to change our definition.

Question 25.7 (continued)

What penalties shall be levied on traitors?

In reviewing our previous finding during Session 42, on the basis of recent changes to our I.O.O. model, new panelist questioned whether we need to clarify the meaning of "undermine" or "subvert" in our A25.5 definition, and whether the stiffest available penalties are really appropriate.

Question 25.5 (continued)

How shall we define 'treason'?

Based on the Q25.7 review conducted in Session 42, we may need to clarify meanings of "undermine" and/or "subvert" in our working definition.

Question 25.7 (continued)

What penalties shall be levied on traitors?

Panelist suggested Exile, but agreed with Moderator's note that people can still undermine a government from remote distance, through communication technology, hiring people, etc. Also agreed that having an i.o.o. with teeth will help prevent abuse of the Treason definition, by providing an added level to appeal any judgment.

Question 33 (continued)

Once a national government is set up, and its geographic jurisdiction clearly established, under what conditions (if any) may one government attempt to acquire territory currently controlled by another government?

Agreed in Session 42 to leave in place our previous Answer, that it is okay if and only if the transaction is consensual among all affected Nations.

Question 32.3 (continued)

Should the I.O.O. get involved in a nation's alleged violation of human rights?

Agreed later in Session 42 with a panelist's amendment to our previous Answer, that people leaving their nations should be able to take their possessions with them.

Question 34 (continued)

What if we want to have a multilateral treaty, but one or more nations don't want to play?

Some further discussion in Session 42, in light of our decision to allow the I.O.O. some limited legislative authority. Agreed with our A25.9 (aka Resolution #1A). Non-author panelist stated that any promulgations by the I.O.O. should be so obvious that any nation which violates them deserves whatever it gets.

Moderator asked whether we wanted to make any adjustment to our legislative model, to make sure that policy statements are obvious. Panelist strongly agreed with Moderator's idea that we should require a 2/3 majority of whatever house is involved in such decision. Day-to-day decisions -- such as whether a particular situation constitutes a rules violation, has so-and-so committed treason, etc. -- may continue to require only a simple majority. Panelist also noted that requiring a 2/3 majority on policy decisions will make those policies much more robust, and much easier to enforce quickly when needed.

Question 35

What if a nation stays within its established borders, but does something (such as changing to a Communist government, or committing so-called 'human rights violations') which one or more other nations don't like?

Seen in Session 42 as duplication of Q32.3, at least as to human rights violations. People should be allowed to leave, and the I.O.O. (along with individual nations) can help people to leave, but may do little else, unless the nation in question is violating some i.o.o. policy which was established by a 2/3 majority of the applicable house.

If a nation (such as Korea or Vietnam) is changing to a system of government that another nation doesn't like, then the other nation has absolutely no right to go in to try to change it, and for them to try it constitutes a violation of our Answer 25.9, that a nation generally gets to do whatever it wants, provided that it is not injuring or threatening another nation against its will. Non-author panelist suggested without objection that any nations having previously committed this violation may deserve to have their asses kicked retroactively, for they really should have known better.

Question 36

What if an individual or consortium wishes to buy part or all of a given nation, and establish their own laws and systems?

No problem seen in Session 42 from a global standpoint. But, who gets to make the call on behalf of the selling nation? Agreed after some discussion that it is best to apply the same principle as with Secession, that is, to require a 2/3 majority of the

affected population, to protect the interests of future generations. Once the deal is concluded, people should still be allowed to leave the nation, with i.o.o. protection if needed. Noted that Howard Hughes would then have power to change everything in the country with little real oversight, but no problem as long as people can leave.

Question 37

Should any purchase by an individual or consortium of part or all of a given nation require approval of the I.O.O.?

Panelist in Session 42 first said Yes, because we want to have recourse to enable enforcement of sale provisions. On some discussion, we agreed that it's not really necessary to require advance permission of the I.O.O., as long as they monitor the sale, and step in to respond to any violations of promises. Buying a nation is like buying a car, in that you can do whatever you want; however, we are talking here about people, who agree to the purchase transaction on certain conditions, so the I.O.O. monitoring the case is like contract enforcement at national levels.

Question 38

What sort of nation do we want to have in America?

Panelist indicated in Session 42 that the Question is too broad to deal with. Moderator read notes from the 'black book', with general agreement:

Considering the non-viability and low quality of life attending most other types of governments, probably want to stick with the basic American ideal of maximum personal freedoms, representative government, equal voting weight for each citizen (regardless of personal wealth), resources allocated by free-market forces (providing incentives to maximize quality and productivity), federal system where certain government functions are devolved down to smaller geographic entities (to allow for more variety and personal choices, as well as increased efficiency and quality), etc.

Non-author panelist also cited that she wanted much less silly restrictions on personal freedoms, a much more socialist way of governing, more socialized medicine, homes for the homeless, no crazy people turned out onto the street because there is no money in the system, more say over where money goes, more accountability in government, greater enforcement of campaign promises, and no more being the watchdog of the rest of the World. She also stated, however, that she could only speak for herself.

Remaining panel agreed with most of these points, but we had extensive discussion on the desired extent of socialized medicine, and on entitlement programs generally. Panelist wanted to see more, but we pointed out that we have limited resources, though we certainly could free up more than was then available. Agreed that it is difficult to assess appropriate levels until we get more data on where money is being spent now (scheduled for Part II), panelist particularly wanting to see how much of the government budget goes to consumption-based entitlements. Also agreed that 'subsidiarity' can apply here, where different smaller jurisdictions can establish different levels of consumption-based spending.

Good reception to our idea of one-stop shopping for homeless and immigrants.

SECTION I-B: GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION

Question 39

Do we want to have a completely centralized and unitary government, one which is completely de-centralized, or one which is federal with different functions assigned to different levels?

Agreed in Session 42 that it is good for America to maintain a federal system. Good to maintain same idea as with i.o.o., that the higher body should generally concentrate only on specific items, with more powers devolved to the lower levels.

Question 40

Any reason to change State boundaries as currently defined?

Initial response in Session 42 was a quick "No". [We added a suggestion later.]

Question 40.5

By what process should any changes in State boundaries be made?

Agreed in Session 42 that simply changing a boundary should require only a 2/3 majority of the populations of the affected States. To break up a State will enable greater Senate representation, so it should require a simple majority of Congress.

Question 41

Do we agree with the principle of subsidiarity?

"Yes". We answered 17 Questions in Session 42. Adjourned 11:41pm.

Question 42

What functions should be handled at the Federal level, and what functions should be handled at State or Local levels?

We assembled the following preliminary listing during Session 43 (June 1999):

| <u>Federal</u> | <u>State/Local</u> | <u>Both</u> |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| National Defense | Occupational Safety | Disaster Relief |
| Currency Administration | Consumption-Based Entitlements | Environment |
| Research & Development | Police/Fire Protection | Social Work |
| Disease Screening | Conservation | Taxation |
| Census & Statistics | Apportionment | Judiciary |
| Postal Service | Insurance Regulation | Law Enforcement |
| Foreign Relations | Arts | |
| Agriculture Monitoring | Water & Power | |
| Language Standardization | Elections | |
| Food & Drug Regulation | Education | Animal Regulation |
| Copyrights & Patents | Public Health | Garbage/Sewage Mgmt. |
| Trade | Street/Highway Maintenance | Libraries |
| Territorial Administration | Gun Regulation | Parks |
| Air Traffic Control | Drug/Liquor Licensing | Airports/Harbors |
| Railroad Maintenance | Emergency Health Care | Public Transportation |

We reviewed our discussion of Entitlements from the previous Session, and considered that different economies and different preferences can be suited by devolving to State/Local levels.

Panelist asked what would happen if a baby is born with advanced and expensive medical needs. We reviewed the basic economic principle of pooled resources.

We also considered the lack of knowledge by the Federal government about a specific family in Alaska, and the amount of resources used up by an inefficient Federal government in trying to learn.

What if all hard-working people move to Minnesota, and all people wanting to sponge off the government live in California? Hopefully, each State will have the opportunity to observe good things and problems in their own and all other States, move as needed, or remain and enact changes as needed, finally ending at optimum equilibrium. If mediating at a Federal level, we wouldn't have a choice.

Question 42.1

What if a wilderness area crosses a State boundary?

We could still have each State determine for itself how much Conservation it will manage for the portion within its boundaries, but panelist suggested in Session 43 that it might also be nice for tourists to be able to move around the entire area without having to worry about different State laws. We figured that it would then be meaningless to consider that the State boundary goes through the National Park/Wilderness/(whatever), so that the area should be considered the same as a federal Territory, where functions are managed as in any federal Territory, including those which are normally devolved to lower levels. [Reconsidered in Second Pass.]

Question 42 (continued)

What functions should be handled at the Federal level, and what functions should be handled at State or Local levels?

Disease Screening: Recalled discussion from Session 36 that we probably want to have Disease Screening checkpoints in different countries, to be on the conservative side. Found in Session 43 that the function should be managed at the Federal level, since if left to the States then we would not accomplish anything. Beyond this, there didn't appear to be much to be done in Immigration or Naturalization, since we did not have Citizenship in our model at the time.

Social Work: Panelist suggested that we should have Local facility for Social Workers to work with people who have problems living in normal society, including habitual criminals, drug addicts, diseased persons, and people living in their own filth. Moderator noted that we might want to have Federal orientation centers [later 'help centers'], so we put it in the 'Both' column for now.

Agriculture: Basically for monitoring of production, and also to check for Fruit Flies and stuff, but price-fixing and other controls should be left to the free market.

Elections: We could have the function at different levels, but we felt in Session 43 that we probably don't need it at the Federal level, since the personnel would be idle for 3½ years out of every 4, and since they would otherwise be duplicating effort, and since it is possible for a Federal candidate to file in a State election office, which would utilize a mechanism to share the filing with all other State election officials.

Question 43

Under what conditions should certain federal land not be assigned to any State, but rather be named a Territory?

We listed national parks, federal buildings and grounds, and the District of Columbia in Session 43. Fed can have option to decertify any existing State that ain't making it, and reconvert it to a Territory.

But, what about areas not able to manage themselves as States, or which are not States for some other reason? We read from the 'black book', with agreement:

If we agree with the principle of subsidiarity, then it is in the public interest to devolve as many functions as possible down to lower jurisdictions of government, and it is in the interest of such lower jurisdictions to have maximum flexibility in managing their own affairs. However, it may be that a particular geographic area that wishes to manage such affairs itself as a full-fledged State may not have the resources or expertise to do so (although most of these situations are probably best handled by combining said area with an existing State, unless the geography, population, or other factor(s) make it impractical). It is also possible that a geographic area may want to handle its own affairs, and may have the resources to do so, but may choose to defy the authority of the Federal government in areas over which the latter has jurisdiction. In these rare instances, the Federal government may determine that it would be in the national interest to administer such areas itself, defining as a "territory" any area whose needs and/or geographic features make it sufficiently different from any neighboring state or other territory.

We wondered, then, why Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Guam, etc., were not States. Noted to research specifics for latter, but presumption was that there was not sufficient evidence that they could self-manage.

Panelist asked how the call could be made about States and Territories. Congress decides, as with any other legislation. Adjourned 10:45pm.

Different panelist asked in Session 44 (July 1999) why National Parks were to be treated as Territories, and agreed with our note that State laws would apply if not, which would be too confusing.

Question 42 (continued)

What functions should be handled at the Federal level, and what functions should be handled at State or Local levels?

After we re-read our Federal list in Session 44 for confirmation, a panelist not present for the original construction asked re Taxation and Public Transportation, and

agreed with our placement. She agreed with our reasons for Entitlements that California people shouldn't be expected to support Rhode Island people, and that devolving allows for different philosophies. We moved Occupational Safety to the Both list, because panelist noted that a particular State might not be sufficiently motivated to be sufficiently aggressive when it is in the interest of the State to overlook violations, and that we should have an oversight mechanism. We moved Public Health to the Both list, basically for the same reason; noted that some version of the CDC may actually do it, but supported/monitored by the Fed. We moved Parks to the Both list because of the possibility of national parks. Panelist was also thinking in terms of more money for Animal Regulation, but also acknowledged that the Fed really shouldn't be sticking its nose in, and that routing local money through the Fed takes away from the process. We added Job Training to the Both list, and Communication, Business Regulation (Antitrust), and Securities to the Fed list.

Question 44

What rights -- if any -- should a Territory have?

Agreed in Session 44 to make statement that the Fed can designate additional specific laws for certain Territories, based on their size, location, demographics, specific functions, etc.; DC shouldn't be the same as national parks.

Noted that it was hard to deal with this Question, because Territories are so different from one another. Looked a lot at Congressional representation, and the possibility of self-determination of local laws.

Thinking in terms of allowing some level of Congressional representation, but reduced/eliminated self-administration. Appeared reasonable that both States and Territories are made up of People, and that in a representative democracy People living in a Territory should be entitled to representation -- and full representation, at that -- or else people will be de-motivated to live and work there, and a potentially valuable land is never developed and made fully productive. We didn't know yet what kind of Congress we would have, but representation in any population-based house should be at the same rate; representation in any other house(s) would need to be assessed after building our legislative structure.

Thinking of access to Federal funding.

Agreed that the rights of individuals in Territories should be the same as the rights of individuals anywhere else in America.

Rights of different Territories may depend on the type/class/category of each Territory. There are some which are defined as Territories perpetually, for specific reasons (such as D.C.), while others are Territories because they can't 'hack the knack'. Rules should be different, but this appeared to go directly to Question 45.

We read the note from the 'black book' about States being motivated to apply for deadmission (and, if this is denied, then they might intentionally fuck [sic] themselves up in order to get the Fed to take over). Panelist was not sure that States would really want to do that, but concurred with our analogy of a 20-30-something-year-old person still living with his parents: Most people want to be out on their own, but some others are so lazy that they're willing to sacrifice independence for having stuff done for them. In such a case, we agreed that it

would not be appropriate for the region to have full representation in Congress if it is doing no work, but then the individual People shouldn't be screwed, either. Agreed that if we do end up with multiple houses in Congress, then it would be okay for a Territory to have full representation in any population-based house(s), and no representation in any house(s) not based on population.

We agreed with the note in our 'black book', that the Fed can allow certain Territories to manage certain functions if it is determined that they can/will do them well.

Concept of federal funding goes to general concept of Revenue Sharing, to be treated in Question 412. Agreed for the present that we didn't anticipate needing/wanting any of this, but noted for later that we may revisit the topic, if allowing any kind of Revenue Sharing or Federal Funding.

Electoral College goes to that concept, too, and was to be treated under Questions 120/121, including possible exceptions for D.C. and/or other Territories.

Question 45

Should an exception be made for the District of Columbia?

[Third Pass: We considered the name and disposition of this Territory later on.]

Agreed to a Yes in Session 44. National Parks, beaches, wildlife reserves, and other sparsely-populated regions generally do not need anything beyond the population-based house(s), but the central government district probably should, due to its high population, and because it is directly involved in important national administration.

However, it probably does not need to have the same level of representation as other States, because (1) States have bigger problems and issues, (2) it is not as big as most States (less than 1/20th the size of Rhode Island, and only Wyoming has a smaller population), (3) it was specifically set up to have no internal politics which could conflict with more important national needs. It thus doesn't need the same number of Senators as a State, which would be good to have two Senators, to allow for divergent political opinion within the State. Therefore, if keeping current structure, then DC [*sic*] would get one Senator; if modifying, then it would get approximately 1/2 of whatever non-population representation is accorded to States.

Agreed that we didn't want an exception for self-administration, because if the district has an extensive internal administrative structure, then we would need to elect/appoint people to manage it, engendering a political environment which could conflict with more important national needs.

Question 46

Given that some functions are devolved to States, what role -- if any -- should Counties and Cities serve in the desired environment?

[Whenever we use the word 'County' or 'Counties', we refer also to Louisiana's 'Parishes', Alaska's 'Divisions', and any other such name assigned by any State.]

Agreed in Session 45 (July 1999) with notes in 'black book', that Counties are basically administrative arms of States (particularly large States -- smaller States

may not need Counties), that Cities can be places where certain laws can be adopted or not (so-called "indecent exposure" laws being a good example, provided that such adoption or non-adoption does not conflict with higher levels), and that Cities can also administer certain functions (parks, libraries, etc.) which affect only those Cities without bothering higher levels. [Modified slightly in Third Pass, as shown below.]

Question 47

Given the establishment of Counties and Cities, should each State be able to decide which government functions it wishes to retain at State level, and which to devolve?

Panelist in Session 45 didn't want the State to be given a large hunk of power to delegate to lower levels as it pleases. On the other hand, we also agreed that we should not allow the Fed to make those calls for all States, all States being different.

Also agreed that we should try to encourage Localities to assume as many functions as practical, and to get consensus of the entire State when it comes to having the State assume a given function. This is the sort of 'bottom-up' government which panelist wanted to see -- consistent with the Subsidiarity Principle.

Question 48

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

We took the preliminary listing which we had assembled in Session 43 and modified in Session 44, and in Session 45 expanded the list to assign each designated non-Federal function to either State, County, or City, or to some combination of these.

[Our eventual model will be only a default recommendation; individual States and/or communities may decide how their administrative functions are to be handled, based on their own collective needs and desires.]

Initial attempt is shown here. [As with the preliminary list, we adjusted later on.]

| State only | County only | City only | State & County | State & City | County & City | State & County & City | ? |
|-------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------------|--------------|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Apportionment | Fire | Police | | | Streets/Highways | | Entitlements |
| Insurance Reg. | Water/Power | Garbage | | | Public Transp. | | Conservation |
| Gun Regulation | Education | Libraries | | | | | Arts |
| Vehicle Regis. | Drug/Liquor Reg. | | | | | | Disaster Relief |
| Driver's Licenses | Emergency Health | | | | | | Environment |
| | Animal Regulation | | | | | | [latter 3 shared |
| | Sewage Mgmt. | | | | | | with Fed per S43] |
| | Worker's Comp. | | | | | | |

Big discussion on Entitlements. Non-author panelist in Session 45 argued vehemently against allowing any at all, not even allowing for communities to decide for themselves, on grounds that it is allegedly unfair for the majority to impose its will on the minority. We agreed to assign it at the next level up from the bottom [that is, County], since economic conditions (closed factory, natural disaster, etc.) which may warrant dipping into the relief fund will not stop at a municipal boundary.

Police assigned to lowest level. If we relied on a higher level, then they would need to know all laws in all sub-jurisdictions. Probably can expect each municipal police force to know the laws of that City and County and State and Nation. Probably therefore also don't need a National police force, and can more efficiently manage resources -- and have a better quality of life -- with only one set of police.

Fire assigned to County, because fires don't pay attention to municipal boundaries, and reciprocity agreements can be cumbersome.

Conservation appeared from earlier notes to relate mostly to establishment of wildlife preserves and other such facilities. Non-author panelist suggested that this would give Government an additional excuse to own too much land, alleging that the Fed already owned 30,000,000,000,000 acres of land. The panelist did not cite a source for the large figure, and the proposition did not achieve consensus of the panel.

Non-entitlement panelist wanted to privatize Water & Power as much as possible, and we didn't object, at least for the moment. However, we agreed to assign it as a County function for the present, to maximize likelihood of getting adequate technical experts (needed even if contracting out), and to minimize duplication of effort. But, we were both "fairly fuzzy" on it.

Education moved to a lower level to make it harder (and not worthwhile) for a few maniacs to muddy up the curriculum. [Reconsidered in Third Pass.]

Roads/Highways were proposed for State/County/City combination, but non-author panelist (who generally favored minimalist government) asked for little or no government involvement in that function at all. Panel compromised, noting that everyone benefits from people being able to use roads, even if an individual never leaves his house. However, people can also be assessed an extra charge for using vehicles which result in more wear-and-tear on the roads.

Interestingly, the same panelist also argued that Gun Possession may yet be considered a serious enough matter [mind you, this was back in July 1999] that we would want more uniformity in the rules, so that it would be easier to keep track. Panel found this to be a persuasive argument.

Too easy to violate Liquor laws if we move them all the way down to City level, for you could just cross a line and get a drink if you're a minor of a different age.

Why should Long Beach pay for disaster relief for Malibu? Issue is partly helped by making sure that the area's own funds are exhausted. How do we make sure that they were sufficiently funded to begin with? Panel not originally sure. Non-author panelist believed that all Disaster Relief should be handled through insurance, with larger risks being reinsured as needed.

Zoning added to City during Session 46 (July 1999). Noted that we probably don't need a separate bureaucracy for State Parks, especially since faraway State residents can't easily enjoy them, so placed in Fed/County/City list. Job Training would be redundant at City level, and many trainees would come from outside of the City, so placed in Fed/State/County list. Not sure yet about Elections, since may be more efficient at one level only, perhaps County; if having in more than one level, then make sure that all levels communicate well, to avoid duplication; tentatively assigned to Fed/State/County/City list.

Arts also established at the Federal level, in that we agreed that it is okay for the NEA to fund performances on PBS, and possibly to have one or more national museums in major tourist centers. However, we also want Arts funding and activity at the local levels for local residents to enjoy, so we placed it in Fed/County/City. Non-author panelist suggested without objection that the same people who manage Education should manage Art, to help make sure that Art is in the curriculum.

For function of Disaster Relief, earlier concern was clarified in Session 46 by having States and Counties anticipate what levels of funding places like Malibu should have, with the expectation that they will provide for such in their budgets. Any supplement from higher levels should be fairly low, thus encouraging Localities to set appropriate levels, rather than relying on higher levels to bail them out. It works for Disaster Relief to be managed by all levels, if having Taxation at all levels, as planned.

Question 49

Are we happy with the basic set-up of the Federal government as outlined in the Constitution?

We liked the three Branches as of Session 46, each with Checks & Balances on the others, to prevent any one Branch from becoming all-powerful. We like a single head of the Executive Branch for unity of command, though the panel was also considering an ExComm approach to the office of President.

Supreme Court was considered okay in Session 46 [we made some changes later], though we were considering that they might have too much power, and that we might want to limit their power or disable their lifetime tenure or something.

Congress was also considered to be okay in Session 46, but we allowed that we might want to make changes later on, which we ended up doing.

Overall was a Yes, and we agreed to incorporate the U.S. Constitution into our overall model, but also that there are certain specific elements of the Constitution that we might like to change when we get to the appropriate Sections of our Outline.

SECTION I-C: THE ELECTION PROCESS

There are five Subsections, being (1) Parties, Apportionment, and Voter Registration, (2) Qualifications for Office, (3) Campaign Reform, (4) Voting and Tallying, and (5) Recall Procedures. Section also contained some introductory Questions which treated the general methods by which an individual could be selected to fill a particular position in government.

Question 50

Having established that we in America wish to have certain functions handled by certain government entities associated with certain geographical jurisdictions, how best to determine which individuals are chosen to manage said functions?

We agreed in Session 46 with suggestion offered without solicitation by non-author panelist that this depends on the function.

Question 51

Should we determine one single method to select all government officials, or should the method of selection vary according to the function?

It should vary.

Question 52

What are our choices for method of selection?

We listed 13 possible methods in Session 46: Peer Panel, Election, Appointment, Promotion, Inheritance, Purchase, Self-Appointment, Random Drawing, Rotation, Seniority, Alphabetical Selection (a type of rotation), Computer, and Contests

Question 53

Which of these methods is to be recommended for each type of office?

Non-author panelist in Session 46 liked the idea that a peer group can recommend candidates for subsequent election or appointment. [Reconsidered in Third Pass.]

We generally want the best people for offices, especially as our environment and constituencies become more and more complex, so we dropped Alpha, Rotation, Random Drawing, Seniority, Purchase, and Inheritance as valid options.

Agreed that a fixed Promotion mechanism shouldn't be used, either, since there is no guarantee that a given official would be well-suited for a different or higher position.

We crossed off Computer as a valid option, both because most people will want to exercise human judgment and oversight over any presumably-imperfect program, and also because too easy for someone to tamper with a program without detection.

Probably no Contest would be sufficiently informative as to actual job qualifications.

Agreed that Self-Appointment without some kind of approval is unhealthy, and could create more problems than keeping the position vacant.

That left Peer Panels, Election, and Appointment as the only 3 really valid options.

Agreed after some brief discussion that it would be most appropriate to elect Executives and Legislators by the people, and for most Department heads and similar positions to be appointed. Where applicable, we were suggesting also that Peer Groups should nominate and/or screen candidates for Department positions.

Deferring the Judiciary to Question 300 in Section I-F.

In considering which selection method should apply to which type of function, we adopted Resolution #2A, that "Most or all legislative and senior executive government positions should be filled by individuals elected by the general populace, the will of the majority of the electorate being the best determinant of who should serve in which capacity", and Resolution #2B, that "Most or all subordinate executive

government positions should be filled by appointment of higher levels, candidates for such positions to be nominated and/or screened by peer groups as applicable."

Question 54

How shall it be determined in real life which method is used for each office?

Panel in Session 46 agreed with Moderator suggestion that each jurisdiction at each level should have its own constitution or charter, to include the process by which it gets amended. Process of selection method for each position or class of positions should be programmed into the constitution/charter. Adjourned at 10:03pm.

Subsection I-C-1: Parties, Apportionment, and Voter Registration

Question 55

How shall we define 'political party' for the purpose of this discussion?

Notes from Session 47 (July 1999) are incomplete on this point. Suggested that the label could be applied by any persons to themselves, but apparently not agreed.

Question 56

For what purposes could political parties be used?

We identified 12 potential purposes for which political parties could be used:

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) Banding together to increase power | (7) Selecting leadership in Legislature |
| (2) Fundraising | (8) Division of labor |
| (3) Publicity | (9) 'Keeping score' of the national mood |
| (4) 'Brand Name' shortcut | (10) Encouraging voter registration |
| (5) Assistance from govt (funding, airtime, etc.) | (11) Encouraging absentee voting |
| (6) Narrowing selection field for given office | (12) Apportionment |

Question 57

Which -- if any -- of these functions do we consider to be healthy and constructive in today's environment?

Following points are presented in the order discussed during Session 47:

P1) It is necessary to band together in order to get anything done; one person can't do anything alone. No problem with this function, then, but power can be abused.

P4) We want voters to form their own assessments. If a voter doesn't care enough about an election and its outcome to put in a minimal amount of reading, homework, watching debates, etc., then we don't need his vote, and he [*sic*] can stay home. Uninformed voters tend to randomize the result, and can lead to a negative outcome.

P9) This approach creates an adversarial environment, and also is misleading by assuming that all people in one set are alike and have nothing in common with members of the other set. In other words, it makes the groups mutually exclusive,

which is both inaccurate to assume and dangerous to try to enforce. Additional reason against it is that the meaning of the party labels can change over time.

P10) Anyone who needs to be encouraged to register probably shouldn't register. We want only people who care enough about the process to do at least some minimal research, and any such people will be self-motivated to register. Allowing/encouraging others tends to randomize and skew the result, defeating the entire purpose of having an election.

P11) Reasons for P10 also apply here. In addition, we received preliminary approval at this time for notes on absentee voting, that voters are cheating themselves by not allowing themselves access to all available information, and also cheating the system by randomizing the result. Mechanism should be available for people who really need it, but should be a last resort. Panelist added that fraud is possible with absentee voting. [Reconsidered in Third Pass.]

P7) Agreed that it is unfair to disenfranchise legislators who are not members of the 'party in power', whatever that means.

P5a) Agreed that government subsidy of elections and campaigns is inappropriate, provided that we either place limits on what rich candidates buy and/or provide minimum coverage for all candidates.

P5b) Non-author panelist who generally favored minimalist government expressed opposition to allowing any air time for any candidate, but conceded a minimal picture and campaign statement in a ballot pamphlet, and public-sponsored debates if no others are available. Question raised on what happens if one or more candidates can't make it to a public debate; responded that poorer candidates may have this as their only chance to shine, so they should plan their entire campaigns around it; would not be in the public interest for them to be there if they are too dumb to do it.

P8) Panel was not sure that this function argues either for or against parties, but generally agreed that it's good to do. More efficient is less costly. On the other hand, formalizing the process under a political organization means that they must take money from donors, making the incumbents indebted and subservient to them.

P2) We don't want any incumbent owing a significant amount to any organization, for it creates a conflict of interest.

P3) Moderator was fuzzy, since politicians should be able to team up if they wish, but it encourages a 'shortcut to thinking' and an adversarial environment. On balance, bad for political parties to be involved in publicity, since it encourages P4, adversarial environment, 'shortcut to thinking', misleading labels, etc; however, no problem if individual candidates wish to ally themselves with other individual candidates for other offices, if they think that they can work together well. Voters should be able to select candidates individually even if they are running in a slate, if they dislike any of them. Panelist asked what to do if a candidate declares that he will not work with a certain other candidate if they both are elected; response that he [*sic*] is damaging his own political chances, since a good public servant should be able to work with anyone whom he needs to, and that he should resign if he says/feels that he should.

P12) Involving political parties in the process contributes to an adversarial environment, making invalid assumptions about people and communities, etc.

P6) Suggested that it is arbitrary to say that these 5 candidates should have a primary election with one another, that those other 7 should, that these 3 should, while this guy and that guy and one other advance automatically. What if you have one candidate of one political philosophy, and three candidates of another philosophy, and they end up splitting the vote? Referred to Question 59.

Question 58

Should political parties be used to narrow the selection field for any given office?

Notwithstanding that we were not yet prepared to address P6 in Session 47, panel yet felt that political parties should not be used for narrowing selection fields. Agreed that we can rely on the 1st, 2nd, and 4th notes suggested in our 'black book' of preliminary ideas, specifically (1) that parties tends to polarize the community, (2) that candidates within a given party often disagree and are later forced to put on a false face of support for their erstwhile opponents for the sake of the party and against the public interest, and (4) that candidates and incumbents may be tempted to base their actions on the desires of the party rather than on those of the general public. On the last point in particular, two people in the same party might want to vote the same way on one issue, but different ways on another issue, and they would be strong-armed to vote the same way on both issues for the sake of the party, which is what majority and minority Whips are for.

Question 59

If we go to a party-less ballot, how would we deal with the possibility that two or more philosophically similar candidates might split the vote, allowing the election of a third candidate who would not ordinarily obtain a majority?

Non-author panelist preferred in Session 47 to narrow the selection field to 2-3 candidates, so that we would not have that much vote-splitting, but that doesn't really address the Question. Panelist didn't think that a situation with only 3 people would come up that often, but was willing to allow for the possibility by allowing the narrowing of the field to 2 candidates.

Panelist also stated (without comment from the Moderator) that we should make sure that there always are two elections, instead of one with the possibility of runoff.

In general, we were stating that we could use some method or other to narrow the selection field ourselves, and had stated in A58 that we are actively discouraging the use of political parties in that process, so that answered Q59 and last item in Q57.

Question 60

Should political parties be used to determine who fills certain special positions within legislative bodies?

We already answered No, and agreed in Session 47 with language from our 'black book' of preliminary ideas, including that "certain perfectly qualified legislators are disempowered from participating in the selection process", and that "some pairs of individuals from different parties may be closer together philosophically (on some

issues, at least) than other pairs within the same party, but one of each such pair is aced out of the process, as a result of some vague, nebulous, and meaningless construct of where everybody supposedly fits on some philosophical continuum”.

Question 61

What method(s) should be used, then, to determine who fills these positions?

In general, we preferred as of Session 47 to allow legislatures to set their own election procedures, depending on each assembly’s size, scope, level, demographics, duties, etc., provided that all individual legislators are allowed to have a full vote.

How do we keep the rules from changing all the time? Agreed that assemblies should have the option to change their rules from time to time, but that it shouldn’t be too easy, lest some individual or group be unfairly aced out. Panelist suggested having a waiting period for implementation of any change, to prevent any one group from benefitting directly; Moderator also pointed out availability of devices like 2/3 majority, repeating ballots over time, executive veto, and popular referenda.

How does a new group get its procedures established? We cited from *Robert’s Rules of Order* about an individual wanting to form a group, holding an organizational meeting, serving as temporary chair unless someone else wants to be, adopting rules of order, and adopting a set of bylaws or other standard procedures, to include procedures for filling special positions within the assembly.

Agreed with note in our ‘black book’ that a group’s bylaws should explicitly prohibit the use of political parties/affiliations as a determining factor in any internal election.

Question 62

Should political parties be used for ‘keeping score’ in voter registration, legislative elections, Presidential elections, or any other purpose?

Non-author panelist spoke in Session 47 against polling as being very manipulative, especially if faking the results.

Agreed that ‘keeping score’ -- whether by polling (even if the results are reported accurately), or by a map showing Red and Blue states, or by any other mechanism -- is misleading, divisive, and generally destructive of the political process.

Question 62.5

To what extent (if at all) should political parties be used in the selection process?

Non-author panelist in Session 47 responded, “Not much, I guess.” Panel clarified that it is okay for candidates to select and obtain assistance in their campaigns (unrealistic to expect them to do without), but that we don’t want an adversarial environment, misleading information, or ‘shortcuts to thinking’, so we are opposed to printing any such organizational affiliation on any ballot form or campaign statement. Any organizational affiliation should not be used for line drawing, filling positions within legislative bodies, or any other formal part of the political process.

Question 55 (continued)

How shall we define 'political party' for the purpose of this discussion?

Noted later in Session 47 that it is possible to have a procedural step of filling out some form to declare that a given party exists.

Question 62.5 (continued)

To what extent (if at all) should political parties be used in the selection process?

On further reflection, agreed that it is okay (and even desirable) for candidates to disclose any affiliations in the text of their campaign statements, but any such label is not to be used in the statement heading, and not on the actual ballot at all.

Therefore, registration of political parties probably is not necessary.

Introduced definitions of 'pluralism' and 'pluralistic environment' at this time without objection, both referring to a system where we elect People not Parties.

At this time, adopted our Resolution #3, as follows: "Candidates for office may choose to attach themselves to one or more organizations to help with fundraising, publicity, and other such chores, but such affiliations should not appear on any ballot, and should not factor into the filling of any office within any legislature."

Question 63

Currently, the 'party in power' has authority over drawing Congressional district lines. In a pluralistic environment, how should those lines be drawn and updated?

Lines should be drawn without regard to voting patterns or other behaviors of residents. Same people should be drawing lines for different levels, because they have the technical expertise, plus evens out the workload over the Census period.

Determined in Session 47 that each State should decide for itself how the drawing people shall be selected (either full-time employees, part-time independent contractors/consultants, or unpaid volunteers), since each State has different size, demographics, topography, and budgetary constraints.

Also agreed that it is still in the interest of the State to come up with a fair apportionment for the U.S. Congress, so that the body can still operate and make good decisions on issues affecting the State as well as generally.

Question 64

What should the guiding principle(s) be in drawing the lines?

Again, should not regard voter behavior. We presumed in Session 47 that we are keeping the decennial Census, but noted that we might not do so. Agreed that we want to change periodically, because population shifts. Possibility of popular voting.

Agreed that the districts should represent equal numbers of people, not voters.

Basic principle of representative government is that a representative is representing a community of similar demographics, geographics, economy, or something.

Must have compactness, for less compact means less likely to be unified community.

We should keep the lines fairly simple, both to facilitate ratification and to discourage definition of communities in terms of someone's backyard. For, basing a district on individual residences suggests political expediency instead of the public interest.

Question 65

Should the Fed draw the lines?

Agreed in Session 47 that the Fed is too big and far-removed from Localities to define accurately where communities exist.

Question 66

If not the Fed, then who should have authority to draw the lines?

Agreed in Session 47 that it might be problematic for Counties or Cities to do, since district lines can cross their boundaries. Probably good for States to administer.

Question 67

Should the States manage the actual drawing process, or should we devolve to Counties, or should we try to have Communities self-draw?

Agreed in Session 47 that self-drawing probably is not workable. Probably better to make sure that we have someone from each Locality on the drawing panel, to make sure that some familiarity exists as to local demographics.

Question 68

Which agencies of the State should have control over the line-drawing process?

Answer per Session 47 is the State Elections Office, as defined in Answer 48. Again, the Office should solicit input from individuals in different areas of the State.

Question 69

What rules -- if any -- should be imposed on the drawing committees?

In talking about angle restriction, and the possibility that existing angles in Ventura Boulevard could be ignored, a non-author panelist suggested in Session 47 that we could express a limit as ≤ 8 non-pre-existing angles, or some other such. [Added during Third Pass that we later found it easier to speak in terms of line segments than angles.]

We drew on our whiteboard a sample figure consisting of two congruent regular trapezoids, with one inverted such that the shorter sides meet up in the middle.

Total figure is 2 units high, each long side is 2 units, and the narrow space across the middle is $\frac{2}{3}$ unit. We selected this shape because we felt it to be 'borderline' in terms of how strange a simple polygon could be and still be considered compact enough to possibly serve as a legislative district. The area of this figure is $\frac{8}{3}$ square units, and the longest straight-line distance between any two points on the perimeter is 2 times the square root of 2. The square of the longest straight-line distance is 3 times the total area, so that is our maximum ratio for any district.

We added a no-concavity requirement, to help mitigate kooky shapes, but the rule may ignore natural boundaries such as mountains and rivers, and certain artificial boundaries such as freeways, major streets, and pre-existing political boundaries.

Panelist noted that people in oceanfront or riverfront communities have unique concerns, especially as to pollution or boat noise, and we readily concurred that we probably should make an exception to any model for those.

For comparison, the classic 'Golden Section' of Greek geometry (an oblong where the ratio of the short side to the long side is the same as the ratio of the long side to the sum of the two sides) has the square root of 5 (= 2.236...) as the proportion of the square of the longest straight-line distance to the total area.

We thought about having a straight square (which has a corresponding proportion of 2) at one end, the Golden Section in the middle, and our cutoff at the other end, but feared that the other end would be too low. Panelist also was concerned that we would get leftover areas in real life which we could not incorporate without violating the rules. We'll see...

Agreed after discussion to give preliminary approval to the 3-rule model (with 3.0 as upper cutoff for L^2/A), pending results of a research exercise to carve out X districts in a real-life area (probably So. Calif.), using real Census data. Adjourned 11:58pm.

Question 68 (continued)

Which agencies of the State should have control over the line-drawing process?

Minimalist panel member ruled out ratification by entire population in Session 48 (August 1999), alleging that "the population is too stupid to rule on such matters", better phrased as that many people do not have sufficient mathematical inclinations to be of much help. It would be more practical if we go through the process every 10 years instead of every 2 years; however, we noted that most States would still need at least three plans (U.S. House, State Senate, State Assembly) adopted every 10 years, so it still is a big job.

Also noted that a huge amount of technical information would need to be submitted to the public, more than they probably could be expected to absorb. We have legislators in place specifically to manage technical stuff like that. Finally, we probably would have a situation where a voter doesn't like what's happening on his block or in his neighborhood, and will vote against the plan on that basis, so most voters will vote against the plan, for 16 million different reasons.

We considered having the Legislature draw the lines, but agreed that there would be too much potential for conflict of interest, even if they are merely overseeing the process. Governor or Judiciary may be able to exercise oversight.

Determined that a good approach would be for the panel (which for this purpose must be rather sizable, such as with one person from each County) to approve a draft plan by majority vote, and submit it to the Governor, who would either approve or veto it, just like a passed bill; if vetoed, then the panel can override by a 2/3 vote.

Okay for the Judiciary to throw out a plan only if there is strict violation of any specific rules/laws; may not throw out because the plan is allegedly unfair to some group or constituency, as long as the rules are followed. They may interpret what constitutes a 'logical' boundary for our concavity rule. Also okay for them to grant exceptions which may be requested by the panel, but they may not order any, because it is outside their authority. Exceptions -- with appropriate ranges -- could be written into the actual rules, and we are so recommending. (For example, the number of angles must be ≤ 8 , unless the State Supreme Court grants exceptions, in which case the limit can go up to 12, but may not exceed 12 under any conditions.) Okay to leave up to each State whether they wish to incorporate any possible exceptions into their rules, and what those shall be, since each State is different.

On the construction of the panel, we discussed different possibilities. One was tying selection to existing Congressional districts, but we rejected on account of the high possibility that a panel rep would be a close ally of the incumbent Congressman. One panelist from each County will probably not be enough. After discussion, settled on having each County elect X number of panel representatives, where X equals the County's share of the total panel population, which is equal to the total number of Congressmembers in that State (including the two Senators, so that each State would have at least three panelists), apportioned among the Counties according to population, rounded to the nearest whole panelist. Nice because (among other things) the number of panelists rises and falls with State population, as appropriate.

Question 70

If voters are not required to identify themselves with parties, then should we still have voter registration?

Non-author panelist thought so as of Session 48, in order to verify that the person exists, that they are unique, and that they [*sic*] live where they say. Otherwise, it is too easy to have voter fraud.

Question 71

Who should be permitted to register to vote?

We felt it important as of Session 48 to make sure that people from foreign Nations don't come in and vote in large numbers, as it could subvert our Nation.

Panelist believed that a voter should be living within the country for at least 5 years (and possibly 10, but willing to compromise) before being allowed to vote. Moderator could go with requiring them to have lived in country for 5 years, in order to make sure that they are sufficiently knowledgeable about the culture and political process and stuff to vote intelligently and constructively. Other panelist, however,

seemed to be worried about the influence of foreign ideologies, so he suggested that residency must be consecutive. Moderator didn't see the same problem.

In course of discussion, panelist stated that he didn't want tyranny, but didn't want to place too much power in the hands of people, either.

Extended discussion on political parties and scope of government, and degree to which people should be allowed to change, and other stuff.

Question 70 (continued)

If voters are not required to identify themselves with parties, then should we still have voter registration?

In discussion of Question 71 during Session 48, the 'minimalist' panelist wanted to establish that we want some limitation on government in America. Moderator acknowledged that our statement on maximum personal freedoms in Answer 38 implies government limitations. Given that, we agreed that there should be some limitations on the behavior of politicians. How do we enforce such limitations? One method which the minimalist panelist had been pushing is to limit who can vote, since bad voters could elect people who would be likely to behave illegally.

Moderator started to diverge here: Such limitations would not necessarily prevent people from getting in who would try to subvert the process, so we would therefore need institutional safeguards to prevent it. But, those safeguards would hopefully suffice to prevent any politician from subverting the process, so we shouldn't need a residency requirement for that reason.

Question 71 (continued)

Who should be permitted to register to vote?

We seemed to be agreed in Session 48 on the general principles, and the minimalist panelist acknowledged the possibility that the suggested residency requirement may possibly not be the best mechanism for achieving them. However, he noted that he would like to see some indication (actually, he said "proof", but how could that be possible?) that a given voter is planning to stay here awhile, and is willing to be subjected to whatever laws are passed here, before being allowed to help influence such laws by voting.

Reasonable to want some indication of willingness to abide by passed laws. But, how do we do that? Even if coming from this country, changing conditions (job offers, political/economic climate, etc.) will motivate some people to leave within a short period, so no one will sign an affidavit of intent to stay in the country for a certain period of time. Few would make oral statements, and we couldn't rely on them anyway. So, we guessed that we were going back to previous residency as indicating pattern and the likelihood of future behavior.

We wanted to avoid situations where people come into an area shortly before an election, vote, and then go home. We brought up the example of completing the 710 Freeway in or under or near South Pasadena, where people from outside the districts might be imported to sway the vote one way or the other. Another example was raised of Texas-born diplomat Edward Mandell "Colonel" House, who in vicinity

of 1913 moved immigrants around to different districts which were narrowly divided between two major parties; we claimed in response that this will be less of a problem with the elimination [per Answer 62.5] of political parties.

Problem is best solved by having some requirement that you must be registered in a certain area for some minimum period of time before actually voting there. [Noted in Third Pass that this will upset certain people who favor allowing registrations as late as Election Day itself.] Challenge is to select a time period long enough to mitigate voter fraud (though we will never totally get rid of it), but short enough so as not to disenfranchise too many legitimate voters.

Discussion followed of whether registration should be tied to residency, or could be tied to place of employment, or could be anywhere within the country. Moderator claimed anywhere (to be considered in Question 72.5), but the 'minimalist' panelist was afraid that the Sierra Club or residents of New York might band together in a movement to subvert our setup in California. Moderator claimed that they would be highly challenged to come up with sufficient numbers to accomplish their goal, and that we could mitigate the likelihood further by having a sufficiently long pre-registration requirement to allow us sufficient notice of their intent to encourage more voter turnout within the State.

What if New York gangs up against Wyoming, where the numbers are easier? Moderator saw it as unlikely that they're gonna have such problems with Wyoming; even if they do, they would be disenfranchising themselves in New York, and it would be unlikely that so many people would be satisfied with the government there.

Finally agreed that it would be good to have a requirement that a voter should be registered in a district for a certain time period before being allowed to vote there, but we were not yet decided whether this is sufficient.

Minimalist panelist made potentially good point, though, that a voter who is registered in a way other part of the country will not be living under the conditions which are voted on, so we can't trust him to vote conscientiously. Deferred further discussion on this topic to Question 72.5 on whether you must vote where you live.

Returning to actual Q71, the 'minimalist' panelist suggested that women possibly should be discouraged from voting, because they are allegedly less understanding of the political process. Moderator questioned how he arrived at that conclusion, with response that we could construct objective tests. Moderator stated that we could do that for all voters, and that we might consider such under Question 76; agreed.

Moderator asked panelist for all possible reasons why we might disenfranchise someone. He gave that voters should be human, alive, and conscious in order to vote; agreed. Moderator also agreed with certified insane as a reason to disenfranchise. Okay to allow blind people to vote.

Remaining possible reasons for disenfranchisement were listed as chronological age (either too old or too young), moved here from Mexico yesterday, not living in America, prisoners, ex-prisoners, illiteracy (must at least read ballot), and poor facility with language generally or English language specifically. [Amended later.] To be dealt with in this or future Questions as appropriate. Adjourned 11:52pm.

Question 32.3 (continued)

Should the I.O.O. get involved in a nation's alleged violation of human rights?

In performing review of past decisions for two new panelists in Session 49 (August 1999), we entertained point that we might have a problem if we are wanting to help refugees leave an oppressive country, but there's nowhere for them to go.

Question 19 (continued)

The 'One World' question: Could we get away with one government for the entire world, or is it necessary to have more than one?

New panelists in Session 49 raised point that we may want to discourage too many variations in laws from one country to the next.

Question 558

At what level of government should education be supervised?

Preliminarily suggested by two new panelists in Session 49 that we should have national standards for Education, and can then allow state and local variations as appropriate. Carried forward for when we consider this Question in earnest.

Question 70 (continued)

If voters are not required to identify themselves with parties, then should we still have voter registration?

New panelist suggested in Session 49 that we probably should do away with voter registration, since it creates more regulation and since people will find a way to commit fraud however the system is set up. This posture was not adopted.

Another new panelist noted that we don't vote now the way that the Founding Fathers intended: We are more concerned with appearances now.

Question 17 (continued)

Is it necessary to have any kind of government at all in modern society?

New panelist in Session 49 suggested 'direct democracy'. Noted that our Answer 49 supported representative government, but that we could reconsider.

We mentioned the value of debate and discussion among representatives over Internet chatrooms and stuff; new panelist responded that a panel could discuss and come up with positions, and finally submit them to voters, like a ballot proposition.

Question 71 (continued)

Who should be permitted to register to vote?

Tending to agree with the two new panelists in Session 49 that tying voter registration to chronological age is not a good idea.

Question 17 (continued)

Is it necessary to have any kind of government at all in modern society?

Moderator also mentioned in Session 49 that legislators have more time to deal with complex and technical topics. Agreed that, in general, one needs to have both knowledge of and interest in a given matter (or at least knowledge) before a vote could be trusted. Panelist also made good point that we would like to see less complexity involved in the legislative process, so that it would be easier for "random people" to have greater participation.

Question 2 (continued)

Should we look only at isolated topics, or should we construct a 'whole agenda' covering everything?

New panelist in Session 49 made good general note that she looked at all this from the perspective of an alien in a spaceship. Seems like a good analogy of our Project.

Question 70 (continued)

If voters are not required to identify themselves with parties, then should we still have voter registration?

New panelist made good suggestion in Session 49 that the hassles of voter registration can be avoided by issuing a card with a computer chip which could be placed in a slot like an ATM card. Moderator questioned what would happen if card got lost or stolen. [Noted in Third Pass that this scenario is more likely when the card is used only once every two years.] Group said first (half-jokingly) that if the owner is so irresponsible as to lose his card, then we probably don't want his vote, anyway. Then, the original panelist said that the card could have a procedure like a credit card, where you report the card as lost/stolen, and then it's invalidated and can't be used again. Agreed that this is a good idea. [Reconsidered in Third Pass.]

Panelist noted in Session 50 (August 1999) that we could use fingerprints on a screen to prevent duplication. [Also reconsidered in Third Pass.]

Question 32.3 (continued)

Should the I.O.O. get involved in a nation's alleged violation of human rights?

Panel considered idea in Session 50 of having I.O.O.-staffed embassies/offices in each city, on the idea that people in an oppressed country who want to leave need to have a place to go to get the I.O.O.'s attention. Agreement established with the concept that people should have access to the I.O.O., but one panelist was hesitant to establish physical offices because of overhead costs, and not knowing what staff would do while waiting for people to request to be assisted in leaving.

In discussion, another panelist asked whether we should establish any minimum size for a country; added as Question 29.2 at this time.

Panelist suggested that people could use computers to alert the I.O.O. of conditions needing their attention, but we noted that most residents of oppressive nations will be too poor to have access to computers, or will not be so allowed. [Noted in Third Pass that technology has advanced much since 1999, such that more oppressed persons now have communication access.]

One panelist suggested that an "I.O.O. center" could accumulate data on Health, Education, Employment, etc. Another panelist responded that such additional functions are "busy work" which we are trying to eliminate for simplification. First panelist agreed with second panelist's desire for simplification, but still saw need for Health monitoring.

Moderator asked what embassy offices are currently doing all day. One panelist suggested that they are wasteful, but another indicated that activities depend on the country, but that they frequently have cultural activities.

The 'no-waste' panelist noted that a hostile country would not be willing to cooperate with statistics personnel.

Moderator suggested that we could relieve the personnel problem by having a kiosk with phones. The 'no-waste' panelist liked it, but the 'pro-monitoring' panelist wanted a place for people to go for sanctuary. They both noted that sanctuary needs to involve military protection, complicating things further.

The 'no-waste' panelist suggested a one-world government, but we noted the reasons why that approach would be bad.

We couldn't rely on regular phones to be all over the place [not even in 1999], so any kiosk would need to be installed and maintained by the I.O.O.

The 'pro-monitoring' panelist didn't think that physical places would need military protection if we rely on countries respecting the sanctuary of the building, but noted that some countries will not do so.

Agreed that we don't want to legislate each country to have an embassy in each and every other country, but each country can be expected to have at least one embassy in it. Maybe we can rely on these offices, but what if a country doesn't agree to pass any would-be refugees on to the I.O.O.? We can legislate that the embassy will always alert the I.O.O. when requested, but how do we enforce such a measure without International personnel in place?

The 'no-waste' panelist suggested that if we have a one-world government, then we won't have the same problems. She said that existing governments will all have expired by Year 2150. Noted that perhaps we should reconsider Question 19.

Question 220.5

Should there be an 'international language', and what should it be if so?

Discussion of the possibility of an 'international language' was raised in Session 50 while considering Question 32.3; packaged as Q220.5 in the Third Pass. Noted at the time that English is not as flexible as some other languages. [More later.]

Question 32.3 (continued)

Should the I.O.O. get involved in a nation's alleged violation of human rights?

Panelist in Session 50 proposed deferring present discussion until after working on voter registration, etc., with response that discussion on voter registration depends on the existence of America, which we wouldn't have with a one-world government.

Question 19 (continued)

The 'One World' question: Could we get away with one government for the entire world, or is it necessary to have more than one?

Agreed in Session 50 that it would be good for the I.O.O. to have authority over certain issues of international import, especially Environmental Protection. We were thinking, though, that other functions which are more localized should be in the charge of smaller governments, but discussion continued. New panelist wanted to be able to cross borders freely. [Again, though, this was back in 1999.]

Question 32.3 (continued)

Should the I.O.O. get involved in a nation's alleged violation of human rights?

Moderator shared some points from earlier Answers, including wanting per A21 to be able to move around different countries freely. Panelist's two responses: (1) Who pays for the relocation of refugees? Depends on situation: If moving voluntarily, then I should be expected to pay; if it's as a result of government oppression, then the I.O.O. can fund relocation. (2) What if the refugee wants to go to Paris? If leaving for government oppression, then the destination is unimportant.

To what extent would the global community want/need to be involved in refugee relocation? This goes to general economic principles, which would depend on A19.

Question 19 (continued)

The 'One World' question: Could we get away with one government for the entire world, or is it necessary to have more than one?

A panelist in Session 50 asked about Smuggling, but before we could get to that, we addressed first: Who would establish 'minor' laws if a one-world government does only the 'major' stuff but still doesn't want lower bureaucratic levels? Another panelist suggested the example of variable Speed Limits, our response being that each jurisdiction should define its own. She thought that the law would have no impact, since no one changed when the speed limit was raised, but we responded that other areas could experience change in average speed, so laws are relevant, and therefore need to be decided by somebody.

Question 32.3 (continued)

Should the I.O.O. get involved in a nation's alleged violation of human rights?

Discussion of 'morality', but fuzzy on definition, and as to the degree to which morality changes with countries or is universal.

Question 19 (continued)

The 'One World' question: Could we get away with one government for the entire world, or is it necessary to have more than one?

As of Session 50, it appeared consistent with the absence of Citizenship that one could bring anything anywhere. Discussion then went to Taxation, with two newer panelists suggesting that a national sales tax is actually unfair, in that poor people may need government more than rich people, but noted that we would take this up in Section II-C. [Noted in Third Pass that we did program 'regressivity' out of our Sales Tax model in Section II-C, poor people to be recipients not contributors.]

Question 6 (continued)

What is a 'right'?

Session 50 concluded with further discussion of Rights, including our then-fuzzy definition. Agreed that we might try to establish a revised definition, and reconsider other Rights-related Questions, including whether we really do have some Fundamental Rights, one of which might be 'clean air' according to one panelist.

Panelist in Session 51 (August 1999) defined Rights as a "bundle of basic privileges".

Another panelist read from the "Dictionary of the History of Ideas" a definition which appeared to contain circular reasoning. Also suggested 'rights' being so ambiguous that we may not be able to define them in strict 'Aristotelian' terms, and that it may be possible and necessary to operate on an 'undefined' basis, such as in Euclidean geometry, where theorems come from the use of undefined terms like 'points'.

We read from previous notes and the definitions from legal sources, and a panelist found a problem with the lack of social discussion in Black's description.

We mentioned our current definition. One panelist had a problem with it, saying something about having the definition depend on the concept of freedom, whereas she thought that we should go the other way around, or something. Another panelist suggested changing 'freedom' to 'ability', but acknowledged that it wouldn't apply in the example of someone robbing a bank; she was willing to accept the then-current working definition pending something better.

First panelist's principal objection apparently stemmed from the idea that our definition gave all people the right to do anything that they wanted, regardless of impact on others, to include waiving certain rights or ignoring certain responsibilities (she gave example of refusing education). After discussion, she became clearer that we were not making that statement. She also suggested putting 'and/or' after the comma, to stress the inclusive nature of the definition; we had no real problem with this, but we didn't see how both conditions could happen at the same time.

Good point about rights of individuals and societies, with agreement that it appears possible for groups to have rights too, and that our definition appears to allow this.

Panelist suggested to add phrasing after 'benefit' to specify what can and cannot be done, but this was beyond the scope of the definition, to be treated in later Q's.

Another panelist said something about the definition automatically including waiver of rights, but we brought up example of right to life versus right to commit suicide, as showing that rights waivers are not *ipso facto*, but must be addressed as separate Question(s), and included in our overall model about Rights if not in the basic definition. Agreed, with renewed consensus, pending further thought/research.

Question 7 (continued)

What rights (if any) are inherent in all human beings, regardless of where or how they choose to live, and which rights are only optionally agreed to by members of a civil society?

Panelist suggested during Session 51 that our current definition of 'rights' implies that no rights are natural, since they can never be guaranteed, which is consistent with our previous finding. However, another panelist suggested that people may have a fundamental right to Air, Water, Thought, and something else.

Is a clean environment a Fundamental or Civil right? Moderator tended to think that it is more Civil, since it depends on Legislation. Second panelist said that we have no right to pollute Air or Water under any conditions, since we are all One World and One Family. Third panelist noted that it is difficult/impossible to live as Human Beings without generating some waste products. Moderator also noted that what is Pollution to some is useful Biology to others. Second panelist would reconsider.

Another panelist spoke on certain qualities which we need to have before we can become Human Beings, but we were fuzzy on all this.

Question of to what extent Computers may think, and what Rights they may have, with Moderator positing that a fundamental difference between Humans and Computers -- no matter what advancements may ever be made in how they process information -- is that we generate our own decisions to do stuff, whereas Computers only respond to user instructions. [Again, though, this was only 1999, practically ancient history by now.] Panelist suggested that we may not have Freedom of Will, and disputed our Answer 3.5, but not officially.

Brief discussion of Animal rights, tending toward idea that our biological system requires that some organisms must subsist on other organisms, but that Animals may have a right to no unnecessary suffering, not indicating whether this is Natural or Civil. She saw this as a third kind of Human Right, beyond Natural and Civil, but we never established this. Agreed to do/redo Q's 19-21, 29.1, 29.2, and 32.3 after finalizing, and any others arising from any changes, then Q43 and from Q70 on.

Determined at beginning of Session 52 (August 1999) that adequate evaluation of this Question may necessitate review of Question 6.3 on the Sources of Rights.

Question 6.3 (continued)

Where do rights come from?

Moderator cited in Session 52 that there are two possible types of Rights, being Natural and Civil; agreed.

There are two possible sources of Natural rights: Either they are a concomitant aspect of our Existence, or else they come from one or more Higher Powers.

Panelist was uncomfortable ascribing the granting of Rights to "unknown" Power(s). We concurred that it is difficult to ascribe such gifts of Rights with authority to a Power or group of Powers whom we are not unequivocally able to identify. If some Rights do come from a Creator, then our different belief systems make it fuzzy for us to figure out which ones do. I have my Belief system, but I recognize the difference between Belief and Knowledge.

Thus, either they come from Existence (as the panelist believed), or else the Monday group was correct all along, and all Rights derive from a Social Contract.

Panelist suggested that the historical pattern has been that attackers/conquerors generally knew that their acts were 'wrong', but we countered that many conquerors (Hitler being an extreme example, Richard I and Cardinal Ximenez being others) sincerely believed that they were doing the right thing.

Multiple panelists were "frightened" that our Rights are subject to the whims of Society, but this may actually be the case.

Panelist noted that Violence is inherent in us. How do we overcome it? We suggested through Cooperation and Wisdom and Tolerance and other such attributes would help, but these all derive from a Social Contract. She still thought instinctively that people have Natural Rights, but how do you know?

We may need to go back and look at the Animal Kingdom. Where do lower organisms get any Rights? At what point in Evolution do certain Rights accrue?

Question 7 (continued)

What rights (if any) are inherent in all human beings, regardless of where or how they choose to live, and which rights are only optionally agreed to by members of a civil society?

Extensive general discussion in Session 52 about Right and Sources of Rights and Purpose of Government and Necessity of Government and a bunch of other stuff. We didn't remember it all for the 'blue book', but we talked about Smoker versus Nonsmoker rights, a neighbor with 15 dogs, a sex offender coming out of jail on parole, Manuel Noriega not having a country to go to. Panelist suggested putting all criminals in an Australia-type colony to live as they may; she didn't care whether the land is sufficiently arable for them to survive; in any case, we agreed that someone needs to make that decision in each case, since each case is different.

Somewhere she said that if I don't want to change places with a person of whom I was taking unfair advantage, then I don't have a right to do so. Moderator asked whether this applied to the cow which I kill to provide myself with beef for my hamburger, or the fly which I will swat because it is annoying. She said that she should keep the discussion to the Human race, but Moderator said that we may need to look at the overall Universe in order to figure out where we fit in, and also to address Animal rights.

We thus started to look more at the Evolutionary scale: When the first unicellular organism came into existence, it was free to go wherever it physically could, with no other organism to interfere. Probably continued when other similar organisms arose, because they couldn't prevent each other, and had no real reason to. Eventually, it became necessary for some organisms to subsist on others, and contend for limited food supply. In such cases, it couldn't be said that bigger organisms didn't have the Right to eat smaller ones, nor that smaller ones didn't have the Right to run away.

In general, then, it can be said that higher organisms have the right to subsist on lower ones, and that the lower ones have the right to try to escape.

At some point, panelist asked why so many oppressed people tried to escape tyrannical masters, with answer that they were simply trying to maximize the quality of their existence, just like the oppressors. We talked about Spartacus, where both sides felt that they were right and that the other side was wrong.

Question 30 (continued)

If there is an i.o.o., then how should its leaders be chosen?

Non-author panelist in Session 52 wanted to see the World ruled by a 'council of the wise', administering a set of general parameters like those being constructed here. But, who would serve on the council, and where are those people now? Panelist thought that they might come out if the political process were improved, or that they would be willing to serve if asked.

She somewhere said something about China, that people there are so polite that they will go out of their way to retrieve lost items and perform other acts of politeness. Moderator said that that's fine if they want to sublimate their will, and all dress the same, etc.; others of us, though, have more initiative and self-will and desire for self-determination and are more willing to question things, and Moderator didn't want to compromise that by becoming one of the sheep.

Panelist said that she wanted me/us to shift people's attitudes, but isn't that a violation of their Rights?

Question 19 (continued)

The 'One World' question: Could we get away with one government for the entire world, or is it necessary to have more than one?

Panelist in Session 52 resisted the idea of empowerment of local governments, on the concept that a local tyrant might arise, but we claimed that we can fix election rules to prevent this. Also, we'd rather follow a local tyrant who knows about prevailing local conditions here than some guy in New York or Washington or somewhere else who has never been here.

Total decentralization is bad, and total unitary government is also bad, even for just the United States, much worse for the whole World.

Discussion of Smoker's rights came from general point that we can't rely completely on voluntary cooperation, since not everyone agrees on what actually constitutes infringement on my Rights, and because some will go off on their own trip, anyway.

Parolees can be sent to halfway-houses if no one wants them immediately, but those cases still need to be decided by somebody.

At the end of the discussion, Moderator noted that -- even though we can and will encourage more and better Education, and more Cooperation and Tolerance and Arbitration etc., and even with whatever improvements we make in our Economic system -- there always will be some people who will try to take shortcuts and violate other people's Rights. There may also be situations of Disease Control which may require local decision-making. Good to have regulations on False Advertising and to safeguard against Bacteria poisoning in meat. For all such cases, we need to have some individual or group making such decisions; agreed.

Given this, two main questions arise: Do we want to place any limitations or restrictions or guidelines on how they make such decisions? (Agreed yes, or else our fear of a local dictator might be realized.) And, how do we determine who gets selected to be involved in the decision-making process? From these two basic questions come just about Everything in political theory/science and our Part I.

Question 7 (continued)

What rights (if any) are inherent in all human beings, regardless of where or how they choose to live, and which rights are only optionally agreed to by members of a civil society?

Moderator mentioned at one point in Session 52 that one property of Rights is that no higher authority will interfere with taking a certain action or benefit, so maybe Rights exist only when there is a Higher Power (possibly including other Humans or Society as a whole) which is in a position to permit a certain action or not. On the other hand, it may also mean that Humans have certain Natural Rights, since there is no Higher Power to stop us, with the possible exception of a God or Gods, who don't appear to be wielding that clear of an Earthly leverage, although maybe that's what the Ten Commandments were for.

We spent some time talking about the 'right' to procreate, one panelist thinking that it is a Natural Right, and Moderator stating that the creation of more Human Beings can have impact on the rest of Society, so Society may have something to say about whether you can continue. She wanted to do more with Education and Counseling, and that's fine, but people are still going to have sex and make babies, even if they're too poor to take care of them, until Society determines that it's too much and imposes limits on procreation. Further, this needs to be a local decision, since locals are the only ones who are in a position to experience the actual social impact, which speaks further to Subsidiarity and a federalized government.

Returning panelist not present for the preceding discussion suggested in Session 53 (October 1999) that all Rights are a "man-made paradigm". Through common experience, all of Mankind [*sic*] decided that there were certain conditions which needed to exist in order for people to be happy and thrive, including the rights of Shelter and Food, and the rights to Sleep peacefully and to Reproduce and to Respect one another. Otherwise, we would kill one another.

She raised the example of cats (some cats, at least) being unable/unwilling to relinquish territorial dominance. Moderator noted the contrast that many other animal species are very social and appear to have well-developed Rights structures.

Some discussion of animals taking care of orphans from other species, though this appears to happen fairly infrequently, and this may be related more to Compassion than to recognition of any Rights.

Panelist initially thought that most religions are based on her assertion that there are no Natural Rights, but Moderator pointed out that most are actually based on the idea that certain rights have been granted by one or more Gods. Further, several schools of philosophical and political thought are based on the idea that there are one or more Natural Rights which may have been divinely granted. Declaration of Independence makes this assertion, for example, but the statements are only axiomatic, used to derive other conclusions, and no logical basis is stated for them.

There did not appear to be much evidence to dispute the idea that all rights are Civil. Moderator mentioned that the Monday group had previously reached this conclusion, for the reason that any named right could theoretically be abridged legitimately by Society. Or can it? This is the key question, though available evidence appeared to point to only that Answer. Moderator also mentioned that he always had some misgivings about the conclusion, but probably mostly because he had been brought up to believe that one or more Rights are either Natural and/or granted by God. Panelist's independent finding along the same lines added further weight to this.

We figured that we would need to continue to go along with this result, until someone could come up with a valid argument to contradict it.

Question 19 (continued)

The 'One World' question: Could we get away with one government for the entire world, or is it necessary to have more than one?

Returning panelist not present for the most recent 'One World' discussion identified in Session 53 some prose which suggested that everyone would be unified, and work toward common goals of perpetuation of the Planet and of our Species. Moderator pointed out that unification of people must precede a one-world government, and that a one-world government is unlikely to achieve unification of people.

Panelist liked the idea that everyone is all together, without an adversarial environment, and that this is consistent with our goal of a utopian order. She asked why we would want more than one government. Moderator answered:

Different areas of the World have different geography, different agricultural output, different population densities, etc., so residents will require different methods and structures to maximize their Quality of Life, given the physical conditions which they are given. Further, the mathematical Laws of Probability suggest that people will have different ideas on how to do things, different cultural preferences, different languages, different religions, etc., even if physical conditions are all the same. Panelist herself noted that a community as homogeneous as Woodland Hills has people with widely diverging ideas on how to do things. We therefore claim that the Quality of everyone's Life is maximized to the most practical extent if we have different areas of the World where people can indulge different needs and desires.

Panelist also noted that our desire for a One-World Government depends on the extent to which people embrace Diversity or are fearful of it. We concurred, and noted that we may keep this in mind during any future deliberations on this point.

Moderator asked whether panelist concurred with his assessment. On her request, he repeated that the main reason for his position was that different people will have different needs and desires, either from mathematical variance and/or different physical conditions around the World; if we want to have a utopian order, then we should accommodate different people's needs and desires, not try to dictate them.

Panelist concurred with this assessment. A19 reaffirmed, though we noted again that it would be good to have an i.o.o. to deal with international issues.

Question 20 (continued)

How shall we determine how many governments we are to have, and over what territory they will have jurisdiction?

Noted in Session 53 that we had begun Question 20 in Session 17, but had never completed it, because we had found that it depends on Answers 26-32.

Non-author panelist now suggested that we should base borders on natural physical conditions. Moderator asked if the entire Sahara Desert or all the Rocky Mountains be considered as one Nation or State? Panelist recognized this as unlikely. Moderator then pointed out that physical variations were only one basic reason which we had stated in Answer 19 for why we need to have multiple governments, the other being that -- within a given area of physical homogeneity -- people will have different ideas and desires, so we should allow this to be a factor too; agreed.

Read notes from our 'black book' of preliminary ideas into the record, as follows:

<begin quote>

Easy in the old days, when they had localized clusters of people who already had similar ways of life and lots of space between the clusters. Now, in a world of six billion people [it was the 1990's], which has already evolved into a group of nearly two hundred "nations", not as easy to get what we may want. We see five choices:

- 1) Accept the international borders that we have, and give the remainder of our concentration to what's happening in the United States as currently configured.
- 2) Use the current borders as a starting point, and peacefully make whatever adjustments are seen to be fairest and most desirable.
- 3) Scrap all current borders, and start from scratch, which even if possible would require discussing mechanisms of the adjustment, and which must allow for real possibility that most people would gravitate toward current set-up anyway.
- 4) Scrap some or all borders entirely, and allow people to group themselves together according to philosophy and culture, and not require their residences to be geographically contiguous, although it would be nice to know that a certain set of rules applies when an individual is on a given point on the globe.
- 5) Enact some combination of bordered and borderless areas.

<end quote>

We noted that there was a presumption in favor of the previous finding, though it was only partial in the case of Question 20.

Panelist noted that Haiti and the Dominican Republic might be one Nation if allowed to start from scratch, and that it might be more logical for them, and that they might already have done so if not for the influence of their former 'mother countries'.

We read our notes from Session 17, and clarified that Option 3 is unworkable, mostly because decisions would need to be made as to who gets to make the call, who's going to be likely to try to override the current setup, the mechanisms for negotiating and voting (each delegate would likely have own plan, and would be unlikely to vote for any other; may be possible to negotiate and compromise, but very hard if possible at all), and other problems. Further, when considering how difficult it is for places like Israel and Yugoslavia to agree on local borders, we saw it as unlikely that any group of people could agree on borders for the entire World.

Panelist asked about the history of our current borders. Moderator mentioned that some were established by military conquest, some by negotiation, some by survey, some by evolution of colonial development, some by natural boundaries, etc.

Discussion of i.o.o. involvement, and generally what an i.o.o. can do if a rogue Nation chooses to flout its edicts, including possibly kicking their asses.

Agreed that the five possibilities listed in the 'black book' are all-inclusive. Decided to defer discussion of individual options until next Session.

Another panelist found Option 4 attractive in Session 54 (November 1999), but noted that it is "David Duke-ish", because he advocated redistribution of territory according to ethnicity. However, the concept might not be all that bad. On the other hand, Moderator noted that people who want to live in a diverse culture or a homogeneous culture currently may do so. Panelist also liked Option 2.

We liked the ability to come and go as we please, as would happen in a borderless society, but this could also be made to happen in a bordered society, depending on what rules we set up.

If we try to establish a borderless society, then we may end up with an 'every man for himself' situation, like the *Road Warrior* movies. Further, if we set up a borderless society, then people would eventually band together for similar culture, political philosophy, etc., and arrange for certain institutions to exist within a given geographic area, and encourage people who don't like it to leave. Thus, a bordered society probably would evolve from borderless.

Appears, then, that our choices are really between Option 1 and Option 2.

Moderator suggested that Option 1 might be a better choice, not just because the Monday group had earlier decided it, but also because we didn't know as of Session 54 if we wanted to get into the business of trying to figure out so many border disputes, and because there is something to be said for Jefferson's note "that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes".

Noted that we might look at certain situations like Israel or Northern Ireland or Mexico, but then panelist suggested that those nations could resolve those situations

themselves, including by military conflict. Moderator managed to convince her that it is not in the international interest to have an environment where military conflicts abound, and that we don't want the I.O.O. coming to the military aid of one nation over another simply for border disputes. Agreed to have environment where the I.O.O. decides the border if the nations don't agree between themselves, and where any nation crossing that border with military force is subject to international sanctions, including (but not limited to) trade embargoes and the removal/punishment of responsible leaders.

We felt that we could not mandate anything that the Nations do, but we can make recommendations as to specific situations if we want to. However, we also noted that those in remote nations (which would include both the I.O.O. and our own panels) would not be in a good position to evaluate conditions in other areas of the World. How do we resolve our preference that the I.O.O. arbitrate border disputes with our assertion that remote people cannot do so? In any case, panel agreed in discussion that we were all tired of America being the world's policeman.

In discussion of War being against the international interest, we noted that many innocent people are severely compromised in War, both by risk of injury and death and by having to move if needed. Sure, the I.O.O. can go in and help people move, but it shouldn't have to do that. Moving to a new country is many times more of a hassle than it recently was for the author to move 2½ miles down the street, and that was a lot of hassle.

In trying to resolve our dilemma, panelist noted that individual Nations can try to resolve disputes themselves, and ask for international arbitration if unable. We offered amendment that, while we agreed that we don't want the I.O.O. to volunteer unilaterally to modify an existing border, and that they can be available to arbitrate when requested, they can also step in when it appears that there will be no peaceful solution. Panelist thought it seemed to be a bit "Big Brother-ish", especially if relying on one possible international sanction of removing from power whoever is responsible for any bad acts, since this would require some internal intelligence, which they probably would have, by [per A32.3] having a presence in each big city.

It is also against the international interest to have War because we don't want to live in an environment where we need to be continually fearful of the incidence of War; it degrades the quality of life for everyone. Conflict is also bad for the international community because we could have Trade and other constructive dialogues with other Nations during peacetime which we couldn't have during War. Panelist mentioned that War creates Jobs, but Moderator preferred that Jobs be created and maintained in sectors which are more peaceful and productive and constructive.

We probably can't get too exact on when the I.O.O. may step in, but safe to say that they can do so upon the first bomb explosion or the first gunshot; may also do when mobilization of troops is being detected. Anything before that probably is premature. Even if we can't get too specific, though, can rely partially on the general statement that we don't want the I.O.O. to step in prematurely, but that it would be good for them to do so at the right time to prevent violence.

Panelist asked: Who polices the I.O.O.? Maybe we can have some kind of international charter to which we could adhere as much as we do the American Constitution. We also can make a statement that it is not recommended for anyone to veer from the plan, as it would screw things up worse than they already are. If

this proves insufficient, then maybe we could develop the I.O.O. model further to allow more checks and balances, such that different elements of the I.O.O. can police each other (such as the three Houses in the existing model), or we could have that the I.O.O. polices individual Nations while the individual Nations simultaneously police the I.O.O. It's all good.

With that, we appeared to agree on the amendment and the main model.

Returning to the earlier question, we noted that we could build recommendations as to Israel, Northern Ireland, Mexico, and other places, but that we prefer not to, instead considering such matters as an existing part of ongoing history, since there always will be border questions and demographic redistribution arising forever. We will let all such Nations try to resolve these matters themselves, ask for arbitration if they can't, and have the I.O.O. decide if they don't ask for arbitration.

As far as we were concerned as of Session 54, then, all international borders will stay as they are. Confirms our earlier result.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual needs to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual may be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

We noted that the panelist who was present at Session 54 was also present when we had looked again at Question 21 the previous June. She suggested that we therefore didn't need to go over it again. We responded that we still wanted to go through it, in light of our recent discussions on the other globally-oriented Questions, if only to be able to state truthfully that we did.

Good thing that we did, because the panelist immediately responded Yes, Yes, Yes, and No. Since this was different from that panelist's earlier response, there appeared to be even more reason why it was good to re-review.

Moderator asked how could we have Yes to the first element, with No on the fourth. Panelist asked for a re-reading of the first element, and then changed her position to No-Yes-Yes-No. We then asked how we could have Yes to the second, and she responded that Citizenship can be an option, including Dual Citizenship, but that we should also have the option not to be a Citizen. In any case, we should all [or so we thought in November 1999] be able to come and go as we please.

Since our earlier model, though, was to have no Citizenship at all, how did panelist define 'citizenship' for her Answer? She said that it amounts to a contract where the Individual provides some kind of service to a Nation in exchange for some benefit.

With this definition (which we may not necessarily need to apply to the term 'citizenship', though it actually may be ideal -- noted that we should meditate further on this), we agreed that one could have a contract with multiple Nations, provided that we have full disclosure of all such relationships with all affected Nations. But, did we want to change our previous model to allow even the option of Citizenship? We were not prepared mentally to deal with it at the time, so we adjourned at 9:56pm with aim to consider further later.

Question 19.5

How do (or should) we feel about War?

We reviewed in Session 55 (February 2000) the previous results of Question 21 for a new panelist, who had introduced himself as a current member of the National Guard. He thought that we might have been advocating a one-world government, because of our proposed international role in preventing military border-crossing, but was told the contrary. He then stated that he favored War in general (naturally enough, being a member of the National Guard), and we had a discussion about this, which we rolled into a separate Question during the Third Pass.

He thought that it's justified to wage War for reasons of conquest and imperial expansion, whereas Moderator preferred to live in an environment where we don't need to worry about conquest all the time, and where we can devote more resources to Food and other constructive purposes than to Armaments.

We also asked a rhetorical question about our response if the Soviet Union had won the Cold War. His response was that we would have gone into a Hot War, and then been completely subject to them if they had won.

He made good point that it's patently unfair for us now to say that we want no more Wars of Conquest after having acquired all this territory by that mechanism. [Noted in early part of Third Pass, however, that much of our current American territory was acquired by purchase, and that it is still the strong preference (yea, insistence) of our group that any transfer of land between Nations should be achieved by only peaceful means. Noted later in Third Pass that our purchases were from other Nations which had acquired the land through conquest, so original point stands.]

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual needs to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual may be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

If we have a non-hostile environment, then we probably don't need Citizenship. If we do have a hostile environment (which the pro-war panelist in Session 55 claimed that we do), then we do need Citizenship. We concurred with this syllogism, but we were not convinced that the World was then all that hostile, or that we want it to be.

Panelist asked about Disease Screening, and we read the notes from Sessions 35-37 on this being independent of Citizenship.

Panelist thought that the existence of an adversarial environment might make Citizenship necessary. Moderator pointed out that we had considered what we then called our Resolution #1, and found that we probably would have an adversarial environment with or without Citizenship, so it is independent. Panelist still asserted that we want an adversarial environment, but Moderator was not completely sympathetic with this view. However, if what the Session 30 panelist said was true, then it wouldn't matter. We asked the panelist whether his military experiences (we found out during discussion that he also was in the Coast Guard from Ages 17-21) colored his attitudes at all, and he acknowledged that certain experiences had given him more information which resulted in developing his views.

Another panelist noted in Session 56 (March 2000) that some people liked the concept of 'citizen of the world'; agreed. Panelist brought up question of Taxation, but we noted again our model to replace Income Tax with a nonregressive Sales Tax.

Even if we were to get rid of Citizenship, the fact of different Languages might still be a problem, and might still foster Nationalism. Accepted that we probably will always have a somewhat adversarial environment, but is that a reason to keep Citizenship?

Panelist suggested that getting rid of Citizenship might result in a One-World Government, but we responded with our finding that we wanted sovereign Nations without Citizenship, just like the States in the current United States. He still said that the difference of language and cultures might be problematic.

If we drop Citizenship, then undesirable (that is, in the eyes of The Powers That Be) people could move in, but we mentioned that this still happens even with Citizenship, such as the reports recently heard at that time of Seattle residents being unhappy with so many Californians moving in. Communities often dislike people moving in who don't have a lot of investment capital. But, should communities be allowed to restrict entry to people with certain characteristics?

Tending to think not: We like the idea of maximizing personal freedoms, as enhancing the quality of life for everyone.

On the point of 'undesirables', allowing such people to move here might force us to get to know them, and maybe we'll find out that they're not so undesirable after all.

Even if elimination doesn't reduce adversariality, that's no reason to introduce piles of paperwork and waiting periods and filing fees and other administrative hoops.

I may love living where I am, but I don't want some government telling me that I have to. Only reason that panelist could now see for keeping the institution of Citizenship is that current big government wants it the current way, but we agreed that we don't need to defer to them, but rather should assert our own desires.

Further on the 'undesirables', we agreed that communities should welcome poorer people, too, if only to increase their manual labor force.

Big Government probably does have an interest in maintaining the *status quo*, so that they keep desirable people in and undesirable people out.

Agreed to let previous decision stand! [Reconsidered again in the Second Pass.]

Panelist also noted the example of the European Common Market as a 'step in the right direction'.

Question 29.1

How shall we define 'nation' for these discussions?

Accepted suggestion in Session 56 of 'a land area with a specific border that has a national government in place to manage its affairs'. Agreed that the I.O.O. needs to recognize the government before the area is accepted as an official 'nation'

Question 29.2

Should there be any minimum size for a 'nation'?

Agreed in Session 56 that there is no need to have a minimum size. How would you determine the minimum size, anyway? It would need to be very arbitrary.

Question 29.1 (continued)

How shall we define 'nation' for these discussions?

Panelist made good point later in Session 56 that we should consider the existence of logical boundaries (rivers, mountains, etc.) in assessing whether to grant national status to a given area, but we agreed that the I.O.O. can use those as factors in their judgment, but that we/they don't need to codify it.

Question 32.3 (continued)

Should the I.O.O. get involved in a nation's alleged violation of human rights?

Non-author panelist wisely noted in Session 56 that "It's more fun to find fault with other nations than to look inward and solve our own problems."

We reviewed the history of this and the other Questions which we were asked to review by one of the panelists in Session 51. Since our Answers on Rights, One-World Government, Citizenship, and the International Oversight Organization (i.o.o.) appeared basically unchanged from before, was there any reason at this time for Answer 32.3 to be overturned? No reason seen by those now present.

Question 43 (continued)

Under what conditions should certain federal land not be assigned to any State, but rather be named a Territory?

Panelist in Session 56 didn't think that it would make much difference for National Parks, since the Fed would still run it directly one way or another. Added item to our research list to see how much authority States currently have in National Parks.

Question 70 (continued)

If voters are not required to identify themselves with parties, then should we still have voter registration?

We felt in Session 56 that we probably should have it, if only to prevent voting twice.

Question 71 (continued)

Who should be permitted to register to vote?

Agreed in Session 56 that neither holding property nor paying poll tax is a good requirement, since everyone is affected by how the government is run, and by who runs it, and should therefore have a say in same.

Moderator reviewed the notes of our previous discussion in Session 48, and noted that some of the 'minimalist' panelist's ideas may not be that useful, but that we had identified several factors which might be used to determine whether or not a certain individual is qualified to vote. Noted that we could review these later.

New panelist noted in Session 57 (March 2000) that many people who fought in the Vietnam War were not old enough to vote for the people who sent them there.

This panelist was in favor of lowering the chronological age for voting. Moderator countered from his years of experience as a Precinct Inspector that some older people had no clue as to what they were voting for.

Panelist asked: How do we establish standards that will not be abused? Moderator suggested an education requirement, equivalent to what is now a high-school diploma [modified later], and panelist was receptive to this. Moderator also mentioned possibility of a testing requirement (including that it might be useful to re-certify people as they get older), and that we could require both or allow a combination. Panelist indicated that he probably would prefer allowing either possibility, to which idea Moderator was also sympathetic.

Moderator mentioned that there would be no social stigma attached to getting decertified, unlike Mensa, where everyone would know it. Panelist still thought that it might be unfair to disenfranchise older people, who have contributed so much to society. We countered that the purpose of an election is to get the collective opinion of an informed electorate, otherwise we would just defer to some think-tank types.

Panelist asked: How might we rank our considerations for disenfranchising people? We noted that the first consideration might be to drop people who didn't have a minimal understanding of what they were voting for or about. Could also go with a finding that certain people who had committed certain bad acts could be considered to have waived their right to vote. In any case, panelist wanted objective standards, and expressed that he didn't want Jerry Falwell or anyone like him deciding who votes. But, the 'devil is in the details', so how do we decide?

We allowed for the possibility that a youngster who does something stupid can later grow into a mature and responsible adult. Also, a mature adult who commits a bad act can still rehabilitate, and we should give him a motivation to do so. Agreed, then, that any disenfranchisement for a bad act should be only temporary.

But, should we have any temporary disenfranchisements at all? We don't have to, and we were not then sure that we really want to. However, we noted two small advantages: One is that it provides an additional not-too-oppressive motivation for people to refrain from committing bad acts. Other is that it makes voting seem a little bit more important to some people, with the implied threat of taking it away.

Session 58 (July 2000) comprised general discussion and orientation for a new panelist, with no advance on our Agenda. Further work was to wait until she read the summary documents then available, but behold she never showed up again.

Session 59 (December 2000) was called to order at 11:18am! Reasons go beyond the scope of this 1250-page report.

Returning panelist who was not present for any of the previous deliberations on this Question now agreed that all those old enough to be drafted should be old enough to vote, since they should have a voice in making those decisions; we concurred.

We agreed that the privilege should be taken away from certain criminals.

Moderator observed that this big Question appears to break down into several little Questions:

- A - When is the earliest that I can be registered to vote?
- B - When is the latest?
- C - Disenfranchisement for certain bad acts
- D - Mental illness
- E - Residency requirement
- F - Citizenship

Question 71a

When is the earliest that I can be registered to vote?

What if we don't have a draft? How do we then determine the appropriate voting age? Panelist suggested Age 16 in Session 59, but we asked why we would have any particular chronological age at all. This went to our Questions 73 & 74:

Question 73

Should voting rights be limited to those of a certain minimum chronological age?

Agreed in Session 59 that we could have a cutoff age by which everyone should have the franchise, and still allow younger people to vote if they pass a certain test.

Question 74

Some people who have attained legal voting age clearly do not have sufficient educational background to make informed choices, and many who are younger do: Shouldn't the requirement be based on education rather than chronological age?

In other words, why allow older people to vote who would not have passed the testing requirement? Response offered in Session 59 was that all people should be able to vote no matter how stupid they are, and even if they don't know Everything about the structure and process of government, since they can still form opinions as to which candidates are most compatible with their personal agendas.

So, why do we require testing for younger voters, if knowledge of structure and process is not essential to being able to vote intelligently? Because we want to make sure that 10-year-olds are not going to just play with the levers in the voting booth, and because demonstrating knowledge of structure and process shows sufficient maturity and sincerity as to indicate that they will vote conscientiously. Also, older people have life experiences which may offset any lack of technical knowledge.

Question 71a (continued)

When is the earliest that I can be registered to vote?

Noted later in Session 59 that current Age 18 appears to be tied to standard age of high-school graduation. Since we were not planning to get through the educational curriculum until Section III-C, we could now state only that whatever the standard age is determined to be for high-school graduation will be our age for this exercise.

We re-emphasized that this should be no higher than the minimum age for being drafted. This age appears to be driven by when most people normally develop a sufficient level of physical and emotional maturity to be able to serve effectively in the military, which age can be explored in further research. [Changed later.]

Question 71b

When is the latest that I can be registered to vote?

Moderator again noted in Session 59 his observations as an election worker of some older people trying to vote and getting hopelessly confused. We don't want to take rights away from people just because they're old, but we may possibly have room for doing so when people are mentally absent. How would you determine this? We suggested that we could do something similar to what they do for Driving, to have a periodic recertification of some kind, to determine that they're basically aware enough to vote. Panelist found the car analogy to fail, because people's lives are directly in danger if someone drives who can't see or has poor reflexes, but this is not the case with Voting.

But, how about the fact that the person who is bringing an unaware individual into the polling place is effectively doubling his own vote? Response was that the relatively few instances of this are not sufficient to take rights away from everyone else. Panel also noted that some younger people can also suffer from confusion, but that doesn't mean that the franchise should be taken away from the rest of us.

Finally, the act of going in to retest, and the possibility of being told that you no longer have the mental resources to vote intelligently, are too undesirable to possibly be offset by the potential social benefit of screening out potentially-confused voters. It would take away their last dignity. Additionally noted that victims of Parkinson's could be mistaken for confused voters, although they are mentally present.

Question 71c

To what extent (if at all) shall we disenfranchise for certain bad acts?

Mass murder, treason against the Government, and generally serious crimes against Society should carry Disenfranchisement, whereas simple drunk-driving should not. Pending closer review of Bad Acts (scheduled for Section I-F), tending as of Session 59 to think that what we now generally consider to be Felony convictions should result in Disenfranchisement, whereas Infractions and Misdemeanors should not.

How long should Disenfranchisement last? Agreed that length can vary according to the specific Bad Act, and should be part of the sentence laid out by Judge or Jury.

Question 71d

Should those with apparent mental illness be allowed to vote?

Agreed that people who can get out and about should be able to vote, and that those who are mentally present enough to sign the register should be allowed to vote.

Question 72.5 (or Question 71e)

Should there be a residency requirement for voting?

When this matter was discussed in Session 59, rules had recently been changing in California, with some people wanting to vote where they work, or where their sister lives, or somewhere else. We had added a note to our 'black book' on 9-Oct-1998, to consider the argument that the jurisdiction where one works might have more influence over one's life than her jurisdiction of residence. We therefore now suggested that we may want to allow people to vote wherever they want, as long as they vote only once. However, panelist noted experience in Louisiana of people being bussed in from outlying areas for a small fee to vote for a particular candidate, and suggested a residency requirement for that reason alone. We were prepared to go along, unless we could later figure out some other way of stopping that problem.

Agreed on then-current rule in California, to vote where you currently live, the idea being that it's presumed to be more in a person's interest to vote conscientiously where you're going to continue to live for a while. Panelist made good point that a person with an interest in an election in another precinct can still campaign there.

Question 72 (or Question 71f)

Should there be a citizenship requirement for voting?

Not applicable under the model prevailing as of Session 59, but we noted that it's more important in the absence of Citizenship to have a Residency requirement.

Question 75

Should each individual be allowed a full vote?

No reason was seen in this group as of Session 59 to give 3/5 (or any other fraction) to anyone. In trying to anticipate the arguments of those who might feel otherwise, we agreed that there does not appear to be any reasonable criterion (neither skin color, ancestry, chronological age, personal wealth, amount of land owned, etc.) for assigning a smaller fraction to anyone, and that the burden would be on such people to support their claim, which we find highly unlikely to be accomplished.

Question 76

With each individual being allowed a full vote, what adjustments -- if any -- do we need to make to the registration procedure in a pluralistic environment?

As of Session 59, we were 'generally ok' with the then-current procedure, but went along with the notes in our 'black book', that some areas could be tightened.

Question 77

Under what circumstances would a voter need to re-register?

Yes if you move, but in Session 59 we also liked the procedure whereby a recent mover within a jurisdiction can vote by provisional ballot if she shows proof of current residency. Discussion of when you would actually need to re-register, with consensus that it is necessary if you are moving to another jurisdiction of the level which will typically be maintaining voter registration. (That is, if we determine in Section I-D that Counties shall maintain voter records, then you should re-register when you move to a different County, since the new County will have no record of you; if we determine that States should do it, then re-register only when moving to a different State; etc.) If you have moved within such jurisdiction, then you can either vote by provisional ballot with proof of residency, and have the voter rolls updated by staff at the Registrar's office later, or you can re-register in advance, as an administrative convenience for everyone, including the voter, who would then not need to bring proof of residency, and would get a sample ballot at her new address.

Noted that we always need to show proof of current residency when registering or re-registering. Also noted that we need to check for every registration, re-registration, or provisional ballot that the voter is not registered in any other jurisdiction, and to remove the previous record if so. Use the SSN (or future equivalent) if necessary.

Question 78

Do we want to allow an individual's voter registration to expire after some consecutive number of inactive elections or years?

Panelist in Session 59 suggested no, because one may be out of the country or may be in a coma or just may not have liked anyone for a few years.

Moderator mentioned potential need of making sure that people are not pretending to be a dead voter, and that people who have moved are not voting in multiple jurisdictions during the same day. Of course, we could simply try harder to make sure that our records stay current in case of death or change of residence, but we can't guarantee it, if recent performance was any indicator. However, panelist didn't want the system to have the effect of taking anyone's voting rights away, nor do we want to make voting any more inconvenient than it really needs to be. We liked her suggestion that inactive voters can be flagged in the system, and can be required to show proof of current residency in order to be allowed to vote. How would an inactive voter know to do this? Make it common knowledge by regular media announcements, inclusion of notes on the sample ballot, statements on Internet, etc.

Question 79

If we add the expiration (read 'flagging') procedure, then how shall we determine how many consecutive elections or years shall result in the expiration (or flagging) of a registration?

State Legislature probably is in the best position to make that call per Session 59.

Question 79.5

What is our recommendation (if any) as to the number of consecutive elections or years which must pass before any action can be taken on an inactive voter registration?

Panelist suggested in Session 59 that 5 years is sufficient, but Moderator didn't want to inconvenience a voter -- or create more work for the Registrar's staff in checking all those provisional ballots -- for missing only one Presidential election. If we make it 8 years, then the timing becomes goofy. If we tie it to the number of elections, then it could be a problem if different jurisdictions have different election schedules. Agreed finally on 10 years, for it is 2½ Presidential terms, and a nice round number.

Question 80

Once all the rules for voter registration are clarified, do we want to add a rule to the apportionment process, to the effect that districts should carry nearly-equal numbers of registered voters, as well as of citizens?

Review of Answer 69 during Session 59 showed that we appeared not to have made any specification as to how many people, voters, etc., should be in each district. We reviewed our findings as to shapes of districts. On discussion, we agreed that population is a more reliable factor than numbers of registered voters, because multiple kids reach majority and multiple other people die in each decennial period. Also something to be said for idea that non-voters are still affected by the decisions of their leaders and representatives. Adjourned 2:01pm!

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Something special happened in our Session 60, conducted on December 18, 2000. We had only one non-author panelist, being a certain older gentleman [deceased as of the Third Pass] who never came to another meeting. But, we completed two entire Subsections of our Outline, comprising 28 Questions. Best meeting ever:

Subsection I-C-2: Qualifications for Office

Question 81

Do we agree with the qualifications for Federal offices as outline in the Constitution, excluding the term limits established in the 22nd Amendment?

Moderator thought in Session 60 that Representatives should have a Residency requirement; panelist noted that original intent of the Constitution probably was that Representatives were to be elected at large instead of by District; consulting original Article I, Section 2, showed apparent absence of reference to Districts. Agreed that there's an important value in small Districts being represented in Congress, and that it makes more sense also to require Representatives to live in those Districts.

Panelist questioned Age requirements, calling them "micro-management"; he initially suggested having Congress set Age limits, but quickly concurred with Moderator's note that Congress might be too politically motivated, and that Voters are in the best position to determine whether a given candidate is too young or old enough.

Also agreed that there should be no maximum Age limit, except as determined by the Voters in each race.

Residency requirement may be treated in the same way as Age, by letting the Voters decide. Panelist offered secondary recommendation that any Residency requirement which we do have shouldn't be longer than one year. Primary recommendation was going to be living in the jurisdiction at the time of the election, but panel agreed with the rhetorical question of why we would need even that, and to let Voters decide.

Noted that we had eliminated the institution of Citizenship in Answer 21, and therefore considered the topic 'not applicable' to the current Question.

Question 82

Do we agree with all qualifications for office (excluding term limits) listed in all sources other than the Constitution?

Tending as of Session 60 to go with the same approach as before, and let the Voters decide; just make sure that we have full disclosure. Head of a criminal organization shows leadership ability, and many politicians exhibit criminal propensities anyway. Moderator asked: Why are we trying to find Saints to be Politicians??

Question 83

Do we wish to define any additional requirements (other than term limits) for any government office?

Asked and Answered as of Session 60: Let the Voters decide.

Question 84

Shall the accumulation by an individual of a certain number of years of experience in a given office be considered a failure to qualify for additional service in that office?

Agreed in Session 60 that Voters should be able to decide which candidate is best, based on all factors. Panelist brought two potential arguments in favor of Term Limits. One was influence of a Party in favor of an Incumbent, but we considered this 'not applicable' per our Resolution #3. Other was unlimited office facilities for campaigning, but we considered that also to be 'not applicable', due to the Internet and other streamlining making communication costs go way down for everyone.

Therefore, no real reason to keep Term Limits, and better to dump them.

Question 85

But, suppose a case where the majority of Voters in a District feels that their Representative has been in there too long, but they are undecided as to a replacement?

Non-author panelist volunteered in Session 60 (without prompting from the Moderator) that there are better voting methods which can circumvent this problem.

We wanted to make sure that the voting method selected in Subsection I-C-4 is one which solved the Vote-Splitting Problem. [It eventually was.]

Question 86

What about the needs of the people who want to run for office, but don't get their fair chance because of the tendency of incumbents to stay put?

Question is similar to the question of mandatory retirement age, which was planned for treatment in Section II-E. Agreed in Session 60 that one shouldn't be required to continue to employ someone who is not filling the qualifications for the position.

But, would we want to have a mandatory retirement age if only to avoid hurting an employee's feelings by dismissing him? Panelist noted that different people deteriorate at different ages, and that some don't deteriorate at all, such that the designation of any arbitrary age is faulty.

Moderator also noted that he didn't care if a politician's feelings get hurt, because the loser gets his feelings hurt at any age.

After further discussion, we projected that mandatory retirement probably would be gone from our model, in favor of having a facility for voluntary retirement with dignity and a pension and whatever; if the employee resists, then he deserves everything that he gets. [Reconsidered in Third Pass.]

Question 87

Is there any other reason at all to support (or even allow) the idea of term limits?

Panel in Session 60 unanimously said no. We then adopted Resolution #4, as follows: "RESOLVED, The imposition of artificial limitations on the number of terms served by any given public official is contrary to the interests of a free electorate, who should have maximum flexibility in choosing their representatives and leaders."

Question 88

Shall an amendment be added to the Constitution, repealing the 22nd Amendment, and prohibiting any level of American government from enacting term limits on any public office?

We considered in Session 60 that maybe we should 'divide the Question'. Panelist indicated that doing only the second element may be necessary, in that it would automatically invalidate the 22nd Amendment; maybe, but Moderator was afraid that the courts would resolve any conflict in favor of the older provision; panelist said that they would go with the newer provision as being reflective of the the current will of the People, but Moderator would rather not take the chance that they'll call it unconstitutional or something.

Noted that some people might prefer merely making the policy recommendation, and leaving the actual decision up to individual States, but we felt that it makes more logical sense to require the absence of Term Limits all over the Nation.

Question 89

Whatever qualifications for any office are prescribed by law, shall any candidate for such office be required to answer questions not pertaining to such qualifications, including as to commission of any criminal acts, or anything socially unsavory?

Panelist offered that he probably should be allowed to say 'no comment'. Moderator added that he liked freedom from self-incrimination, and that it applies in this case.

Question 90

Should any individual or organization (including press, U.S. Senate, etc.) be permitted to ask such answer-proof questions?

If we want an environment with no self-incrimination, then better per Session 60 not to allow these questions to come up, since the respondent's only choices would be to self-incriminate or appear to be hiding something. Questions should pertain to only the actual qualifications for the job. Smoking pot 20 years ago is not a problem, and maybe not having done so last week, we just don't want them to have an ongoing habit which will affect their job performance.

Subsection I-C-3: Campaign Reform

Question 91

As long as political parties are still with us, is there any real reason for Presidential primaries/caucuses to be held at different times in different States?

Agreed in Session 60 that a National election should not allow some States to have any undue influence over others.

Question 92

Should campaigns for any public office be funded by any government entity?

Panelist noted in Session 60 that improved technology would result in lower campaign costs in general. But, to the extent that it still requires some:

Possible argument for public funding is to allow candidates with no money to run. We also might want to prohibit private funding in order to prevent incumbents from being beholden to contributors. Any middle ground probably would favor one side or the other too much. Moderator didn't want much government spending at all.

Panelist posited that public funding always favors the incumbent, who is in a position to arrange the spending rules in his own favor; therefore, we would need to have Term Limits if we have public funding, in order to mitigate that effect.

If we still had political parties, we would want to support lower-tier candidates with public funding, to the exclusion of private funding, in order to help get rid of parties entirely. Panelist claimed, though, that we would not want to do so if there were no parties, because a good leader can organize support and raise funds on her own.

Advantages of a higher-tier candidate in a pluralistic environment include name recognition, more endorsements, and better political connections, in addition to possible financial advantage (depending on finance rules) and that (depending on the ballot system) more voters will vote for major candidates.

Agreed that public funding is subject to corruption. When the Moderator suggested that private funding also is subject to corruption, the other panelist noted that full disclosure of campaign contributors means that my voting for a particular candidate implies support of the causes supported by that candidate's campaign contributors.

Panelist suggested that public funding might be a short-term benefit, while political parties are still with us, but should be eliminated in the long term.

Question 93

But, is it really benefitting an individual, if all candidates get an equal amount of assistance?

Not applicable as of Session 60.

Question 94

What if we limited assistance to those who established themselves quantifiably as being serious candidates, by means such as collecting some minimum number of signatures on a petition?

Not applicable as of Session 60.

Question 95

If disallowing public funding, then couldn't rich people buy extra publicity, giving themselves an advantage over those less endowed?

In the case of Ross Perot, the extra money didn't help him much. In the case of Bill Gates, all the money which the government could provide to opposing candidates would not be enough to compete. What do we do with this, then? Several choices:

Campaign spending limits

Contribution limits

Limits on actual things that they do

Prohibit people with over \$1 billion from being President (not really)

Let people do whatever they want

If we have Contribution Limits, then they can apply to Self-Contributions, as well. Do we want to limit contributions? After discussion, agreed in Session 60 to rely on previous point that voting for candidates with disclosure of their contributions implies support of those contributors, and that we therefore have no need to limit.

Solution to Question 95 therefore needed to lie elsewhere.

While the Moderator initially preferred limiting things which candidates can spend money on, he now thought that proliferation of the Internet and other new tech

meant that we can't be expected to predict all the ways that people such as Bill Gates will figure out how to advertise, and that the current ways would experience changes in usage, circulation, etc. More practical to have an aggregate spending limit, and to allow the candidate to distribute the money as he [sic] sees fit.

Question 95.3

How much should the campaign spending limit be?

Agreed quickly in Session 60 that conditions of inflation, technology advance, etc., will make it impractical for us to set any limit.

Question 95.4

By what process should be campaign spending limit be determined?

Considered best as of Session 60 to allow Elections Commissions to set temporary limits for their jurisdictions. [We would re-evaluate later.]

Question 96

It must also be considered as a simple fact of reality that voters who are bombarded with print and television ads for a given candidate will often be psychologically conditioned to slant toward that candidate, regardless of whether that person really is the best candidate: Doesn't this conflict with the interests of the voters?

Done. With limits on aggregate campaign spending, voters will not be "bombarded".

Question 97

Can't any rules on campaign finance be circumvented, by setting up dummy organizations, etc.?

Also marked as "done" as of Session 60. [Reconsidered in the Third Pass.]

Question 98

If we agree that the magnifying of one's own voice is a legitimate use of personal wealth, then shouldn't an individual candidate be permitted to distribute her campaign funds among the various advertising media as she sees fit?

Done. Aggregate spending is limited, but allocations to different media are flexible.

Question 99

Given the ability to place limitations on how much advertising rich people can buy, what about the needs of qualified candidates who don't have any funds, or big fund-raising organizations behind them?

Panelist in Session 60 offered the following: (1) Anyone who can't raise any funds is not a good leader. (2) Each election cycle will require less money with advancing

technology. (3) If you have some money, then you can compete with a sufficiently reasonable spending limit; if you have none, then you should start in small jurisdictions where a big budget is not needed, and do stuff manually like door-to-door meetings.

Question 100

Is a simple listing on the ballot sufficient?

Probably not per Session 60, since we get little or no information about qualifications or philosophy, even from the line which states the candidate's occupation/profession.

Question 101

Could more information be allowed in election materials?

Agreed that it's useful to have a pamphlet including a picture and a short candidate statement, both to allow the voter to evaluate all candidates in the same context, and also to allow candidates who have no money to have a minimum exposure.

Noted in Session 60 that a functioning electronic voting system could have a hyperlink to the same thing on screen, and that paper materials should in the meantime still be available as refreshers in the polling place.

Question 102

Is a ballot pamphlet sufficient, given that a public official needs to do more than put together prepared statements, and needs to be able to think and react and decide quickly?

Moderator acknowledged in Session 60 that this is a leading Question.

We saw usefulness in having debates, for all the reasons indicated. Noted that you could have multiple round-robin sessions if you have too many candidates for a given race. Importance is less in racking up debate points than in expressing yourself and your agenda on your feet, showing both knowledge and sincerity.

Question 103

In debates, would it be best for questions to be posed by representatives of the press, by individual citizens, or by the other candidates?

Panelist in Session 60 also asked whether questions should be pre-arranged, and whether candidates should have any advance knowledge. Should some candidates get information which the others don't? No. Question divided as follows:

Question 103.1

Should debate questions be pre-arranged with advance knowledge of the candidates?

Panelist felt that candidates should be able to ask off-agenda Q's of their opponents.

Agreed that we generally want to keep questions secret from the candidates, so that we can get spontaneous responses. However, you can have a few generic questions which the candidates know in advance, as long as you announce that one or more particular questions have been pre-arranged, and you allow for the fact that you'll get a rehearsed response, and all candidates have equal access to the questions.

Question 103.2

How can we make sure that debates are conducted and broadcast?

Noted in Session 60 that Radio & TV stations were then required to devote a certain amount of time to public service, and could use that time for debates. Didn't know whether we would keep that requirement. If not, then those debates are still in the public interest, especially if we are providing equal opportunity to all [qualified] candidates, so it would be a worthwhile government expense if needed.

Question 103.3

In debates, would it be best for questions to be posed by representatives of the press, by individual citizens, or by the other candidates?

No problem with any citizen proffering questions to candidates. Moderator liked idea of different groups putting forward different kinds of questions. Panelist noted that incumbents need to be able to field Q's from citizens and press and other politicians.

Question 104

Shall the government provide any other campaign assistance beyond pictures and statements in ballot supplements, and minimum televised debates?

We can post videos of the debates on government websites. No other suggestions offered during Session 60 for government assistance of campaigns.

Question 105

If pictures, ballot statements, and debates are to be provided by the government, then what is to prevent frivolous candidates from filing, taking up valuable ballot space, disrupting debates, and generally distracting voters from their task of choosing the most qualified serious candidate?

One way would be to limit the number of candidates, but we didn't necessarily like this idea in Session 60, and it's not guaranteed to work anyway.

Panelist suggested a presentation to the Legislature, but Moderator noted that they would have political motivations in accepting or rejecting candidates, and that the choice should be left to the voters. We agreed that acquiring petition signatures is a good idea, because it is taking the issue to the voters.

Should there be a filing fee? Panelist called it a 'negative campaign contribution from government'; we had already indicated that we want no positive contributions from government, now asking whether we want to make negative; hoped that the government could afford the cost of printing ballots without the candidates needing

to subsidize it. Signatures establish seriousness without a filing fee, so filing fee is not necessary. Also desirable for the money which would have gone to a filing fee to go instead to the actual campaign, both for the candidate and for the electorate.

Question 106

Should each jurisdiction (Fed, State, County, etc.) be permitted to set its own rules regarding advertising limits, specification on pictures and statements for ballot publications, number and format of debates, supplemental assistance (if any), safeguards against frivolous filing, etc.?

Panelist in Session 60 offered to divide the Question: Should states be able to make rules regarding a federal election, or just the state only? Noted that the Constitution provides for state rules in federal elections.

Borrowed from previous discussion, and agreed pretty quickly that each jurisdiction should set rules only for itself, without going up or down. If a higher level is dictating to a lower level, then there is no reason to have the lower level. If the other way, then some States will have undue influence in the National election, whereas we should all be equal.

Question 107

Given the above, do we need to make any adjustment to the current 'equal time' rules in the print and electronic media?

We had established earlier in Session 60 that we will have minimum coverage in ballot pamphlets and debates, and a maximum aggregate spending limit to be allocated as candidates see fit (magazine, radio, etc.). These two rules combined should cover what needs to be covered. Also noted (even back in December 2000) that Internet coverage can proliferate almost uncontrollably, so don't bother trying to control it. We should remove any current rules not covered by the above two.

Question 108

Should the results of any polls or surveys on any elections (including those on initiatives and referenda) be published close to Election Day?

We had already established earlier in Session 60 [apparently off-record] that we don't want to have results reported while polls are open, because we don't want voters to be unduly influenced by the apparent sentiments of other voters. Rather, we should allow them to vote their individual (and thus collective) conscience. By similar logic, we don't want polls published too close to Election Day.

Question 109

What sort of time frame would be considered most appropriate to prohibit the publication of poll/survey results?

Panelist in Session 60 suggested possibility of making the time frame infinite, and having no surveys at all! He asked what purpose surveys serve at all, other than publicity for the organizations doing it. A brilliant Question! We had no Answer.

We couldn't think of any purpose served to the Electorate by having survey results published before an election. Possible benefit to the candidate, to know what areas need more concentration, but such results can be communicated to candidates privately, and we may/do require that such results not be published. Possible benefit to the so-called 'intelligent' voter who wishes to try to manipulate the voting system based on knowledge of other voters' preferences, but we don't want them to do that, since we are interested in what each voter's individual preference is.

Agreed for no polls to be published, ever. Candidates may get private information, but they must pay for it out of their aggregate spending limit. [Reconsidered later.]

Question 95 (continued)

If disallowing public funding, then couldn't rich people buy extra publicity, giving themselves an advantage over those less endowed?

Panelist in Session 60 asked whether disclosure should include itemized expenses. We didn't see a need at first, but we then realized that it would be useful for auditing purposes: If I'm holding a copy of a canceled check for \$15k for a polling service, then I want to see that it has been reflected in the expenses, or else I'll tell. Panelist added example of multiple ads on a certain TV station. Adjourned 1:53am!

Subsection I-C-4: Voting and Tallying

Question 110

Do we agree that maximizing voter turnout at the polls is in the public interest?

Found in Session 61 (January 2001) that we may need to define 'public interest' first.

Question 109.9

How should we generally define something as being 'in the public interest' for the purpose of these discussions?

Noted in Session 61 that the 'utilitarian' approach is 'the greatest good for the greatest number', but that this is flawed when it comes to protecting the rights of individuals and minorities. Noted that our Resolution #1 is the 'libertarian' approach.

Can be argued that having an inferior elected official in place can threaten injury to more people than would be threatened by a superior official (under our definition of 'injury' in Answer 13), thus justifying our abolition of political parties and polls/surveys, and the institution of campaign spending limits.

Encyclopedia and dictionary were of little help.

Put on the white board: "Public Interest - describing that which is consistent with -- or not inconsistent with -- the goals and aims of a society". We immediately found multiple problems with this first attempt at a definition, including a participle to signify a noun, vagueness of 'consistency', possibility that a society might not have any aims, and the simple substitution of 'society' for 'public' without providing any real definition of either term. Definition rejected in its entirety.

Hard to come up with a solid definition, since those values which we like -- ascertaining the will of the majority, protecting individual and minority rights, etc. -- are definitions which each society may or may not come up with; another society may find that it is in the public interest to hold slaves, mutilate women's genitalia, or do something else which we find distasteful, so any definition would need to be very generic and adaptable to an individual society's needs.

Noted that our A7 was that there are no Natural Rights, and that closest we could come was our Resolution #1, labeled a 'conditional natural right'. Very fuzzy.

Agreed in Session 62 (March 2001) to accept a working definition of 'public interest' as "the set of conditions which will tend to maximize quality of life of the residents of a given geographic area".

Question 110 (continued)

Do we agree that maximizing voter turnout at the polls is in the public interest?

Discussion in Session 62 of other systems, including Australia (where voters were required by cash fine to vote) and the Soviet Union (where other pressures were levied). Agreed that such a system encourages people to show up and vote randomly, so we're not getting a good result, and it also diminishes quality of life.

Answer to Q110 is conditional: Good to maximize voter desire to participate.

Also agreed that a larger sample is generally more reliable, if people are voting sincerely and not randomly. Therefore, agreed that it is good to maximize willing voter turnout.

Question 111

Should it be necessary for victory to obtain a majority of all eligible voters, or just of those who actually vote?

Clarified that 'eligible voters' in this context means those who are registered to vote.

Turnouts usually [modified to 'often' in the Third Pass] have varied between 5-25%, so could be very difficult to get a majority of the electorate even to show up. Noted that previous turnout figures came from the context where a majority of actual turnout was sufficient. Still, agreed that it could be very problematic to have an election where a majority doesn't turn out, or where no candidate can possibly get a majority. We therefore typically will require only a majority of those actually voting.

Question 112

By what means can we maximize willing voter participation?

Panelist's first reaction in Session 62 was "beats the hell out of me". He suggested, though, that facilitating voter registration would also increase voter turnout, and that separating voter registration from jury selection might help. He noted that 'participation' is more apropos than 'turnout', since it can encompass vote-by-mail and electronic voting.

We generally should make voting as easy as possible. We also can use PR campaigns to attach more value to voting.

Briefly discussed possibility of providing prizes, raffles, or other such incentives (including our earlier idea of a 'reverse poll tax'), and acknowledged that this would present the same problem as forced voting. [That is, many people would vote randomly just to obtain the benefit, and the purpose of the election (being to find out which candidate the electorate finds to be the most qualified) would be defeated.]

Also reiterated earlier conclusion that the reduction/elimination of polls and surveys prior to Election Day will likely tend to increase participation.

Question 108 (continued)

Should the results of any polls or surveys on any elections (including those on initiatives and referenda) be published close to Election Day?

Non-author panelist in Session 62 noted the so-called 'Delta Factor', that some voters will vote for whoever appears to be winning. Agreed that this will also tend to skew the result.

Question 112 (continued)

By what means can we maximize willing voter participation?

Non-author panelist also noted the Time-Zone Problem, but this was planned to be dealt with in greater depth during Questions 115-118.

Question 113

Do we want to encourage the use of absentee ballots?

Non-author panelist in Session 62 thought Yes, as a means to increase voter participation. Noted that many people show up at the polling place without already having decided how to vote. If one has already decided how to vote, makes less difference, but one still has to go out, possibly in bad weather, and possibly have to wait in a long line. Panelist generally felt that it would be more efficient to maximize vote-by-mail to the fullest possible extent.

Moderator's rebuttal was that it is not in the public interest to encourage people to commit to a decision before all campaigning and other discussions have concluded. Some discussion. Panelist's response was that we could still designate a time after which campaigning would be concluded, and mail ballots could be sent out, processed by the voters, and returned. But, what about the lingering influence of people still wearing T-shirts, etc.? Panelist responded that influence would be much more diluted, since there would not be a place for focused and concentrated political activity, as with a polling place. In any case, he didn't see such influence as a big enough problem to warrant the discouragement of vote-by-mail.

Panelist also noted that most electioneering during the final period of the campaign would be by TV and Radio [Internet and the Social Media included in the Third Pass],

and that we could require candidates to suspend any such advertising during the 2-4 weeks needed to process all vote-by-mail ballots. Agreed if we do go that way.

Moderator was still inclined to favor the paradigm where there's a short period where everyone votes, but could agree to the paradigm shift of going by mail.

One more question, though: What about the problem of never knowing exactly when all vote-by-mail ballots which had been cast have actually been received? Panelist noted that people could check for receipt of their ballot, but that this wouldn't solve the entire problem. Asserted in discussion that no system is perfect. [As of the Third Pass, we were not convinced of that premise.] Anyone who is very concerned about the integrity of the delivery process can still vote in person, for no one ever suggested eliminating in-person voting. We saw that maintaining both systems simultaneously is making a whole lot of work for somebody, but those conditions are secondary to the achievement of the best possible election result.

Agreed to a Yes answer for the present. [Reconsidered during the Third Pass.]

Question 114

Certain political organizations currently send applications for absentee ballots to prospective voters, under guise of catering to their convenience: Should this practice be permitted?

Non-author panelist in Session 62 cited that he had gotten started in voting absentee as a result of some candidate sending him an application for an absentee ballot, though he didn't recall being influenced to vote for that candidate.

Moderator still claimed that a lot of voters would be influenced to vote for the candidate who supplies them with an application, either because of immediate name recognition or in reward for being kind and considerate enough to send applications to voters. In either case, voting on the basis of who sends out applications is probably not in the public interest.

Panelist suggested that we could require each candidate to send out at least one vote-by-mail application among her literature, in order to create a level playing field. Moderator was still very fuzzy about this. Panelist noted that this procedure would help to maximize use of vote-by-mail ballots, which would be consistent with what we had decided in Answer 113.

Moderator could go along with this system if everybody is required to do it, since it would then be less likely that voters would select a particular candidate solely out of name recognition or out of the kindness of the candidate's heart in sending an application. Why should we require candidates to do it at all, then? Answer was to maximize voter participation. [Reconsidered in Third Pass.]

Question 115

Shall the announcement of election results in one area be permitted while the polls in that or any other area are still open?

Current model as of Session 62 was that we don't want any voters having any information as to how anyone else has voted, that vote-by-mail is to be maximized,

and that in-person voting is still to be allowed. On discussion, we found that the 2-to-4-week period for voting by mail without influence of TV/radio ads should proceed and end on the in-person Election Day, and that the close of polls on Election Day should coincide with the last time that a mailed ballot will be accepted. This would make it much easier to accept the maximization of vote-by-mail, since the open-ended cutoff had seemed problematic.

Already established that we don't want voters influenced by the actions of other voters, so the Answer was a severe 'No'.

Question 116

But, if every jurisdiction in a National election (or State election, in cases where a State covers more than one Time Zone) has the same local time for the polls to be open (e.g., 7am to 8pm local time), then might it not be considered unfair to those residing in eastern Time Zones to be required to wait for the closing of polls in western Time Zones before any results could be announced?

Non-author panelist in Session 62 stated that he hadn't thought about that aspect, but again agreed that results in eastern Time Zones can influence westerners' decision to vote or not, or how to vote. He didn't see any way to avoid this delay; agreed that it is not unacceptable to wait as much as a few hours, or even a whole day: Better than the old pre-electronic days, and also better than the 2000 Presidential election, the one with the "hanging chads" involving multiple recounts.

This is not really that important of a point in the context of maximized mail ballots, since it routinely will take several days or weeks to tally the much more relevant fraction of mailed ballots. In other words, we'll all need to wait a long time, anyway, so we had better get used to it. This fact may be considered another argument against the proliferation of mailed ballots, but not necessarily, as such proliferation may encourage the development of more efficient procedures.

Question 117

Might not such a system then be unfair to people in different Time Zones, who might then be unable to appear at the polls during the hours designated?

We mentioned after the preceding discussion of Question 116 during Session 62 that our 'black book' of preliminary ideas suggested that we stagger polling periods to coincide in real time, and panelist independently raised Question 117. He said that he thought of the 24-hour suggestion which we had included in our 'black book' notes for Question 118, and which we had not yet introduced into the discussion. However, none of this appeared to matter, if the proliferation of mailed ballots is going to delay the publication of any results for multiple days, anyway.

And, we considered how we would address these Questions in the context of improved procedures for handling mailed ballots, and/or reduced emphasis on mailed ballots, and concurred that it would be least disruptive to require everyone to wait until all polls are closed before any announcement of results is made. Besides, going to a 24-hour polling period would make people need to wait longer, anyway.

Question 119

What role -- if any -- should the Internet play in voting, either now or in the future?

Agreed in Session 62 that electronic voting would be ideal, if technical problems could be worked out. What are those problems? We listed four concerns: (1) Voter has to be who he [*sic*] claims to be; (2) Voter can not already have voted (should be pretty easy); (3) Vote must be recorded in the tally, and not ignored or lost (should also be fairly easy); and (4) No one may see how any other voter voted.

On voter identification, we could rely on a password, but it would be too easy for hackers to get access to the file. Signature checks and voice checks are very unreliable. We could rely on either fingerprints or eye checks, or a system using a card reader. Fingerprint and eye readers might be expensive and bulky, and it might be possible for the entrepreneur to apply a film of somebody else's thumbprint; may be able to get around this by building the machine to require the heat and/or pulse of a living thumb, but one might get around this too.

Most practical solution appeared to be using cards (which could also take the form of then-existing technology, such as CD-ROM's), which can be combined with password usage (similar to then-current ATM protocols), the idea being that clever hackers would probably not have access to a physical card, and those with access to physical cards probably wouldn't be able to hack the password file. Still could be a problem for voters to remember their passwords from one election to the next, but we thought it easier for voters to use familiar references, since the cards would be used infrequently. [Reviewed in Third Pass.] Also observed in discussion that the election authority could issue new temporary passwords in each election, which temporary passwords could be changed to actual passwords by the cardholders. Thought of issuing new cards in each election, but rejected for reasons of expense and security.

Panelist suggested that we find a way to add votes to aggregate totals, and immediately erase how each individual voted, recording only the fact that they did vote. We didn't know how we would successfully convince cynical voters that we had successfully accomplished this, but left this challenge to the marketing experts.

From our 'black book' of preliminary ideas, we treated a question of transition: Panelist thought that it would be worthwhile to have both systems in place at once during the transition, since most such endeavors are implemented gradually. The 'black book' also said that some people will need more time to be walked through the system before we can have full implementation. Meanwhile, how do we prevent duplication between manual and electronic voting? Panelist suggested a deterrence factor of simply prosecuting anyone who is found to have voted twice. We can also rely on the "massive cross-checking" mentioned in the 'black book', which would require the electronic polling period to close 2-3 days before the manual period; then, precinct inspectors could be sent lists of those who voted electronically, and flag them on the index-roster which is used to track voters at physical polling sites, same as they did at the time with vote-by-mail ballots. If the system is still fairly new, then the number of flags should be fairly small; if the number gets very large, then we probably are ready for full implementation.

Problem of a glitch erasing the database is best treated by backing up all data regularly to separate servers, same as by banks, the stock market, airlines, etc.

Bottom line: There appeared to be viable solutions to all technical and educational issues surrounding Electronic Voting, and we deemed it OK to encourage continuation of then-existing efforts to treat these problems and pilot-test the program, and to allow full implementation whenever we appeared to have general satisfaction (including from people like Moderator's mom) that everything is fine.

Question 120

Every election for every office in the country is decided by direct popular vote, except for the ticket of U.S. President and Vice-President, which uses the Electoral College established by Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution, and by the 12th Amendment: Should the Electoral College remain in existence any further?

Agreed very quickly in Session 62 to dump the stupid Electoral College!

Question 121

If yes to keeping the Electoral College, then should the District of Columbia or any other territory have any electors, as provided in the 23rd Amendment?

Not applicable as of Session 62. Dumping the Electoral College.

Question 121.5

Assuming that we continue to have a Vice-President, should the Vice-President succeed automatically on the death of the President, or should the 2nd-place Presidential candidate take over?

Found in Session 63 (April 2001) that it would be easier to do Question 122 first.

Question 122

Regardless of whether the Electoral College is retained or not, should the President and Vice-President (and analogous State executives) continue to be voted for in a single ticket, or should the first runner-up in the Presidential election automatically be named Vice-President, or should the two run separately?

Realized in Session 63 that it is hard to address this Question without knowing all the duties of the Vice-President, including the possible duty of Presidential succession. Determined that these questions interrelate, but are not necessary for discussion of Voting Methods, so agreed to move them to just before Question 130 in Section I-D.

Question 124.4

In general, what Voting Method is best for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies?

Non-author panelist in Session 63 noted that people might want to vote against a candidate. We could assign points to candidates, or give a negative value. Panelist

noted the possibility of vote-splitting, and gave the example of the 2000 Presidential election; Moderator also offered the 1992 example. Panelist suggested that two important factors are that people are allowed to express their will as accurately as possible [later labeled as (F1)], and [later labeled as (F2)] that the method is fairly easy to understand. Moderator strongly agreed.

Panelist started to mention dealing with minor political parties or candidates, but we offered that we had rejected political parties, and that we had eliminated polls and surveys specifically so that we wouldn't know who is a minor candidate. He thought (and maybe he was right) that a general public opinion can be created by media influences, but we don't want to base our system on their statements. Maybe we want to pass some laws to mitigate such statements, but we may not want to inhibit Freedom of the Press. Probable best way is simply to consider all candidates equal for purposes of building an electoral system.

Panelist: We can vote for any number of candidates, possibly up to some maximum, with one vote each. Could assign points to candidates, but probably too complicated for many voters, and would require too much time. Assigning negative votes also might make the system too complicated.

Moderator noted that Straight Approval voting could mean that my influence is higher than that of other voters if I'm voting for more candidates than they are. Could distribute my vote equally among all my candidates, but that might be too complicated. Panelist asked whether our influence could be considered equal if I am actively not voting for other candidates, but Moderator suggested that influence could be equalized only if we have a negative vote for other candidates, which would be appropriate if we are considering that I am making a statement against those candidates; however, panelist noted that this might be too complicated. Panelist also suggested a +1_0_-1 structure, though it might also be too complicated.

Moderator suggested building scenarios with the different possibilities, to get an idea of the mathematical impact of each. [Strap in.] The methods which we considered are referenced below as follows:

A - Single-Vote Plurality

B - Straight Approval, which the non-author panelist suggested as favoring centrist candidates in a polarized environment, which we later labeled as (F3), for in a highly polarized political environment, where people's first-place choices are approximately evenly divided between two strongly-opposing candidates or factions, the society is generally served best and most peacefully by a centrist candidate acceptable to all

C - Prorated Approval, which was not clearly defined in the original notes

D - Yes/No, which in retrospect looks pretty identical to Method B

E - Yes/No/Abstain

F1 - Straight Rating

F2 - Prorated Rating

G - Borda/Ranking

H - Preferential, which the non-author panelist thought too complicated, although we noted that it's way easier than some methods discussed at the Caltech seminars

I - Anti-Preferential, where you go for fewest last-place votes

First scenario: Three candidates (X, Y, Z), and six voters (V1-V6). V1 strongly approves X; V2 strongly opposes X (so 50% chance of approving Y or Z if given only one choice); V3 approves Y and Z equally (so 50% chance of selecting one over the

other if required); V4 ranks the candidates as X/Y/Z (middle ranking assumes 50% probability of approval, or an Abstain under Method E); V5 ranks them as Z/Y/X; V6 ranks them as Z/X/Y.

Average results are X=2 Y=1 Z=3 under Method A, X=2.5 Y=3 Z=4 under Method B, X=2 Y=1.5 Z=2.5 under Method C, and X=2.5 Y=3 Z=4 under Method D. Method E gives scores of Y=2 A=1 N=3 for X, Y=2 A=2 N=2 for Y, and Y=4 A=0 N=2 for Z.

At this point, we found that this scenario was not very instructive, since the same winner appears with each method, though there are different secondary outcomes.

Do we care how complicated the internal mathematics get? Agreed that not only should the ballot be simple, but the background math should be simple too, so that voters don't feel cheated with an unexpected result.

Second scenario: X would get 40 first-place votes out of 100 in any single-vote or ranking method, Y would get 31 out of 100, and Z would get 29. Y and Z are similar but not identical, so lonely X should not get elected with less than a majority. Idea here is to discourage Vote-Splitting, where the majority is opposed to a candidate, but divided as to an alternative.

Scores are X=40 Y=31 Z=29 under Method A, and X=40 Y=60 Z=60 under Method B. Notes for Method C show X=40 Y="30-31" Z="29-30", so still not completely clear at this point what we meant at the time by "Prorated Approval". X would have Y=40 and N=60 under Method D or E, while Y and Z would each have Y=60 and N=40. Applying a 0-5 scale to Method F1, we figured that 40% would score X=5 and Y=Z=0, 58% would score Y=Z=5 and X=0, and maybe 2% would score Y=5 Z=4 X=0. Method F2 would work out same as Method C, whatever that means.

Agreed at this point to enumerate the desired factors of an ideal Voting Method, and registered (F4) that an ideal method should encourage sincere voting, and discourage 'strategic voting', meaning the temptation to register a vote which is different from how one truly feels.

So far, we observed the pro-rated methods to be doing poorly, even though they met the new (F5) objective of giving equal weight to all voters. Non-author panelist made what we considered at the time to be a "very good observation", that Single-Vote Plurality is a form of pro-rated voting, and is also inferior as a result.

Method G (also pro-rated) yielded scores of X=114.3 Y=95.3 Z=90.4, while Y wins on the second ballot under Method H or Method I.

Third scenario, the Polarized Environment: X=49 Y=3 Z=48 out of 100 in terms of everyone's actual favorite candidate.

X wins trivially under Method A, while under Method B we figured that some supporters of X and Z would also approve Y, who would end up with 8.6% approval. We recorded that under Method C, no one would waste her half-vote on a centrist candidate, for in a polar environment voters will already know that their own candidates have the best chance of defeating the main opponent, so will not split a pro-rated vote, so the percentages end up same as under Method A.

Under either Method D or Method E, scores would be $X=-2$ $Y=+3$ $Z=-4$. Applying a 10-point scale to Method F1, we figured that 49% would vote $X=10$ $Z=0$ $Y=5$, 48% would vote $Z=10$ $X=0$ $Y=5$, and 3% would vote $Y=10$ $X=Z=0$; multiplying the percentages by the scores to arrive at total points then gives $X=490$ $Z=480$ $Y=515$ for the win. Scores under Method F2 are $X=490$ $Y=30$ $Z=480$. Adjourned 12:50am.

Looking at Method G in Session 64 (April 2001), we used 2 points for 1st place and 1 point for 2nd (noting that the ranking will be the same as long as the difference in points between each ranking is the same), and we calculated $X=99.52$ $Y=103$ $Z=97.48$ to give Y the win. X wins again under Method H, while Z loses on the first ballot under Method I, with Y achieving 51% on the second ballot.

At this point, we decided to drop Methods A, C, F2, G, and H, and to consider the remaining 5 methods for evaluation with regard to the other factors. Noted that Method E could yield different results, depending on whether the score is calculated by $(Y-N)$ or $Y/(Y+N)$, so we constructed a....

Fourth scenario: Now there are four candidates W, X, Y, and Z. We set up 7 segments of voters according to how they would vote under the Yes/No/Abstain method. Specifically, we speculated that 20% would approve W, abstain on X, and disapprove Y and Z; 19% would approve Y and Z, abstain on X, and disapprove W; 5% would approve Z, abstain on W, and disapprove X and Y; 16% would approve Y, abstain on X and Z, and disapprove W; 12% would approve X, abstain on W and Y, and disapprove Z; 17% would approve X and Y, and disapprove W and Z; and 11% would approve W and Z, and disapprove X and Y.

Method E1 is to give the victory to whoever has the highest quantity of $(Y-N)$, which in this scenario gives $W=-21$ $X=+13$ $Y=+16$ $Z=-14$. Method E2 is to give the victory to whoever has the highest quantity of $Y/(Y+N)$, which in this scenario gives $W=.37$ $X=.64$ $Y=.59$ $Z=.42$, so X wins under Method E2 while Y wins under Method E1, so yes the two sub-methods could yield different results.

Non-author panelist made good note, though, that an unknown candidate could get a very high score with very few votes under Method E2, which might be a good reason to drop that method, in that it fails a theoretical (F6). However, we were unclear on what (F6) really is; we thought that it might be "requiring sizable support", but then realized that favoring Y in the third scenario might violate that. While discussing this topic extensively, non-author panelist noted that the reason why a candidate gets very few votes might be material to the discussion: Is he just unknown, or do people actively consider him to be mediocre? If he's unknown, then some people might vote against him, but some might not. If we have the campaign statements in ballot pamphlets, as agreed earlier, then people can more easily form opinions, so will be less likely to ignore a candidate for lack of personal knowledge. Therefore, less likely that Method E2 will be problematic for nobody casting any votes.

In any case, the biggest problem with $Y+N=2$ (that is, only 2% voting actively as to that candidate) is that not enough people are casting active votes with regard to the candidate for the statistical sample to be reliable. Need a large enough sample for the result to be reliable. In the third scenario, people on both sides and in the center were casting active votes with regard to Candidate Y, even if only to indicate that Y was better than some other candidate. Therefore, okay for Y to win that election.

Therefore, factor (F6) of an ideal voting method is 'significant active votes'.

Does the Method E2 pass or fail (F6)? Depends on how unknown candidates might exist: If we give little information to voters during the campaign, then a candidate could be very unknown, and could win with $1/1=100\%$. If we include significant information in the pamphlet, then less likely, and (Y+N) should be sufficiently large for the result to be reliable.

Built a chart of the methods currently being considered, and the factors being used to evaluate them, using a check (✓) for any method which always passes a given filter, an X for a method which always fails, and a question mark (?) for a method which may or may not pass, depending on other elements in the electoral process, such as the existence of political parties, or the prevalence of polls/surveys published prior to Election Day. Completed chart appears beneath following further analysis:

Decided to create Methods D1 and D2 to use the same formulas as E1 and E2.

Method B probably passes (F4), since you would vote against anyone whom you didn't want to win. Method D1 passes for same reason. Both methods also pass the Accuracy filter, in that there is one-and-only-one interpretation of any particular vote, being that all approved candidates are better than a certain cutoff, whereas all other candidates are below. Noted that there is a difference between 'accuracy' and 'precision' here, where 'precision' implies being able to provide more detailed information on voter preference. Considered adding a 7th filter for 'precision', but noted that more precision generally may encourage strategic voting, and may also make ballots harder to understand.

Method D2 also passes the Accuracy filter, for "making only two camps" if we are reading the original notes correctly. May also pass Sincerity, but we needed to apply the fourth scenario to get an idea of the impact on the math of having only two options. At least, we thought so at first, then non-author panelist noted that (Y+N) is a constant if those are your only two options, so the ranking of Y votes would be the same. Therefore, no reason to doubt Sincerity. Considered that the current system encourages insincere voting, but is related to the existence of polls/surveys and political parties; remove them, and strategic voting goes down, though it may never get eliminated, with so much mass communication, even back in 2001.

Moderator noted that all methods may allow sincere voting if there are no political parties or polls. Panelist noted that performance in past elections may be considered a type of poll, but Moderator responded that so many conditions can change between elections -- including which candidates are being opposed -- that it is difficult to draw a direct comparison.

Difficult for us to come up with strategic-voting scenarios in the absence of polls and political parties. Therefore, unless and until we could come up with any, or determine that any more methods will always encourage sincere voting, putting a ? in the remaining boxes of Column 4.

Added (F7) in Session 65 (April 2001) on solving the Vote-Splitting Problem. Found earlier that all currently-remaining methods passed it.

Agreed that 'unambiguously' more accurately/unambiguously expresses what we mean by (F1), and to replace 'accurately' with 'unambiguously'. Clarified during discussion that (F1) deals more with there being only one possible interpretation as

to what a given vote means, whereas (F4) treats the mathematics of tallying which tend to motivate a voter to vote sincerely or strategically.

Methods E1 and E2 both appear to pass (F1), and Moderator noted that methods which allow voters to express their opinions on each-and-every candidate will tend to be less ambiguous than methods which limit voter information to some subset of candidates. However, this tendency is not universal, and we found that the Rating system yet fails (F1), since what one voter means by rating a given candidate as 4 out of 5 may be significantly different from what another voter means by the same vote. Further, we're guessing that multiple voters will tend to polarize all candidates into extreme positions, while other voters will work very diligently to achieve maximum accuracy, thus making the resulting averages potentially misleading.

Method I passes (F1), since the voter is required only to make a straight ranking. It fails (F2), though, not only because the mechanics of tallying last-place votes is non-trivial for most voters (even many Mensans) to understand, but also because some voters will tend to get pissed when their candidate has the most first-place votes, but gets eliminated for having too many last-place votes.

Noted during discussion that we could construct a hybrid of Methods H and I such that you look at the first-place votes to see whether someone has a majority, and where one who gets eliminated has the most last-place votes, or something, and concluded pretty quickly that Methods H and I probably would be too hard for many people to understand as they are, and that a hybrid probably would be much worse, so probably not necessary even to consider the possibility very actively.

Agreed that Method B probably is easiest of all the methods to understand, and it passed. Started to think that Methods D1 and D2 were similar to Method B, but then realized that many people will not easily understand the distinction between a No vote and an Abstain. In addition, after discussing that a method should be explainable in only 2-3 sentences in order to pass (F2), we thought that too many voters would be likely to get confused by the use of Long Division, and Methods D2 and E2 were therefore found to fail.

Non-author panelist noted that the Understandability of Method D1 could depend on whether we use one column or two, though each could have problems. (One column could lead a voter to think that No votes don't count in the calculation, whereas two columns could lead voters to think that Abstaining is a possibility.) Another non-author panelist noted, though, that most referendum votes are expressed as a percentage of $Y/(Y+N)$, though also agreed in discussion that this is much easier for voters to understand with only two choices per election.

Agreed that Method B is easier to understand than Method D1, but we were not necessarily trying to find the easiest method, but rather one that is 'easy enough' (whatever that means), and still pass as many of the other filters as possible. OUR threshold of Understandability was necessarily subjective.

Further discussion of whether Method D1 should have one column on the ballot or two, and we concluded that the earlier point was compelling, and that either approach is destined to confuse a significant number of voters, and therefore that Method D1 fails the Understandability filter.

Decided upon suggestion from a non-author panelist to replace 'neutral' with 'abstain' in Methods E1 and E2, since they have materially different meanings.

Method E1 definitely is easier, for you would be able to see a Yes column and a No column, and have the option to not-vote with regard to each candidate. Transition should be easy, since we need only to tell people that they now have the option to express opinions on multiple candidates, and that they may now vote actively against those candidates whom they dislike. Agreed that Method E1 passes (F2).

Moderator noted at this point that Method E1 was the only one of the set {D1, D2, E1, E2} which passed (F2), and that it was so far the only method on the board not to have an X. One of the non-author panelists observed that Method E1 would not end up X-free. [But, he later modified his position!]

Agreed that Method F totally fails (F2): Having too few choices makes it hard for a voter to express a fractional rating, whereas having too many choices will overwhelm some other voters. Also, some voters might misunderstand that ratings would need to be averaged, and that the candidate with the highest total (i.e., in the numerator) may not win. Moderator noted that the first problem could be alleviated by allowing the rating to be hand-entered, but a panelist responded that this would apply to so few a number of voters that allowing hand-entry wouldn't make that much difference. Further, the logistical problems associated with voters writing in numbers by hand (including unreliability of optical scanners, time consumed in hand-keyed data entry, etc.) would necessitate establishing a limited number of categories, which would present the above-stated problems. In either case, a significant problem of Understandability results, and so we X'd Method F1 with regard to (F2).

Panelist raised question of whether Method F1 might also fail (F4), with response that -- as long as the preference order stays the same as one's actual preference -- the vote still is sincere, though we still might have an Ambiguity problem.

Started to place a v on the E1 row under (F6), since more Yes votes means greater chance of success, but panelist offered good scenario with 3 major candidates and 1 nobody: Each of the 3 major candidates would get approximately $(-2/3)$ of the electorate, while the nobody could win with just a few positive votes. However, we found in further examination of this scenario that there would be two basic reasons for people voting for major candidates, either because those really are their favorites (in which case they would vote against all opponents, and the nobody would lose worse than anyone else), or because they actively judged the other two major candidates to be bad (in which case the victory of any of these three would result in $2/3$ of the electorate getting pissed off, and where the centrist/neutral candidate probably should prevail anyway). Therefore, putting the v back without objection.

Method F1 severely fails (F6), since any one perfect rating could surpass the average of any other candidate. Method I passes (F6), since one needs to rank all candidates. Method D originally marked as ? under (F6), but changed at this time to v , since voters must express opinion on all candidates. Methods D1, D2, and I all pass (F5), since each voter is expressing an opinion on each candidate.

Considered compatibility of Methods E1 and E2 with (F5), and finally found that each voter has the opportunity to cast a full vote (i.e., an opinion on each candidate), without impacting the accuracy of her vote. By contrast, Method B could result in another voter adding more votes into the system than me, even when we are both

voting accurately. If I choose to abstain on one candidate, then it's the same as abstaining from voting at all: My choice to defer a particular decision to the rest of the electorate has nothing to do with the quality of the Voting Method. Consensus was that it was appropriate to v Methods E1 and E2.

Noted at this time for the record that the one panelist had modified his earlier position on Method E1, as a result of further reflection.

Chart completely filled in at this point, as follows:

| | (F1) | (F2) | (F3) | (F4) | (F5) | (F6) | (F7) |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Method B | v | v | X | v | X | v | v |
| Method D1 | v | X | v | v | v | v | v |
| Method D2 | v | X | v | v | v | v | v |
| Method E1 | v | v | v | ? | v | v | v |
| Method E2 | v | X | v | ? | v | ? | v |
| Method F1 | X | X | v | ? | X | X | v |
| Method I | v | X | v | ? | v | v | v |

Method E1 appeared to be the strongest candidate, as the only option which does not possess a single X, but we agreed that it would be fairer and more prudent to meditate on this whole business until the following meeting, so that we could consider whether to add more methods or more criteria, or whether we wanted to reconsider any existing datapoints. Adjourned at Midnight.

At the opening of Session 66 (April 2001), we reviewed notes on Arrow's Theorem from our 'green book' of general research material. Kenneth Arrow held that an ideal Voting Method must satisfy four specific criteria, one of which is 'independence of irrelevant alternatives', meaning that my vote as to a certain candidate is not going to be influenced by the presence of a certain other candidate on the ballot. We agreed now that this criterion was not important for us to consider, since it really should be up to each voter to determine what is relevant and what is not: We vote on the basis of all choices presented on the ballot, regardless of Voting Method.

Non-author panelist made presentation on the 'Pareto principle' (named for an Italian economist who lived from 1848-1923): In order for a change to be 'Pareto-optimal', no one should be decreasing their happiness as a result, even if the overall utility goes up. The 'weak Pareto principle' appears to mean that a very small decrease in some people's lives could be allowed in order to achieve a larger increase in aggregate utility. However, we were not entirely sure at this point.

Reviewed other papers and materials accumulated on the subject over the preceding three years, and found that most had little or no actual relevance to our challenge here. For example, the Saari paper discussed only scenarios involving three candidates, whereas our ideal method should accommodate any number. Paper by the League of Women Voters relied heavily on the existence of political parties, which we had concluded should be dropped. Pamphlet from the Center for Voting and Democracy suggested ranking methods, and discussed at-large voting, whereas we had decided that we want elections to happen by District, and whereas we had shown that ranking methods -- while probably better than the 'current standard model' -- are yet inferior to other methods available to us. Papers offered by a certain panelist in the Wednesday group working on this Project didn't seem to add

much to what we already knew from our examination of different scenarios, in addition to being rather difficult to absorb and use; further, they often assumed conditions (such as the existence of political parties, and the prevalence of polls/surveys during the campaign period) which we had already decided against.

Agreed that it didn't appear to be necessary for us to give any further consideration to these accumulated materials. Also appeared that we had accumulated enough data for the present on different methods and scenarios, and that we probably could proceed to examine our chart, provided always that we could go back and review our findings further, should the need ever appear to arise.

Readdressing the question put to the group at the end of the previous meeting, we were now not thinking in terms of adding more methods to our chart at this time: If a method was not intuitive enough to have occurred to us by this point in our analysis, then it probably was going to be so bizarre and convoluted as to fail (F2), and therefore not to be deserving of any serious consideration by us.

As to adding more criteria, we considered it most useful to look at what appeared to be the best choice so far, being Method E1, the only method in our chart without any X's, and to check for any reason that we should not adopt it as our ideal Voting Method of choice. Any such reason could then form an additional criterion.

Panelist suggested possibility that all candidates under Method E1 could end up with negative scores, but we countered that there still would be a candidate showing forth who would have a less negative score than the rest, meaning that that person is less objectionable than the others, in which case that person should be elected.

Panelist clarified that his real concern was that a relatively unknown candidate could prevail in a polarized environment, but we discussed that it's pretty unlikely that a candidate will be totally unknown, since the media, other candidates, and the people who signed his/her petition would all be in a position to know about the candidate, in addition to information provided by ballot pamphlets and televised debates. Even if someone is still relatively unknown after all that, then such a candidate is probably still going to be the best choice in a highly polarized environment, unless he materially misrepresents his/her platform during the campaign, which is a problem that could occur under any Voting Method, and which can always be addressed by initiating Recall procedures as needed.

Did the panelist want to add a filter that a candidate needs to be minimally known in order to win? No, for the reasons which we had already mentioned.

Question 105.5

Should we be having jurisdictions set a fixed number of candidates on each ballot, or instead allow any number of candidates to appear who have fulfilled the signature requirement?

Came up during the latter part of our discussions on Questions 124.x, but packaged in the Third Pass as a separate Question relating to Qualifications For Office.

Our earlier vision had been based on the presumption that each jurisdiction would set its own signature requirement, based on all its unique conditions, and that it could raise or lower that requirement based on how many candidates they are

currently getting. Is there a reason why we would want to have a fixed number of candidates? We thought probably not as of Session 66, but a theoretical reason for doing so would be to make it easier for voters by narrowing the selection field. Agreed that this is useful, but can also be accomplished by simply adjusting the signature requirement to taste. In discussion, Moderator pointed out that making a fixed requirement would make it harder to determine who gets put on the ballot, and panelist responded that the procedure probably would be based on the number of signatures collected instead of who filed first. But then, we would be setting up a competition before the competition, whereas we're really only supposed to be determining who is qualified to appear on the ballot. This problem with the process was seen to outweigh any benefit of narrowing the selection field, which can also be accomplished by other means. Therefore, it became part of our model that we don't want a fixed limit on the number of candidates per election. [Modified later.]

Decided to take another week to reflect before trying to reach a final conclusion.

Question 124.4 (continued)

In general, what Voting Method is best for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies?

Undertook further discussion of Voting Methods in Session 67 (June 2001) with a new panelist, including clarification of terms in our working chart. Agreed that Method E1 does appear to have merit. New panelist suggested that it might be appropriate to establish a cutoff which needs to be achieved by a candidate in order to win, that is, $(Y-N) \geq$ [some given quantity, percentage, etc.]; not adopted.

Noted for the record that any conclusion on this topic -- like any other conclusion on any other topic -- was subject to future reconsideration, particularly if/when someone might think of another filter which should be applied to the winning method, and/or another possible method.

Adopted the Yes/No/Abstain method (aka Method E1) on 18-Jun-2001 as our group's Voting Method of choice! [Still was as of the Third Pass.]

Agreed that we still wanted to use the Consensus Rule for our SIG deliberations, as opposed to any kind of Voting Method, since we were a smaller assembly which did not have a fixed time constraint.

Agreed that Method E1 would work equally well for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies.

Question 124.6

What are the benefits and/or detriments of including a "None Of The Above" (NOTA) option on election ballots?

If you don't have a NOTA option, and if someone disfavors all candidates, then they might vote No on all of them. If there is no minimum value which $(Y-N)$ must have in order for a given candidate to win, then voting No on all candidates will not change the aggregate preference order. If there is a minimum cutoff, and if enough people vote No, then a new election might be required. Or, you might have an

actual NOTA option, which could also require a new election, so you would have the same potential problem.

Non-author panelist noted in Session 67 that one good feature of Method E1 is that we are valuing people's negative opinions as well as their positive ones, so maybe we should have either an actual NOTA option and/or a cutoff for (Y-N).

What if NOTA wins, or no candidate successfully passes the cutoff? Would present additional hassle, more time and expense, etc.; people probably would need to fill out new petitions, we would need to decide how many (if any) previous candidates should be disqualified, the previous government might need to stay in place longer than either they or the electorate might prefer (what if an incumbent also failed to achieve the cutoff?), and entire process might be subject to allegations of unfairness.

Non-author panelist pointed out that we should be allowing for write-in candidates. We agreed that that our model should include the option to write in the name of any qualified real person (agreed that it doesn't accomplish anything to write in the name of fictional characters like Donald Duck), and that such candidate should be declared elected if they [*sic*] get the highest vote count, but that we don't want to establish a whole bunch of rules which the candidate needs to follow in order to be considered 'qualified'. Also agreed that any voter who votes No on all candidates, or who votes for the NOTA option if there is one, and who fails to provide a write-in alternative, is simply being obstreperous, obnoxious, and possibly anarchist. We'll count the vote as normal, but we probably don't want to throw out the result on that basis.

Most NOTA voters, then, probably will be motivated to provide write-in alternatives. However, those candidates will not necessarily have been brought to the attention of all voters, who would therefore not have opportunity to vote either For or Against them. We therefore would need at least a second election if a write-in candidate gets the highest score, so that all voters could perform a direct comparison.

Would we want to disqualify all candidates in the first election? Probably not, since people's No votes were based on the entire spectrum of candidates in the first election, and someone might pass the cutoff given a different range of options.

What about the possibility of all elections achieving a non-result? Definitely a potential problem, which we address by determining that there is a maximum of only one additional election. This also addresses the problem of what to do with the government in the interim, since we could make sure that there is sufficient time to conduct both elections before the end of the current government's term.

Moderator also theorized that it could be very likely that most/all elections could result in all candidates achieving a negative result in (Y-N). Any cutoff below the singularity of Zero would be pretty arbitrary, then, and not very defensible.

Question 105.5 (continued)

Should we be having jurisdictions set a fixed number of candidates on each ballot, or instead allow any number of candidates to appear who have fulfilled the signature requirement?

We conducted discussion in Session 67 of possible improvements to the petition process, and agreed that -- whatever we decide as to Voting Methods, Cutoffs,

NOTA, etc. -- voters should be allowed to submit names for possible inclusion on the ballot without needing to wait to be approached by someone with a physical petition. This can be done via the Internet or some other mechanism [remember, this discussion was conducted back in 2001], and would make it easier for people to qualify for listing on the ballot who may not have all the resources needed to conduct entire petition campaigns on their own. This addition would make a write-in vote during the actual election Not Applicable, since anyone who would prefer such a candidate would have had the option to submit his/her name on a petition.

Non-author panelist identified (thank you!) big problem with having a second election at all, being that voters would then have knowledge of voter preferences in the first election, which could seriously skew the results of the second election, no matter which candidates are included. Noted in discussion that Method E1 was conditional as to Filter #4 (F4), meaning that it still could be problematic as to Voter Sincerity if we have polls/surveys or any other significant amount of information on the preferences of other voters. Also noted that the simple failure of each candidate to achieve a given cutoff provides information to voters as to the preferences of other voters as to those candidates. Therefore, now agreed that we should not have multiple elections, and that we should accept whichever candidate has the strongest showing in the first election. Considering our improvement in the petition process, and that write-in votes are not really applicable in an E1 environment, we concluded that there really is no value to including a NOTA option on the ballot.

Now, what if I still disfavor all of the candidates on the ballot, because my favorite candidate -- whose name I would have written in had I had the option to do so -- doesn't appear? Oh, well. Such a person would probably not have had the name recognition to have been very effective in office, anyway, so it's not really a problem if that person fails to get elected.

Consideration of allowing each voter to nominate a maximum of one candidate, notwithstanding the logistical problems in cross-checking all petitions. Noted during discussion that the applicable Elections Office could have a webpage listing all individuals who have indicated a desire/willingness to run, to make things easier on voters, but also noted that it wouldn't solve the logistical problem entirely, especially since voters probably should have the option to submit signature-equivalents by other means too. Discussion that religious congregations or other large groups might galvanize support in favor of hundreds of candidates; if the jurisdiction does not have a maximum number of candidates, then the election becomes a nightmare; if the jurisdiction does have a maximum limit, then the ballot could be monopolized by a slate of candidates from a single group.

Logistical problem of cross-checking nominations is ameliorated by the use of unique Voter ID numbers, which we should have in place anyway, in order to prevent duplication in voting.

Panelist claimed that every individual has one-and-only-one favorite candidate, and that they therefore should be motivated to nominate no more than one candidate. However, he accepted Moderator's rebuttal that I might give favorable consideration to multiple candidates, but that I might be undecided as to which of them appears more qualified until after I listened to debates, read literature, thought more, etc., and that I therefore might want to see both/all those names on the ballot.

Back to the problem of groups monopolizing ballots, Moderator noted that the problem could still exist even if we restrict nominations-per-nominator, since a large group could designate that persons with last names beginning with A or B should nominate this person, those beginning with C or D nominate that other person, etc. On further discussion, Moderator was persuaded that a limitation of the number of names on the ballot implies a limitation on the number of nominations-per-nominator, so that you don't have members of a given organization nominating everyone in the organization, and so that all serious candidates can have access to the ballot. We want to have a good compromise between keeping the number of nominations reasonable and allowing for the fact that individuals may want to suggest multiple candidates. We were then thinking that people should be able to identify their Top 5 candidates without too much difficulty, and settled on that maximum for the present. [Modified in the Third Pass.]

Former political parties still might try to galvanize support for slates of candidates. If the Moderator's perception is correct that a bunch of people will leave the parties once they are de-institutionalized, then the problem reduces to that of any other lobby, and should be satisfactorily addressed by incorporating the provisions already discussed, with manipulation by individual jurisdictions of specific numbers over time as needed. If it is not correct, then we may have a bigger problem, and figured that maybe we should be giving more thought to it, though we definitely didn't want to do anything which will re-institutionalize political parties.

Those former political parties may be committing a strategic error by trying to monopolize the ballot: Their efforts probably will require significant publicity (especially if we establish a nominations-per-nominator requirement), and we can point to any attempt to monopolize the ballot as a clear showing that they have their own partisan interests at heart, over those of the whole Society, so their candidates can be voted down as a bloc, unless they have many adherents, in which case one of their candidates ought to win. Adjourned at 1:12am.

Question 124.4 (continued)

In general, what Voting Method is best for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies?

Following notes compiled June 2001, for presentation at the beginning of Session 68:

On the question of expected/desired value range for a winning candidate in an E1 environment, following shows that it would indeed be very easy for all candidates to end up with negative results: Assume N candidates ($A_1, A_2, A_3, \dots, A_N$). If each voter votes Yes for only one candidate, and No for all the rest (reflecting how it currently happens with Single-Vote Plurality), then each of the first N-1 candidates will get various percentages of $X_1, X_2, X_3, \dots, X_{N-1}$, and the Nth candidate will get $(100 - \sum_{j=1}^{N-1} X_j)$. The quantity $(Y-N)$ for each of the first N-1 candidates would then be $(2X_1-100), (2X_2-100), (2X_3-100), \dots, (2X_{N-1}-100)$, and the Nth candidate would have $(100 - 2\sum_{j=1}^{N-1} X_j)$. If no X_j is $\geq 50\%$ (very easily possible), then all $(2X_j-100)$ would be < 0 .

All candidates having $N > Y$, then, does not necessarily mean that voters rejected the entire slate; could mean that many voters have allegiance to only one candidate each, and that no one of those candidates has a majority of public support.

Question 105.5 (continued)

Should we be having jurisdictions set a fixed number of candidates on each ballot, or instead allow any number of candidates to appear who have fulfilled the signature requirement?

Following notes compiled June 2001, for presentation at the beginning of Session 68:

Further on how best to deal with the possibility that a large political organization could attempt to monopolize/dominate the ballot by nominating as many candidates as they can, we see two basic scenarios: Either there is only one such org, or there will be multiple orgs in competition with one another (as with the political parties of today). If there is only one, then maybe it is appropriate that a candidate of theirs has the strongest chance of winning. If there are multiple orgs in competition, then most likely they will divvy up most/all of the ballot, particularly if we have a rule that no individual may nominate more than a certain number/portion of candidates. Even though such a limit would still mean a very large number of possible signatures, the very fact that the org would then need to divvy up its nominations among multiple segments of its population could easily mean that the different candidates will get unequal numbers of signatures, since different numbers of people in the multiple segments might fail to comply exactly as ordered, either through negligence or through independent thinking. This being the case, competing organizations would have a chance of acquiring more signatures for a given candidate than some of the candidates from the other orgs are getting, and so capture places on the ballot.

Regardless, though, of how many organizations of whatever sizes are trying to get whatever number of candidates on the ballot, we can put out material that any org which is trying to rig the election is acting against the public interest, so their candidates should be considered with negative prejudice, making it strategically unwise for any org to create either the perception or the reality of trying to dominate the ballot with its own people. Also, we can add a rule that any org which is discovered to have sponsored/assisted $\geq 50\%$ of the minimum number of candidates per ballot (meaning that each ballot should have a minimum number of candidates) is guilty of election manipulation, and is subject to having all its candidates disqualified. (If discovered during the election, then all candidates are announced as disqualified. If after the election, and if one of that org's candidates won, then that person is removed, and the next-highest candidate not sponsored by the org wins, unless they were all sponsored by that org, in which case we had better conduct a new election with all-new nominees.) We selected $\geq 50\%$ over $>50\%$ to prevent the possibility that two large competing organizations (such as the two current major political parties) could dominate the ballot between them and not allow the voters the possibility of at least a third choice.

Therefore, we felt at the time [later modified] that each jurisdiction should state a minimum (L) and maximum (H) number of candidates per race: Top L signature-gatherers would automatically be placed on the ballot. In addition, if there are more than L candidates who have collected more than a set number S of signatures (also to be determined by each jurisdiction for each race), then they will also be placed on the ballot, unless the total number N of candidates exceeds H, in which case only the top H get listed. And, if any org is discovered to have sponsored/assisted $\geq L/2$ candidates (not a problem if the actual number of candidates $N < L$, and if that org's candidates $\geq N/2$, since the org can't be held accountable for candidate apathy

outside of their org), then such org shall be deemed guilty of election manipulation, and all such individuals shall be subject to disqualification.

Question 124.4 (continued)

In general, what Voting Method is best for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies?

We read and agreed upon the presentation formulated prior to Session 68 (June 2001), about most candidates getting negative scores in an E1 environment.

Question 105.5 (continued)

Should we be having jurisdictions set a fixed number of candidates on each ballot, or instead allow any number of candidates to appear who have fulfilled the signature requirement?

We gave the presentation in Session 68 formulated earlier that week on nomination procedures, and panelist responded that he "generally" agreed. However, we suggested that the cutoff for how many candidates a given organization could sponsor should be < 50% of L, perhaps as low as 25%, so that we can have an even greater choice. Moderator suggested that 50% is a singularity, and that one would need to justify the procedure by which any lower amount is selected. [We later did.]

Panelist asked what would happen if a competing org attempted to sponsor a certain candidate in order to get him disqualified. We responded that they would thus also be getting their own candidates disqualified, so it would be unwise.

Discussion of 'soft money', and how organizations could indirectly support a wide range of candidates by supporting multiple different orgs which provide the actual contributions. Intent of proposal, though, was that any org which supports $\geq L/2$ candidates -- whether directly or indirectly -- is subject to having all its candidates disqualified. Noted that this may mean that a full audit would involve tracking where all contributors are getting their funds, where their contributors are getting their funding, etc. Panelist suggested that the process might be easier and less subject to corruption if all candidate contributions are tracked by a private, independent, non-profit 'watchdog' group; Moderator objected, on grounds that we can theoretically dictate how the government should be set up, but we can't mandate the existence of any private-sector organization; best for each jurisdiction's elections office to maintain records of all campaign contributions as part of its normal operations.

Question 92 (continued)

Should campaigns for any public office be funded by any government entity?

Discussion in Session 68 of possibility of increasing public funding of campaigns. Noted previous finding as to Question 92, that we want to try to reduce government spending and that public campaign funding should eventually be eliminated. Panelist suggested that more public funding would encourage more people to run who wouldn't otherwise; however, we had also found that government should provide minimal support to all candidates by printing their pictures and campaign statements in the ballot pamphlet, and by sponsoring debates in which they all may participate.

Question 105.5 (continued)

Should we be having jurisdictions set a fixed number of candidates on each ballot, or instead allow any number of candidates to appear who have fulfilled the signature requirement?

Discussion later in Session 68 of possibility that an organization might sponsor one or more 'dummy' candidates who would later withdraw in order to galvanize support around the primary candidate(s). Noted that such dummy candidates would still need to collect signatures in order to get on the ballot.

Question 95.5

What should happen with any funds received in excess of a designated campaign spending limit?

Question raised in Session 68. Could be given to charity, but didn't seem consistent with the purpose for which the contributions were made, and some question might arise as to which charitable organization(s) would really be worthy to receive such funds. Appeared to make more sense for excess monies to escheat to the General Fund of the applicable government, since (a) the purpose of the contributions is theoretically to improve the government by having a certain candidate in office, (b) could motivate candidates and organizations to limit contributions (for, who wants to pay money to the government when you don't need to?), and (c) could motivate candidates and orgs to keep better records of contributions and expenditures.

Clarified during discussion that the intent of our earlier finding on limiting campaign spending was for the limit to be low enough to give poorer candidates a fair chance, though still high enough to allow people the right to use their own funds to magnify their voices. In further discussion, agreed that it is more in the public interest for the spending limit to be low.

Question 95.4 (continued)

By what process should the campaign spending limit be determined?

Non-author panelist in Session 68 proposed that the spending limit should be determined by the Electorate. We asked how 'average people' (whatever that means) would know how much is appropriate for a spending limit; he responded that it doesn't matter, since putting that decision in control of the Government means that they can raise it as much as they like. Even though a higher spending limit would apply equally to all candidates, politicians will generally find it easier to conduct their campaigns with more money than with less, so they would have a motivation to increase the limit, even if it is against the public interest. Agreed that changing the campaign spending limit should be done by referendum or initiative.

Question 105.6

Should we also grant to the public the ability to make changes to ballot sizes and other elements in our nomination model?

Noted in Session 68: "Possibly."

Question 49.6

Should payments of any kind ever be made to incumbent officials?

Established during discussion in Session 68 that no payments of any kind should ever be made to incumbent officials, except a government paycheck. [For, any individual or club or party or corporation or other entity which issues any kind of payment to an incumbent official (whether received in real time, or deferred until after the incumbent leaves office) has a hold over that official, and is thus able to advance their own interests over those of the entire community.]

Question 105.5 (continued)

Should we be having jurisdictions set a fixed number of candidates on each ballot, or instead allow any number of candidates to appear who have fulfilled the signature requirement?

Further discussion in Session 68 of making L/2 cutoff lower, noting that what makes 50% of L a singularity is that any organization having over 50% has more than all other orgs combined, and that a limit of exactly 50% would enable two ostensibly-competing-but-actually-colluding orgs (like the two current major Political Parties) to control the ballot, whereas a limit of < 50% allows at least one additional choice.

Panelist expressed concern that H and L could be set by political powers in such a way as to make it easier for powerful groups to still control the ballot. Suggested setting H as a given multiple of L, in order to allow room for a sufficient number of additional candidates to enter. Moderator preferred to let each jurisdiction decide its limits for itself. Considered setting a general recommendation of L=5 and H=12, on basis of Moderator's admittedly-personal preference, but panelist was concerned that an unregulated environment could still be subject to corruptive influence.

Panelist was concerned that we want to make sure that we have more than two viewpoints represented, so was still inclined to favor regulating L and H, and now began to favor setting the organizational limit to a lower factor than 50% of L.

Agreed to give the People the choice of what L and H should be for each type of race in their jurisdiction, since the main idea of setting limits is to give people enough of a choice while not overwhelming them with too many choices; they really are in the best position to determine what limits they most prefer. Briefly discussed possibility of setting limits by averaging popular votes, but then thought that it is more reasonable to select the L-H combination which is favored by most of the population.

Panelist asked whether we should set boundaries for L and H anyway, since people could be swayed by a corrupt PR campaign. Moderator thought it unlikely that the Public would be swayed by any campaign to limit their electoral choices. However, began to look at some different scenarios, to see if there are any L-H combinations which would really be detrimental to the Public.

A) L=5 H=12

Then, Organization A could submit two names, Organization B could submit two, Organization C could submit two, etc. Agreed that having a relatively-high H would address the problem of allowing multiple viewpoints.

B) L=5 H=6

Could have {OrgA=2, OrgB=2, OrgC=2} or {OrgA=2, OrgB=2, OrgC=1, with one independent candidate}. Either way, multiple viewpoints are getting considered.

C) L=H=5 OrgA=2 OrgB=2, and either OrgC=1 or one independent

In this case, if you have two dominant orgs and one indie, then this begins to resemble a polar environment, and it's likely that Cand C would win. To show:

Suppose that the three orgs have shares of popular sentiment in proportion to their shares of ballot space. (This would not be guaranteed, of course, but it's a reasonable point for illustration purposes, particularly if those two orgs are really dominant.) Under voting Method E1, candidates A1, A2, B1, and B2 would each get 40% Yes and 60% No, for a net of -20%. Candidate C's result would depend on whether A's people were really trying to support A's candidates or defeat B's candidates, and *vice versa*:

If orgs A and B are really trying to elect their own candidates, then C would get 20% Yes and 80% No, for net of -60%, losing.

If orgs A and B are really trying to defeat each other's candidates, then C would get 100% Yes and 0% No, for net of +100%.

If the objectives of A's and B's people are divided, then C would get somewhere in between those two levels, and could either defeat A's and B's candidates or not.

Therefore, L=H=5 is not necessarily good for the centrist candidate, and any large political org could make things strategically difficult for themselves by arranging to get L=H=5.

D) L=2

Major problem (Moderator called it "suicidal"), since any org putting forward even one candidate would be guilty of violating the $\geq L/2$ rule, and its one candidate would be disqualified immediately.

Generally, if H is low relative to any L, then it's more likely that there will be more nominees than spots on the ballot, and that getting on the ballot would require winning a signature battle, which would be much harder in a no-party environment, as result of competing with lots of political and corporate organizations, such as LWV, NOW, AARP, labor unions, NRA, Sierra Club, and other examples. Orgs will therefore be motivated to lobby to keep H high relative to L, so that there will be sufficient room on the ballot for them.

Agreed that, whatever parameters are set as to L and H and S, and whoever gets to decide them under whatever conditions, the number of signatures acquired by any candidate should not be disclosed until after the deadline for submitting them to the Elections Office, so that nobody's actions are dictated by anyone else's actions.

Further discussion of the mechanism of signature submission, one panelist noting that we could have 'digital signatures' to allow computers to verify endorsement much more quickly than humans could visually verify an actual signature. Each person would need a unique ID which couldn't be figured out by other persons. To have such a unique ID on the system would theoretically make it open to hacking, but panelist submitted that the 'PGP' ('Pretty Good Privacy') software should be able to provide adequate protection.

In general, panelist agreed that having an environment in which politicians are self-motivated to make sure that L is not too low -- and to keep H fairly high relative to L -- alleviates the need for making the cutoff lower for organizations sponsoring multiple nominees, and accepted our singularity principle.

Finally adopted entire plan for disqualifying candidates sponsored by organizations which are discovered to have sponsored $\geq L/2$ candidates. [Modified later.]

Subsection I-C-5: Recall Procedures

Question 124.7

What specifications -- if any -- do we wish to make as to recall procedures for any offices and/or ballot propositions?

Found in Session 68 that Recall should be hard to accomplish, or else opponents will initiate it all the time, to the detriment of the smooth operation of government.

Recall should be conducted by either the People or the Government, with preference to the former, since they are the ones who put that person into office, and since it would be too easy for political opponents to put together the legislative votes needed to recall. Requiring approval from both entities is a possible way to go.

In general, the five questions which we immediately saw as needing resolution were:

- Who should approve the recall?
- By what majority must a recall motion pass?
- Who should replace the person being recalled?
- How is the process to be started and completed?
- Grounds for recall

New panelist in Session 69 (July 2001) believed that the above five questions "cut it". Agreed to attack the questions in the sequence in which they would come up in reality. In the Third Pass, we packaged each of these as a separate official Question.

Question 124.71 (or 124.7A)

What grounds should be considered sufficient for recall?

Any rule ever constructed can be subject to exploitation. We want to cut off most avenues of exploitation, without making the process too restrictive. Panelist in Session 69 thought that any recall would be exploitation if it is done contrary to the public interest, as might happen if there is personal disagreement or a blockage to the subject's political ambition.

Moderator noted that initiating a recall procedure could as easily result in bolstering the political position of the subject as taking him down, so the recall would not be undertaken casually, even if we establish no required grounds for recall. Panelist noted that opponents still might initiate recall proceedings, even if only to tie up the official's time and attention, and prevent him from doing the things which would maintain his popularity among the electorate.

Moderator was sympathetic to the idea that we don't want a lot of frivolous or dilatory recall proceedings, because they are time-consuming and expensive and distracting to the incumbent officials. But, what justification do we have for establishing grounds for recall, if the People didn't need grounds for electing the person in the first place?

Maybe we could have the official's private attorney defend him during recall proceedings, to free up the official, or maybe we could have a special position within the Legislature to defend all officials (the opposite of a Special Prosecutor); Moderator was not really thrilled about either of these. Panelist noted that putting a recall before the electorate may make sense, but may also mean that the official needs to campaign again.

Requiring petition signatures would reduce frivolous recalls, since the initiators would need to go through a whole lot of work -- with no guarantee of success -- before the subject official is required to do anything. Also, it seemed to be consistent with the idea of requiring signatures to get the official elected in the first place.

We don't need to require establishment of 'just cause', and we were in effect (though not strictly) requiring initiators to come up with some kind of excuse for recalling. Better to do it that way, since a legal rule for establishing 'just cause' could easily be manipulated by politicians.

Panelist noted that officials do need to make unpopular decisions sometimes, and shouldn't be required to explain them extensively during a recall campaign. We agreed that we're not doing anything here which is not already done during a regular re-election campaign, merely allowing it to be moved up in emergency cases.

Question 124.72 (or 124.7B)

How is the recall process to be begun?

Already established earlier in Session 69 that process should be begun by signatures on a petition. As with the signatures to get a person nominated for election, each jurisdiction will decide its own requirement for initiating recall proceedings.

Panelist asked if we could have negative petition signatures, same as how we have negative votes in voting Method E1. Considered this possibility, noting that the main theory of signatures is to establish that a minimum portion of a constituency feels that the candidate/initiative is worthy of consideration, and that a strong negative support could mean that the person/issue is not really worthy of consideration. Moderator leaned against it, since Method E1 could easily result in all candidates getting negative approval counts, which doesn't mean that a given candidate did not deserve to be on the ballot. Panelist also decided against the idea, since it turns petition signatures into actual votes (that is, actual expressions of opinion, as

opposed to the 'non-disapproval' (Moderator's term) which they currently indicate), which is not appropriate for that early in the campaign process, before voters have had a chance to obtain the knowledge needed to make a well-informed decision.

Question 124.73 (or 124.7C)

Who should approve a recall?

Moderator introduced in Session 69 that it makes most sense for the entity who made the original designation to be in a position to reverse it, but that having a special election for a single question might not be worth all the time and expense and hassle which elections entail, especially given that elections with fewer questions generally elicit lower voter turnouts. Moderator also noted, though, that we should be able to transition soon to an electronic voting environment [didn't quite happen], obviating a lot of the concerns which he then had about special elections. Panelist also noted that a recall proceeding which goes all the way to election probably will have a sufficient voter interest to make the election worthwhile.

Panelist also asked who should remove Judges, if the executives who appointed them are no longer in office. Noted that this would be taken up as part of Question 300.

Moderator asked if we wanted any intermediary steps such as approval by the Legislature between petition and election, with agreement for there not to be, because the subject could have a lot of political allies who could block such a recall from proceeding to election. Those political allies are theoretically subject to their own constituencies, but many of those people wouldn't care, since they didn't know the subject. Besides, the process will take plenty enough time as it is, and if we make it too long, then we might as well wait until the next election. Mainly, the People should be running the Legislature, and not the other way around, so we don't want the Legislature to be in a position to override directly-expressed popular sentiment. The argument about time mitigates against placing any further intermediary steps in the process, which we now agreed was sufficiently covered by signature petition (where the cutoff level should be fairly high, but not overly restrictive) and full popular election.

In general (subject to what we would say in Question 300 about Judges), whoever appoints someone to a position has authority to remove him, but must establish just cause for a good-faith termination, same as for any employer/employee situation.

Question 124.74

By what majority must a recall motion pass?

Panelist's instinct in Session 69 was for something higher than 50%. We could do 2/3, but that's admittedly arbitrary. He felt that there was something in his head which said that 51% is not sufficient to remove, even if sufficient to elect. We don't want to make it too easy to remove someone, since the government needs to go through changes when there are personnel changes.

Moderator responded that we were already making the recall process non-trivial by requiring a high signature count. Also, a 2/3 vote is required under standard parliamentary procedure when a Motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted is

offered with no notice, but notice exists here. In addition, the 2/3 vote is currently required to override a veto, which also is not existing here.

Also noted that we should consider that our Voting Method for election is now different from the Voting Method which would be used for a recall. For, a recall election may be viewed as a race between two candidates, being the incumbent and whoever would be replacing him.

If we require a 2/3 vote to remove, then the incumbent needs only 1/3 approval to remain, which even the nastiest politicians can get fairly easily. [Confirmed from experience in 2019.] Requiring the maintenance of at least 50% approval rating seemed reasonable.

Agreed that setting a high signature requirement, but requiring only a simple majority to recall, would be making it non-trivial to initiate and complete the recall process, which is as it should be, but would also be making it within the realm of realistic possibility, which is also as it should be. So decided.

Question 124.75

Who should replace the person being recalled?

It could be argued that the role should go to the second-place candidate in the preceding election, but there was some question in Session 69 as to whether that individual would still be able and willing to undertake the position.

Agreed that it makes little sense to give the position to the spouse (as happened with Hubert Humphrey's wife), notwithstanding the theory that sleeping with the official gives one special insight into the relevant issues and arguments. We found that there are more qualifications for office than just one's ideas and opinions, and that there would be no guarantee that the two spouses would even have the same ideas and opinions. Giving it to the spouse was right out. [Reconsidered later.]

On the previous possibility, if the second-place candidate in the previous election is unable/unwilling to serve, then you could offer the spot to the third-place candidate, the fourth-place candidate, etc., until one is willing to take over. Other possibilities include appointment by a Chief Executive, appointment by a Legislative body, a special election, and a designated order of succession for each position.

Going with a Legislative appointment might mean that legislators would be more anxious to get rid of someone so that they could designate the replacement. Moderator's rebuttal was that legislators would actually be more likely to oust someone if they knew in advance who would be replacing that person; agreed.

Discussion of possibility of special election, particularly one conducted concurrently with the recall election, to be implemented if-and-only-if the recall petition passes. Also considered that recallee probably should be allowed to be a candidate.

Concerned that having another election -- even if concurrent with recall -- would mean that some amount of additional time probably would be required to allow minimal campaigning, even though the new electee would not be serving a full term. On the other hand, campaigning could happen during the process of conducting a special recall election. On the other hand, we probably want to focus attention on the

person being removed; the 'grass is greener' mentality could easily mean that the incumbent would receive far fewer votes if a whole slate of replacement candidates is on the same ballot. On the other hand, would we really want a separate special vacancy-filling election after the special recall election? Probably not. May be better to have a designated order of succession.

OK to choose the second-place candidate of previous election if desired and available, since she probably would not have been the last-place candidate, since L generally would be ≥ 3 , though there still could be some two-candidate races.

If having a campaign for a replacement, then okay to allow some campaigning during the recall phase, so that people know what choices are available.

What if no one among the candidates who ran in the previous election is both willing and able to serve? Should have some automatic backup available. Noted that Presidents and Governors and other high officials have positions specifically designated as backups who can help with some of the incumbent's duties while he [sic] is there, and who can fill in the position when the incumbent vacates. We see this as a good thing, and we encourage it to continue for positions which have enough responsibility to make the designation worthwhile. Can have order of succession otherwise.

Considered disallowing the last-place candidate from acceding to the position, but noted that the possibility of such accession might motivate people to retain the incumbent, and might motivate higher-up candidates to accept the position. Panelist also noted that there may be a difference between someone who came in last place by one vote and someone who came in last by a lot. Agreed that it would be pretty arbitrary for us to try to draw a distinction. Suggestion withdrawn.

If allowing a special election, then alternate candidates should declare their intent in advance of the recall vote, so that people will know what their choices are. One would hope that we wouldn't have a situation where people declare candidacies in order to encourage a recall, and then drop out before the special election. Agreed to require a declaration of willingness to serve, same as with any election filing.

Final agreement was that very high-level positions (such as President and Governor) should have separate backup positions (Vice-President, Lt. Governor), that most/all other positions should be filled by the highest-ranking candidate in the previous election who is both willing and able to serve, and that any position which does not have such an available alternate candidate -- but which still needs to be filled before the next regular election -- should have a designated order of succession.

During the reading of the previous meeting's summary in Session 70 (July 2001), a new panelist suggested that both the U.S. President and Vice-President (or similar positions at State or Local levels) can be recalled simultaneously. [Added later: If they were elected on the same ticket, then they both would have benefitted from any 'impropriety' in the election, and they probably share similar political beliefs, in which case recalling the higher official alone would not always solve the problem completely.] Agreed upon the same process of picking up the highest-ranking ticket from the previous election. [Added later: Be sure to add that provision to any Constitution which does not already have it, and be sure that your designated order of succession allows for the possibility of simultaneous removal.]

Question 17 (continued)

Is it necessary to have any kind of government at all in modern society?

We asked the three panelists in Session 70 if any had any objection to beginning Section I-D at that time, and one said yes. We read from the 4/24/2001 version of the long form of our Summary document, and noted that our Answer 17 was based on the premises that government is needed (1) because human rights need to be enforced and (2) because there will always be some people who will try to take unfair advantage of others. Can we mitigate corruption? Agreed to let the panelist make a presentation on corruption, with a view to reconsidering Question 17.

Panelist asserted that the Outline may not be perfect if we don't address the problem of human corruption. Suggested that maybe we should add a Question 3.6 on whether human beings are basically good or evil, and a Question 3.7 on whether human corruption can be sufficiently negated, corrected, overcome, or mitigated in such a way that its effects will not cause the degradation of any society. Noted that we had kept looking at ways in which people might be inclined to exploit the advantages of a system because they have motivations to be corrupt. Also noted Moderator's previous informal suggestion to use people's existing motivations like the gravity of Jupiter to do what we want. Opened for discussion.

Question 3.7

Can human corruption be sufficiently negated, corrected, overcome, or mitigated in such a way that its effects will not cause the degradation of any society?

Second panelist noted in Session 70 that a key question is who would be doing the mitigating; didn't know of any effective method other than mind control, which he didn't prefer. Neither did the rest of us.

Third panelist suggested that human beings couldn't survive Utopia; either they wouldn't have the ongoing knowledge to maintain the system, or else they would feel like 'pets' of the system.

Second panelist suggested using Virtual Reality to allow people to play out violent or corrupt tendencies. First panelist responded that human beings' motivations usually are to realize a real-life benefit. [Augmented in Third Pass from further debate.]

Question 3.6

Are human beings basically good or evil?

Third panelist in Session 70 asserted that perceptions of Good and Evil are relative.

Question 3.7 (continued)

Can human corruption be sufficiently negated, corrected, overcome, or mitigated in such a way that its effects will not cause the degradation of any society?

Third panelist: Any attempt to create a society without corruption would result in a system with even more corruption, particularly since a lot of people out there can't

make ongoing decisions on Right and Wrong. People often look for easier solutions to immediate problems, such as lack of money.

Moderator: No matter what we do with equalizing our socioeconomic system, some people -- whether because of psychopathy, of species memory, or it just makes them feel good -- will still be motivated to commit bad acts, and we should allow for such occurrences in our system.

First panelist: Government is not the solution to corruption, but is subject to corruption. We need a solution to corruption. Submitted the question to the group. Third panelist noted that religions have tried forever to suggest solutions to corruption. First panelist noted the possibility of deterrents, and reiterated Moderator's point about Jupiter's gravity.

First panelist hoped to be able to convince people that whatever is in the World's interest is also in their self-interest.

Third panelist: How are we going to convince John Q. Steelworker in Ohio that it's good for him to be out of a job, because it's good for the overall society? Moderator noted that he had been thinking about this a lot. [Found to be particularly poignant as of the Third Pass, in light of the 2017 inauguree's call in 2020 for a boycott of Goodyear products because their Ohio factories would not permit employees to wear clothing bearing his pet political slogan.]

Question 3.6 (continued)

Are human beings basically good or evil?

What causes an Individual to make a decision which is at variance with the interest of the overall Order? Second panelist in Session 70 suggested self-interest. First panelist suggested narrowness of personal perspectives. Second panelist maintained that self-interest is "pretty strong". First panelist claimed that self-interest is "okay as long as it doesn't hurt other people". Second panelist suggested that it might be helpful to make people think that they are an active part of Society, rather than marginalized. Third panelist noted that people like to feel important, and that this is fostered by contributing to the world around them. Example was cited as to the gang culture in south-central Los Angeles, forgoing the overall Society in favor of creating their own society where they feel more active and involved.

Question 3.7 (continued)

Can human corruption be sufficiently negated, corrected, overcome, or mitigated in such a way that its effects will not cause the degradation of any society?

First panelist in Session 70 found the above to be a key argument: How do we make people contribute to society, so that they can feel more important? Second panelist noted that economic class distinctions affect the issue. Media pressures create the desire for more stuff. Second panelist suggested that improved technology might solve multiple problems, because the cost of production would be greatly reduced.

Other factors which could reduce corruption? Third panelist suggested knowing what societal factors exist [whatever that means].

Definitions of 'corrupt' introduced from the *American Heritage* Dictionary: Adjective form means "(1) Immoral; perverted, depraved. (2) Marked by venality and dishonesty." Verb form means "To destroy or subvert the honesty or integrity of."

Recapping, panel found that mitigating factors are promoting wideness of perspective and making people feel important within society.

Third panelist: If making people feel important is preeminent to the mitigation of corruption, then the surest way to subvert that objective is to create a society where individual people aren't needed. Panelist identified during discussion that the W.T.O. was then a country-to-country lending organization (through the World Bank), which also arbitrated trade disputes between countries.

First panelist asserted that government is corrupt. Third panelist disputed, noting that only some of government is corrupt.

First panelist: We had better deal with corruption before building a whole layer of government on top of it.

Second panelist: We can mitigate corruption by removing mechanisms by which it exists, such as money. What other factors support corruption? Secrecy was seen as a problem, and panel agreed that we should make more stuff open, noting the value of the Internet and a Free Press.

Third panelist related experience in Advertising that it's not some big secret entity trying to influence people, but rather regular people putting on a campaign like any other campaign.

Discussion of the example of securities fraud, third panelist noting that we need an agency to investigate and correct illegal and corruptive acts. First panelist agreed that there should be some organization or mechanism to address corruption, but wondered whether it needs to be a 'government' organization. Third panelist defined 'government' as any organization which a society creates to fix its own problems.

Question 17 (continued)

Is it necessary to have any kind of government at all in modern society?

First panelist: What if there is an independent group with the sole power to fix corruption? Third panelist responded that any organization with that much power would need to be monitored by the People, who should have the ultimate power to authorize or de-authorize the agency, and that this is basically what government is.

First panelist preferred some name other than 'government' to describe this agency, since that term allegedly carries certain connotations. Moderator asked what connotations were making the panelist feel uncomfortable, with response of relation of the term to certain functions or activities currently undertaken by government which may or may not be needed. Moderator noted that Question 17 was asking about some form of government only, and was making no assumptions about what that government would look like, or what it would or would not do. Discussion of some possible functions of government other than simple mitigation of corruption, including transportation and telephone lines.

Moderator noted discussions in Sessions 9 and 14, in which the group had found government to be necessary for the protection of rights and fairness, but did not adopt the finding about pooling their resources for public benefit. Discussion of possibility that certain functions can be discharged by public-sector organizations more effectively and/or less expensively than by government. First panelist noted the *American Heritage* definition of 'government' as a body which administers public policy, which definition we found at this time to be consistent with our Session 14 definition of one or more people who make decisions for the rest of society.

Question 3.7 (continued)

Can human corruption be sufficiently negated, corrected, overcome, or mitigated in such a way that its effects will not cause the degradation of any society?

Moderator suggested that possible definition of 'corruption' is that which advances self-interest at the expense of societal interest.

Question 17 (continued)

Is it necessary to have any kind of public organization (was 'government') at all in modern society?

First panelist suggested rephrasing Question 17 to replace 'government' with 'anti-corruption league', or some other expression which doesn't suggest or imply that government is supposed to do more than what Question 17 is strictly saying.

Moderator suggested replacing 'government' with 'public organization' in Question 17, noting that he didn't believe that either of the panels which discussed the matter in Sessions 9 and 14 or any subsequent panels would object, since they probably would equate the two expressions. First panelist agreed that the rephrasing satisfied his concerns, and the other panelists consented.

Moderator noted that multiple subsequent Questions and Answers frequently utilize the term 'government', and asked whether we needed to make any further modification to any of that literature. First panelist suggested replacing 'government' with 'public organization' wherever it appears. Moderator noted the logistical difficulty, and counter-suggested that our audience might end up being confused as to whether we are actually referring to our current government when suggesting modifications. Further discussion, Moderator suggesting that the establishment of a denotative definition can supplant certain people's connotations. Agreed to introduce Question 17.1 on the most appropriate usage, viz. :

Question 17.1

Shall we define the word 'government' to refer to this organization, without making any specifications at this time as to its structure or functionality?

Two panelists said Yes, one panelist said No, on grounds that the word raises connotations about what government does, Moderator objecting that people have multiple preconceptions which we should be attacking as part of our presentation.

Extensive discussion of whether our objectives are furthered or mitigated by the use of 'government' to refer to our public org. Discussion of definition of 'governing',

Moderator suggesting that to moderate or supervise the interaction of people is to govern, and that an organization which governs can be called a 'government', although first panelist still disagreed.

First panelist asked what harm exists by replacing 'government' with 'public organization' wherever it appears, Moderator repeating point about people wondering when we're going to talk about government, and third panelist noting that a 'public org' can do stuff other than govern, so we should delineate that we're talking about a 'public organization' which governs. Further discussion.

First panelist agreed that people's confusion about our non-use of the word 'government' would be problematic, but felt that it would be less of a problem than the use of 'government'. He asserted that all government is corrupt, and that most people will assume corruption in whatever government we put together; Moderator disputed this point, but suggested that -- even assuming *arguendo* that the assertion is correct -- it's not because of the word 'government'. Further discussion.

First panelist projected that our model will be widely different from how government is currently structured. Moderator noted that our Answers 38 and 49 mean that our model is actually closer to than further away from the current structure.

Third panelist offered analogy that human beings are still called 'human beings' even if we accept argument that most/all human beings are corrupt. First panelist was not sure that the analogy was truly applicable, though Moderator found it quite apt.

Moderator offered that there have been many different forms of government in history, and that there are multiple different possible forms of government, and that most people probably are aware of this, so there shouldn't be that much problem with the use of the expression. He thought that what we put together would be a form of government, but first panelist thought that it would not be.

Moderator noted that Question 17 could be viewed as the converse to a Question on Anarchy: It is only offering two choices, being some government or no government. If one answers No to Anarchy (which should be pretty easy to sell among The People, then one answers Yes to Question 17 as phrased.

First panelist suggested that the perception of group members could be affected by the use of a prejudicial expression, and that our Answers to certain Questions could be influenced by the use of the term.

Moderator offered the SUV analogy, suggesting that modifications initiated by Congress as to SUV's don't mean that we shouldn't still be calling them SUV's.

First panelist: People may fear that any form of government will be subject to the same pitfalls as any form of government which they've ever heard of. Moderator wondered whether that many people would be unaware that there could exist some form of government other than what they have seen currently or in history, and believed that we should be educating any such people on this point, as part of our overall presentation. Besides, anyone who sees that we're talking about what they know to be government would not have their fears assuaged, so we would not really be accomplishing anything by avoiding the term.

First panelist brought up the example of the term 'Negroes', which many people sought to remove from our working vocabulary because of certain negative connotations. Moderator found some value in this analogy, but noted the material difference that the main reason for that removal was that we were trying to eradicate or downplay the distinctions among racial groups, in favor of considering us all as one human species, whereas we're not trying to eliminate government, but rather simply trying to make certain changes in its structure and operation.

Discussed some alternatives to 'government', including 'administration' (too narrow, because government also legislates, judges, wages war [at least then], etc.) and 'governing body' (too cumbersome (third panelist said that programmers would call it 'syntactic sugar') and still contains 'govern'). Third panelist noted that distinctions between Physics and Biology are pretty vague, and sometimes overlap, but that people still have a pretty consistent idea of what those terms generally mean.

Moderator suggested that the generally-accepted definition of 'govern' is consistent with the generally-accepted definition of 'moderate and supervise the interaction of', or the dictionary definition of 'regulate the behavior of', and that any entity which governs can/should be called a 'government'. First panelist felt that governing is more about control, and that the expressions are not synonymous, since 'control' means more than 'moderate' or 'supervise'. No consensus. Adjourned at 2:57am.

None of those three panelists ever came to another meeting, so we considered the Q afresh with a new panelist in Session 71 (August 2001). New panelist believed that people involved in this Project will not be prejudiced by the use of the word 'government'. Moderator asked whether the Laity might be prejudiced. Discussion that the words should be fairly clear, but that all words carry some connotations. Moderator asked whether the connotations of this word could hurt us in terms of getting people to understand that multiple governmental models are possible. Concluded that we should be covered if we clearly define the term 'government' up front in our presentation, and include occasional reminders that we're using the term 'government' in the broader sense of any organization which governs.

Question 17 (continued)

Is it necessary to have any kind of public organization (was 'government') at all in modern society?

Considering the topic of corruption, Moderator read in Session 71 from the notes compiled in previous meeting. Discussed possible definition of 'corrupt'/'corruption'. Agreed that de-programming is not practical or desirable. Only method which could possibly work would be whatever words we could come up with to make people realize that they should not advance their self-interests at the expense of the societal interest. But, to what extent is this possible?

New panelist found that there is an inevitable clash of self-interests versus societal interests, and that our challenge will be to find the point where those interests come closest together, even if it means that some people will need to make certain compromises. Moderator noted that an environment where we all focus only on self-interest will produce a jungle-law type of anarchy, where we're all continually looking over our shoulders to make sure that some stronger person isn't going to take our stuff away, and that this would mean a generally lower quality of life for everyone. People have a basic biological impulse to survive, and to maximize their own well-

being. Moderator claimed that the only way that we can get people to consider societal interests is to make them understand that those interests will actually serve their own interests in the long run. After all, societal interest comes from a sum of a lot of self-interests, and can be thought of as a function of self-interest.

Noted during further discussion that the primary purpose of this entire Project is to try to maximize the aggregate quality of life of the entire Society, even if that means that some individuals may end up experiencing a slightly lower quality of life in the shorter term than that to which they have become accustomed.

Moderator claimed again that -- even if we successfully convince most people that advancing societal interest is ultimately in their self-interest -- there always will be some people who (1) are not convinced of our premise, (2) don't want to wait that long, or (3) might be one of the ones who need to suffer some for the common good.

There always have been some people in every society who have broken whatever rules may have existed. [A certain old story goes that two folks named Adam & Eve were granted a lifetime in Paradise on the one condition that they follow a certain rule, and that they failed to keep that one rule.] Even though our current society has advanced in so many ways from the Dark Ages and the Mongol Hordes, we still have people committing crimes and taking unfair advantage of others. There might have been a few examples in history of societies where there was no corruption, but those may have been the result of mass brainwashing, although even those societies had a few people committing acts which contradicted the established laws and principles. It appears that we always have had some people doing at least one of the three things noted above, but this is not sufficient to establish that this will always necessarily be the case. We therefore tried a more rigorous approach, *viz.*:

Given: Statement P, that people have a basic biological impulse to survive and to maximize their own well-being.

To prove: Statement Q, that there always will be some people who will want to try to take unfair advantage of others.

We could try a *reductio ad absurdum* argument, but that probably wouldn't work, because Statement Q is suggesting that the other possibility is possible. We could rely on the historical argument, but that is not compelling or conclusive by itself.

Converse of Q: It is possible to have an environment wherein no individual has a motivation to take unfair advantage of others. Panelist suggested that the existence of this possibility would deny the validity of Premise P; Moderator noted in response that this is not necessarily the case, for acceptance of the assertion that advancing societal interest will generally eventually inure to self-interest would mean that people are actually trying to advance their self-interest. [Third Pass: Got all that?]

People have two basic kinds of interest, being either direct self-interest or societal interest which leads to an indirect self-interest (that is, promoting societal well-being will generally translate to a higher quality of life for the inhabitants of a society). There will inevitably be some clash between direct self-interest and societal interest.* [*To prove this, we wouldn't even be having this discussion of societal interests versus self-interests if these two sets were identical.] Insofar as such conflicts exist, the basic impulse premised in P means that the direct self-interest will frequently/generally take higher

precedence. Thus, there will be an impulse to advance self-interest at the expense of societal interest, which would satisfy our working definition of 'corruption'.

So, we have that there always will be some people who will want to advance self-interests over societal interests. We now need to translate that into Conclusion Q.

What constitutes an 'unfair advantage'? One example of giving up a direct personal interest for a larger societal interest is in trade negotiations: If either party in a negotiation has information which the other party doesn't have, then that party is taking unfair advantage of the other. Conversely, if both parties have the same information, and if one party happens to benefit more from the trade than the other, then that party has taken fair advantage, and cannot be blamed if the other party doesn't do as well. Now, it could be argued that my giving up information to the other party is against my self-interest, but I would rather live in a society where I could be confident that the other party is giving me all the information that I need, this being a very good example of giving up a short-term advantage in favor of the societal interest of having fair trade negotiations, which benefits me in the long run.

We might equate 'unfair advantage' with 'that which is against societal interest', but there are acts (such as murder for anger or revenge) which do not yield an actual advantage but which are yet against the societal interest. Thus, 'unfair advantage' is a subset of 'that which is against societal interest'. Suspended at 10:14pm.

New panelist in Session 72 (3 September 2001) pointed out that this all was actually moot to Question 17, noting the example of a society where everyone is acting as fairly as possible, but where stuff still isn't getting done (such as where to build a road in a village of 100 people) without some structure in place to reach a decision.

Therefore, even if we have a society without human corruption, we still would need some kind of public organization (which we can call a 'government', according to Answer 17.1) with some level of coercive power, so that decisions can be made and implemented which will improve everybody's quality of life.

SECTION I-D: EXECUTIVE STRUCTURE

Question 125

What guiding principles should be observed by government agencies?

There could be significant differences among Branches and individual Agencies.

In general, actions of Agencies should reflect both the long-term values of society and the short- and mid-term policies of various Branches of government. When there is any conflict among these, policies should be moderated somewhat to reflect the values of the People being affected.

Answer 18 is on point here, that any government which does not respond to the needs and desires of its People defeats the purpose of its own existence.

Panelist in Session 72 brought good example of a lynch mob as distinguishing long-term values from short-term desires. Agreed that we need to find some way of balancing all those needs.

Question 126

What is the motivation for any particular government agency to follow such principles?

Discussion in Session 72 of extent to which Nations compete with one another, for Land and People and Control. Panelist cited example of Mexico, which may actually do better with fewer people. Moderator brought example of East Germans escaping to West Germany after the Berlin Wall came down, along with historical examples of empires which have tried to gobble up Land and People. Moderator also asserted that a head of state might have very low self-esteem if all his People are leaving, and might want to try to improve conditions within his Nation for that reason alone.

In any case, senior Executives in America are subject to recall or un-re-election, so someone who wants to keep his job will have a certain motive to make voters happy.

Payments to government employees should be based on delivery of service, as with the private sector.

Feedback forms should be made available to users of government services [with e-alternatives for those with online access], to help evaluate employee performance.

Service bonuses should be available for especially good service, and the possibility should exist of disciplinary action for very poor service.

Question 127

But, many government employees are irreplaceable, as a result of their acceptance into the Civil Service program: Do we then have any means of motivating them?

We should remove the concept of tenure, and replace it with protection from arbitrary firing. That is, people may be dismissed from their jobs, but only for a demonstrable cause. Discussed in Session 72 the possibility of establishing a probationary period during which new employees can be fired without cause, and rejected the concept, since a person who has once demonstrated acceptability for hiring, and who has accepted an offer of employment, is immediately bound with the employer by the employment contract, which generally holds that the employee will be paid a given salary as long as he/she continues to perform adequately.

Question 128

Should any changes (up to and including total dismantlement) be made to the Civil Service program?

Covered in Answer 127.

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At this point in Session 72, we considered a resolution offered in our 'black book' of preliminary ideas. Original language of proposed resolution was "Resolved: All government employees -- up to and including the Chief Executives of the United States of America and of each of its constituent States and subsidiary jurisdictions --

shall be subject to removal from their positions at any time, for cause relating to the quality of their service, and/or the cost necessary to produce it."

Panelist felt that the Chief Executive should have different standards for being able to stay in office, due to political motivations which others may have to remove him without actual cause. Moderator noted that he could be removed by recall election, and that this was the group finding in Subsection I-C-5. Panelist was more receptive to this, since he wouldn't trust the decision to a political body, but suggested applying a super-majority. Moderator noted that we had specified 2/3 majorities for certain other actions in our Agenda, but specified simple majority for recall of an elected official. Agreed to consider further.

Panelist didn't disagree with language of resolution, since it was expressed in general terms, but wanted to make sure that procedures for recalling senior executives are difficult, requiring a super-majority. Discussed in Session 73 (10 September 2001) that the language was not intended to be exhaustive in its provisions, but was only a general policy statement to guide us in formulating more specific rules. However, it certainly would be possible to pass amendments to the resolution to include any specific limitations which we might want.

Panelist asked who would be doing the removing. Moderator responded that whoever is doing the selecting would generally be doing the de-selecting.

Panelist noted example of Senator Arlen Specter, who initially voted "not proven" during Clinton's impeachment process, and who was informed by the Chief Justice that it was not a valid vote, and who then changed his vote to "not guilty", on grounds that removal of the President would have caused even greater disruption than leaving a guilty person in office. [Of course, we note in the Third Pass that this would depend on the nature and volume and relative severity of the bad act(s) which the President is alleged to have committed.] On the basis of this example, we agreed to amend the resolution by inserting "possible" in front of "removal", to show that it's not automatic for a given person to be removed, even for cause. Agreed on Resolution #5 as amended.

Question 129

What would motivate a department head or other manager in government to order the replacement of a subordinate?

Noted in Session 73 that much of this had been covered in previous Answers, including competition with other jurisdictions, and possibility of removal of the higher official. In addition, some managers may simply want themselves and their Agencies and their individual employees to do the right thing.

Question 121.5

Assuming that we continue to have a Vice-President, should the Vice-President succeed automatically on the death of the President, or should the second-place Presidential candidate take over?

Moved to this point of the Outline in Session 63, and taken up in Session 73.

Found from the summary of Session 69 that we had stated that the President should have a designated backup position, but were unspecific as to who it should be.

Should it be the Vice-President, or someone else? Appeared to relate to Question 122, since a Vice-President elected on a separate ticket might be problematic, even in a no-party environment, although that apparently would make things a bit easier.

Moderator's position was that the Vice-President probably is in the best position to take over, particularly if we rearrange duties such that the VP is more actively involved in running the government (to include being in the direct chain of command over most/all Cabinet directors, Moderator initially preferring that the VP be over all Cabinet directors, other panelist initially preferring to be over all except for State and Defense, to be addressed more specifically in Question 131) than he/she currently is. We now preferred the idea of the VP being more actively involved in government administration (to include having most/all Department heads report to him [*sic*], and running Cabinet meetings, which still should have the President present whenever possible), so that the President can be freed up to concentrate on the Bigger Picture. On this premise especially, the VP knows more about current issues and projects and opportunities than anyone other than the President, and so would be in the best position to take over the job with minimal disruption if anyone must do so quickly.

Question 122

Regardless of whether the Electoral College is retained or not, should the President and Vice-President (and analogous State executives) continue to be voted for in a single ticket, or should the first runner-up in the Presidential election automatically be named Vice-President, or should the two run separately?

Also moved to this point of the Outline in Session 63, and taken up in Session 73.

Moderator noted that this Question did appear to depend more on Question 121.5 than the other way around, notwithstanding our previous feeling.

Panelist was thinking that we should elect the Vice-President separately, both because we are removing party politics from the process, and because we had established that the VP should be more actively involved in government administration, implying that we should be focusing on good leaders for President and good administrators for Vice-President. Moderator noted that we also had established in Answer 121.5 that the VP would be taking over in case of a mid-term vacancy in the Presidency, so the VP should also possess leadership and policy-making abilities. Also, it's possible to place a leader and an administrator on the same ticket, so this is not a reason to run them separately.

Discussion of real and theoretical examples where the President and Vice-President (or Governor and Lieutenant Governor) are elected who have different agendas, clashing personalities, etc., which is easily possible in a no-party environment, since someone like Jerry Brown could get elected because he was the son of a previous Governor, while Mike Curb could get elected because he was cute and charismatic.

Clashing personalities or agendas could easily make it very difficult to run the government smoothly, and a VP with active administrative power could be very selective in deciding which policies of the President will be enforced actively and

which may be allowed to slide for a week or two. Conversely, a jointly-elected team probably would have more of a bilateral loyalty. We therefore decided that the P&VP should be elected on the same ticket. Resuming regular order:

Question 130

What if a U.S. President, or other Chief Executive, is in his/her last term under a term-limit law, and thus has no lingering motivation to perform at the highest level?

Not applicable, due to our Resolution #4 abolishing term limits, which we agreed in Session 74 (24 September 2001) are not as necessary in a no-party environment.

Question 131

At the Federal or State level, should the department heads (aka Secretaries, aka Cabinet members) report directly to the Chief Executive, or first to the Vice-President or Lieutenant Governor who in turn reports to the Chief Executive?

We had already determined in Session 73 that most/all Federal department heads should report to the Vice-President, possibly excluding State and Defense. Discussed in Session 74 whether we want State and Defense to report directly to P or VP.

Generally, there is an argument for reporting directly to the President, to avoid a non-productive level of bureaucracy. Moderator's reasons for preferring to have all department heads report first to the Vice-President include:

- Division of labor between President and Vice-President
- Authority of VP to monitor and improve operations of all departments
- Ability of VP to conduct Cabinet meetings of all department heads
- Extra check on Presidential orders in case he goes crazy or does something illegal (non-author panelist thought of that one)
- Necessitates picking an actually well-qualified person to be VP (panel seemed to find a level of underqualification in Dan Quayle, but of course opinions will vary)
- VP is better prepared to take over as President if in active loop while VP

Also, as to the idea of having some departments reporting directly to the President, argument raised that it is inconsistent to have multiple classes of departments.

As to the extra layer of bureaucracy, probably wouldn't require that much extra time in emergency situations, and you can have a similar National Security Council (NSC) to allow the President to have direct input in military or diplomatic matters. NSC should include President, Vice-President, State secretary, and Defense secretary. On this condition, panel agreed to have all department heads report to VP.

In the case of States, agreed that the argument of needing to be prepared to take over in case of sudden vacancy in a Senior Executive position is not as compelling at the State level as in the Fed. However, there still are enough other applicable arguments to suggest that any State which considers itself large enough to need a Lieutenant Governor should divide its Executive labor such that the LG is in the direct chain of command between the Governor and all the State's operating departments.

Question 132

Should the President (or Governor, or other Chief Executive of a jurisdiction) have unilateral authority to establish, adjust, or eliminate Departments in the Executive Branch, or should the Legislature have complete authority, or some kind of hybrid?

First instinct in Session 74 was to say "shared", but we were not sure how. Could be done in multiple ways: Could have a rule that any Executive Order which is not overturned by the Legislature within 30 days takes effect. Could grant the Executive the authority to rearrange agencies without firing people. Could do other stuff.

We are reluctant to allow the Exec to eliminate a Department unilaterally, since could affect implementation of public policy. (For example, would we want a City Manager to be able to eliminate the Fire Department?) Also, we wouldn't want the Exec to be able to increase the size and cost of government. On the other hand, we might also like the Exec to exercise some discretion in streamlining or improving government.

After discussion, we agreed that the Chief Executive should have authority to make any decisions as to the Executive Branch which he/she deems fit, if all legislative policies are maintained, any applicable laws on treatment of employees are followed, and any operational decision is subject to legislative override. On further discussion, we found that referring every single operational decision to the Legislature would both overwhelm them and make it highly difficult to get admin orders implemented quickly when needed, since middle managers might be reluctant to implement an order which could be rescinded within 30 days by the Legislature. We don't want the President to be a 'limp biscuit', but we don't want him to be a dictator, either.

Solution appeared to be that the President may take any action authorized by a legislative act, and does not need to refer to the Legislature any action taken within legislatively-determined parameters. If, however, the President wants to take a unilateral action which is not contained within any legislative directive, then such decision should be referred to the Legislature, and may be rescinded within 30 days by a simple majority, without the possibility of veto.

Question 132.5

What should happen to any government worker whose agency is eliminated?

Agreed in Session 74 that any action which involves the elimination of a currently-filled government position should allow the employee to be referred to 'priority placement', and thus to get preferential consideration for any other government vacancies, and to receive a separation package if not so appointed.

Question 133

Should the President have full authority (which could then be delegated to the Vice-President or to other subordinate staff) to name Department heads and other appointees without Congressional approval?

We found three possible reasons in Session 75 (October 2001) for Congressional oversight over Executive appointments, being character, competence, and

willingness to implement Congressional policy. One panelist initially thought that Department heads and Bureau chiefs should be confirmed by the Legislature. Discussion of comparison between the President's role as Commander-in-Chief and as head over other Departments, with general consensus that they're really the same. Noted that we should base our decisions on our previous finding that the President can do stuff unilaterally within the Executive Branch, subject to Legislative override within 30 days. Agreed that it is good for public policy to be a blend of Executive and Legislative input.

Further discussion of military policy. Agreed that the President should report to Congress on military policy, and also abide by [our proposed] International law that one can't unilaterally cross a border with military force. Should be okay for the President to do whatever it takes to defend against a direct attack on America without seeking Congressional approval first. We like the idea of military personnel saluting a Commander-in-Chief wearing civilian clothing, to symbolize that the Military is subordinate to Civilian employees and the General Public.

Moderator was a little fuzzy on the use of the term 'Commander-in-Chief', since we don't want to imply that the President is a military dictator. However, a panelist felt that it is okay to use that expression to mean the highest-ranking single official in a military structure. Moderator offered this as a definition of that expression for the purposes of our model; we agreed to adopt the definition with the change of 'structure' to 'chain of command'.

Back on the main Question, the Moderator brought up his corporate experience of requiring a manager's approval before hiring someone, and suggested that requiring or allowing Congressional oversight on the hiring of a Department head could be thought of as an application of this principle. On the other hand, though, the Department head reports first to the Vice-President, so the President and Vice-President would already be two levels of approval. On the other hand, though, we may want a third level of approval for especially high-ranking or high-impact positions. Also, the P & VP can possibly be thought of as a single unit, anyway, since we're having them run on the same ticket. Agreed to have Congressional approval over the hiring of Department heads, but not yet sure on Bureau chiefs.

Panelist built on the 'high-impact' argument to suggest that we should also have Congressional approval for the chiefs of certain Bureaus which have a potentially high impact. Moderator bought this argument, and added that we probably should be consistent in our practice, and not consider some Bureaus to be significantly more important than others; the importance of any agency which is organized at the Bureau level is considered to be of roughly the same order of magnitude as that of any other Bureau. Therefore, we shall require Congressional approval of all Bureau chiefs, even if it needs to be just a *pro forma* fast-track procedure in certain cases, just to give Congress a chance to override an appointment if necessary.

Question 134

What is to prevent anyone in the Executive Branch from appointing friends, family members, heavy campaign contributors, or other such individuals, who may not be the best choices for certain positions?

Not applicable, based on above findings.

Question 135

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

We began this operation during Session 76 (November 2001), by reviewing the charts which we had constructed in Sessions 43 and 45.

[In general, we endeavored to arrange our structures on a more functional basis than what we have now in 'real life', and to replace current agency names with those which indicate more clearly what those people are doing for a living.]

Panelist who was not present in those earlier Sessions expressed concern about our having assigned consumption-based entitlements to the County level. Moderator discussed that we have multiple varying opinions in our country as to how much such programs should be funded, so best to handle at lower levels in order to give people options. Preliminary discussion of transition to a non-SocSec environment. Do we want Counties administering those programs if they can go bankrupt? Answer is that we should make sure that Counties don't go bankrupt. Remainder of that discussion was scheduled to be taken up in Part II.

135a) Federal

Previous charts had identified 31 functions which we felt should be discharged by either the Fed or some combination of the Fed and lower levels, as follows:

| <u>Fed Only</u> | | <u>Fed and Local</u> | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| National Defense | Currency Admin | Disaster Relief | Environment |
| Research & Devel. | Disease Screening | Social Work | Taxation |
| Census & Statistics | Postal Service | Judiciary | Law Enforcement |
| Foreign Relations | Agri. Monitoring | Occup. Safety | Public Health |
| Language Standard. | Food/Drug Reg. | Parks | Job Training |
| Copyrights/Patents | International Trade | Elections | Airpt./Harb. Supvsn. |
| Territorial Admin. | Air Traffic Control | Arts | |
| Railroad Maint. | Communication Reg. | | |
| Anti-Trust | Securities Regulation | | |

Agreed that we don't want 31 Departments. Non-author panelist suggested 8-10, since more would reduce the ability to discuss issues at Cabinet meetings.

Added function for Space Exploration to the Fed Only list: Agreed that it's a basic human need to want to know more about our place in the Universe. Also, there are multiple scientific, technical, medical, etc., advantages to developing Space travel and doing stuff in a zero-gravity environment.

At this point, we completed a preliminary distribution of these functions into 8 function groups, as follows:

- A) Communication & Transportation stuff
- B) Scientific stuff
- C) Health & Safety

- D) Defense
- E) Justice
- F) Foreign Relations
- G) Domestic Affairs, including Interior
- H) Treasury

Department C was changed to Public Services when we added Job Training to it.

We added a Measurement Standards function to Fed Only list under B.

Panelist questioned whether we really need a Secretary for Agriculture, since it's an industry like any other. Moderator noted that Food is more important than Steel.

Panelist was not sure whether government should be in the business of standardizing Language, other than as a procedures manual for its own publications. If we do it, though, then he suggested putting it with the Scientific group, since scientists could examine how quickly people absorb different language elements.

Panelist expressed desire to do without a Commerce or Labor Department.

Communication & Transportation are sufficiently related to be in the same group because of overlap between the functions, especially as the Post Office involves both.

Moderator was concerned about the breadth of functions in G. Suggested moving Environment and Parks from G to C. Panelist noted that Environment and Parks don't provide services to individuals, but rather to the entire national community.

Moved the Elections office to the Justice department, since it is a better fit than with the department covering Parks and the Environment.

Panelist noted that we probably want to have the capability of appointing a Special Prosecutor to deal with alleged offenses of high government officials (i.e., the ones for whom Congressional confirmation would ordinarily be sought), and Moderator suggested that this individual should be appointed by and report to the Legislature, which could issue an indictment to be adjudged by the Judicial Branch. Some discussion of specifics, and Moderator noted that the complete discussion would take place in Subsection I-E-6.

We wrote out the 8 departments on the whiteboard in Session 77 (November 2001). Noted that Domestic Affairs and Foreign Relations would soak up anything inside or outside our borders (respectively) which wouldn't easily classify anywhere else. Even though Communications & Transportation was the only department with two elements in its name, we affirmed that they dovetail sufficiently well to justify combining in one department.

Non-author panelist liked the number 8 for this purpose. Wouldn't be a problem for the Cabinet to comprise an even number of positions, since they wouldn't really take binding votes on anything, since the body exists mainly to give advice to the President and Vice-President, who would make any necessary executive decisions. Insofar as they do vote on anything, though, we wouldn't want to create a whole other Department for the sole purpose of being able to break a tie. Besides, either the President or Vice-President can be considered a tie-breaking vote if necessary.

Question 42 (continued)

What functions should be handled at the Federal level, and what functions should be handled at State or Local levels?

Agreed in Session 77 that Street & Highway Maintenance should be performed at all levels. Important for the Fed to make sure that there are some highways connecting all areas of the country, and these may be supplemented by lower levels as they deem fit. We discussed a previous panelist's presentation in favor of performing that function only at lower levels, but found that it had been colored by his basic philosophy in favor of extremely minimalist government, and thus not completely applicable to our adopted model.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

At this time, we created a draft Federal structure of Departments and Bureaus, making certain adjustments as we went along, according to the footnotes:

Communications & Transportation

- Postal Service
- Air Traffic
- Railroads
- Electronic Communications
- Airports & Harbors
- Highways
- Language¹

Science

- Research & Development
- Food & Drug Regulation
- Space Exploration
- Measurement Standards
- Earth & Sea Exploration²

Public Services³

- Job Training
- Disaster Relief
- Social Services⁴
- Occupational Safety
- Public Health⁵
- Arts¹¹

Defense

- Land Defense
- Sea Defense
- Air Defense
- Space Defense⁶

Justice

- Copyrights & Patents
- Business & Securities⁷
- Law Enforcement
- Elections⁸

Foreign Affairs⁹

- Foreign Relations
- International Trade
- Cultural Exchange¹⁰

Domestic Affairs

- Census & Statistics
- Agriculture
- Territorial Administration
- Domestic Trade
- Environmental Protection
- National Parks

Treasury

- Currency Administration
- Revenue Collection¹²
- Government Payroll¹³
- Asset Administration¹⁴
- Administrative Services¹⁵
- Personnel & Pensions¹⁶
- Security
- Transportation Services
- Accounting & Budget
- Infrastructure Maintenance
- Procurement
- Building & Floor Planning

¹Language had been reassigned from Science because it was more Communication-related than anything else, and didn't involve that much in scientific logistics. Noted in discussion that this agency could serve both legal and political purposes, could be important for printing ballot statements and other government documents, could provide a standardized source for Education, and could help regular free-assembly groups like ours to understand one another. [We later dumped it.]

²Earth & Sea Exploration was the idea of a non-author panelist, who noted that this function is significantly different from Space Exploration.

³Just before we began listing the Public Service agencies, non-author panelist made general note that all these Departments and Bureaus go contrary to the previous panelist's concept of a minimalist government. Moderator responded that he had never totally bought into that concept, and that the other panelist should have been present more often if he really wanted to push it.

⁴Moderator wanted to get away from the word 'welfare', but the Social Services Bureau would oversee the "S.I.C.'s". [Not sure in the Third Pass what that meant.]

⁵Agreed to combine the Disease Screening function into Public Health, since it has a similar purpose.

⁶Space Defense also was the idea of a non-author panelist, not so much to guard against Mars, but to guard against any [terrestrial] attacks through Space, and also to divert any dangerous meteors.

⁷Agreed to adopt Moderator's name for the Business & Securities bureau, which would cover both Securities Regulation and Anti-Trust, since the latter doesn't apply to just corporations.

⁸Just after we listed Elections, non-author panelist offered general note that this outline of Bureaus was "very functional".

⁹Foreign Affairs was renamed from 'Foreign Relations', to avoid duplication with the Bureau name.

¹⁰Cultural Exchange was a good idea introduced by a non-author panelist to satisfy our desire not to have exactly two Bureaus in a Department, and also to provide a forum for international artistic endeavors, the Olympics, etc.

¹¹Arts moved from Public Services to Domestic Affairs during the posting, because the function is more like National Parks in being visually oriented and self-selecting, whereas all other Public Services provide actual service to all affected individuals.

¹²Revenue Collection includes Taxation, but is not limited thereto; might also include Tariffs, Excise Taxes, etc.

¹³Government Payroll would perform the actual check-cutting, based on vouchers provided by the Personnel office (or whatever other specific procedure is used), as a double-check when issuing disbursements.

¹⁴Asset Administration was the excellent name by a non-author panelist for the function to maintain Gold reserves, Federal lands, Tax foreclosures, etc.

¹⁵Department name changed from 'Administration' because we had too many Bureaus with that word in their names.

¹⁶We were originally going to call it just 'Personnel', but we realized that an uninitiated observer might think that Government Payroll should do Pensions.

We ended up our first draft with 3-7 Bureaus in each Department, and 9 Departments total. Seemed to look pretty good.

Reviewed our preliminary Federal structure with a new panelist in Session 78 (November 2001), and explained some points:

When we got to talking about Language, new panelist bridled at the possibility of using the word 'Services' in the bureau name, thinking about the old line of "I'm from the Government, and I'm here to help you". Moderator noted that one of the reasons that he was suggesting to use the word 'Services' was to help foster the mindset among government workers that they really are there to provide services to people, and not just to enjoy a cushy civil-service job. But, new panelist asserted that it is better to make people use new words than to ask them to use the same words in a new way: 'Services' is an example of an old word, and brings an image of politicians who call themselves 'public servants', but who actually live like Royalty. Also noted example of a 'Social Services Bureau' which doesn't provide service as much as shame and humiliate people. After considering different other possibilities, we settled on 'Language Resources' as having the combination of being both adequately descriptive and nice-sounding.

Considered replacing 'Administration' with 'Management' for Currency and Assets. Agreed that 'Management' is better for Assets than 'Administration', as it implies that decisions are being made and actions are being taken. Tentatively leaving 'Currency Administration' as is, in anticipation of the possibility that this agency will mostly be carrying out the directives of Congress or the future equivalent of the current Federal Reserve. If we later determined that the role of the agency should be expanded to include all decision-making on Money Supply, then we would consider making the name 'Currency Management'. Adjourned at 9:30pm.

Reviewed draft Federal structure again in Session 79 (December 2001), with a panelist who had not attended since Session 57 in March 2000. Addressed several random questions on Postal Service, Language Resources, Justice, and Food & Drug.

Question 42 (continued)

What functions should be handled at the Federal level, and what functions should be handled at State or Local levels?

Panelist in Session 79 indicated that Energy distribution should be managed at the Federal level, since power grids and water supplies cross so many State and County borders. Moderator agreed to move Water/Power from the County level (as indicated in Answer 48, and more generally as State/Local in Answer 42) to be a bureau within Domestic Affairs. They should be in the same bureau because Water is often used for Power. Panelist noted that different kinds of technologies can have uses by different government agencies; Moderator responded that this is one of the reasons for combining all these into the Science department.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Discussion of enabling one or more agencies for Automotive Safety and other Product Safety. We didn't want to put it in Public Services, because we didn't want people to come to have a negative view of that department, as another panelist had suggested in Session 78. There were too many bureaus in Domestic Affairs as it was. Also should not go in Communications & Transportation, since many of the products are not automotive. May want to split into two bureaus. Considering.

Intelligence should be a function, and Moderator wanted to put it as a bureau within Foreign Affairs, but other panelist wasn't sure. Considering.

Economic Policy should be a function. Moderator wanted to put it in Treasury, and expand that Department to be called 'Finance'. Considering.

Confirmed vision that the Federal bureau of Law Enforcement should be concerned with enforcement of only Federal laws.

Discussion of extent to which we want the Fed to be involved with Urban Development, non-author panelist claiming that it's appropriate for everybody to put money into a central kitty for redistribution to individual Localities in trouble, and Moderator making pitch that this would violate our principle of Subsidiarity.

Noted in Session 80 (December 2001) that when we're talking about Intelligence, we are referring to any attempt to subvert or attack our country. Such attempts can be initiated from either inside or outside our borders, so the Intelligence function would not make a very good fit with either Domestic Affairs or Foreign Affairs. Agreed that it belongs in Defense, and that it is best to treat it as a separate Bureau.

We could place Product Safety in Public Services, but in our model that department then dealt with only non-physical functions. Domestic Affairs was more for functions which don't easily classify elsewhere. Besides, as a non-author panelist pointed out, some of our products are actually produced elsewhere, plus many of them are shipped to other countries, so this is not purely a domestic function. Best fit was seen with Science, since they already had Food & Drug Regulation and Measurement Standards, both of which help to ensure that things which we buy and use are safe and have accurate packaging information. Moderator was a little bugged about the Science Department becoming more regulatory than we originally envisioned, but probably okay as is. Noted that putting it into a Commerce Department might be even worse, due to conflict of interest between Safety and encouragement of Trade.

Question arose of whether Economic Policy really belongs in the Executive structure at all. Noted that major decisions can be made by the Legislature, but more specific day-to-day decisions on Interest Rates and such probably would need to be made and implemented outside of that structure. Could do it in the Executive Branch, but there is some argument in favor of a semi-autonomous Federal Reserve; however, Moderator was very uncomfortable with the idea of having such important decisions made by a group over which we have little or no electoral oversight. On the other

hand, we might not want policy decisions made within a basically-administrative structure, or one which is subject to political influence. Moderator was thinking that the Legislature can set any basic economic parameters, and delegate specific decisions within those parameters to the President and/or his [*sic*] subordinates. In discussion of setting policy on Government Spending and Taxation, Moderator suggested that Government Spending shouldn't be so high that general Economic Policy is significantly affected; panelist pointed out in response that this is a decision better suited to Part II, and that we were here to create an organizational structure which will be adaptable to any such decisions. One of the panelists suggested possibility of establishing automatic stabilization mechanisms, either to adjust employee withholding according to the current state of the economy, or else to tie Interest Rates to a Commodity price index; Moderator responded that many individuals are under such tight personal budgets that they would have a problem with periodic fluctuations in their take-home income, in addition to his general problem with the Income Tax, and that we may not want to make general economic decisions based on the behavior of one specific sector like Commodities.

Agreed that Economic Policy should go in what we then called the Treasury Department if we are not having semi-autonomous Federal Reserve Board, but still wondering whether we should have that or not. In the course of these deliberations, Moderator mentioned that we probably would want to expand 'Treasury' to 'Finance' if we do add Economic Policy, and maybe even if not, since Currency Administration was already there. Moderator also mentioned that a semi-autonomous Federal Reserve probably could take the Currency Administration function with it. Agreed to give this matter some further thought before deciding.

One of those panelists suggested in Session 81 (December 2001) deferring the question of Economic Policy to later. Moderator objected, since he was not sure of where we would place the marker to remind ourselves to go back and fix this element, and since the Questions were arranged sequentially. Also, what information or insight would we have later which we didn't have at the time?

Panelist then suggested expanding Currency Administration to 'Currency & Banking', with role expanded to include all functions relating to Banks. Agreed by Moderator. Panelist also indicated that the Legislature could set a range of possible Interest Rates, and that Currency & Banking could then set specific rates within that range.

We then performed a final review of our overall Federal structure:

- Confirmed that Communication & Transportation should be one Department, because those functions will merge more and more, because the Post Office involves both, and because laying out highways also involves telephone lines.

- Moderator noted absence of Meteorology and Atmospheric Examination (Ozone Depletion being chief among those issues [even back then]). Thought of combining Atmosphere with the regular Research & Development Bureau, but then people would wonder why we had separate bureaus for Space and Land/Air. Thought of putting it with Space ('Space and the Atmosphere?'), but some of the functions are too dissimilar. It's not really Exploration. Agreed that we needed a new unit in the Science Department to cover Meteorology. Also thinking that Environmental Protection shouldn't be in Domestic Affairs, both because the issues could cross national borders, and also because the functions are similar to what the Product Safety people would be doing. Agreed to combine the two units as one bureau

within Science, to be called 'Environmental & Consumer Protection'. They will be in charge of checking the Ozone layer. Then, we added an extra bureau in Science for Meteorology, and [metaphorically] called it a day.

- Now that we had Environmental & Consumer Protection, did we need Food & Drug Regulation as a separate bureau? Agreed that it was not needed, and that the function could be rolled into the new bureau. Also, Moderator liked that this made the Science Department seem a bit less regulatory on paper.

- We moved Environmental & Consumer Protection to the Department of Public Services for the present, since (1) it fits better with the bureaus of Occupational Safety and Public Health, (2) a representative from Public Services probably would carry a lot more psychological weight with a non-complying business owner than a representative from Science would, and (3) it makes Science even less regulatory. Science should basically serve the whole country, while Public Services should serve the people in the country.

- We considered breaking out Earth & Sea Exploration into different bureaus, and decided against it. For one thing, many of the functions and objectives (Geology, Archaeology, etc.) will pertain to both Land and Sea. For another, that bureau probably would become less critical as Time passes, and there may not be enough in each segment to warrant the continued existence of separate bureaus.

- Agreed that Pension Administration is more in line with the Government Payroll function, so we moved it into that bureau from Personnel.

- We added Immigration as a bureau within Foreign Affairs, just in case we have some policy which needs administering.

- We changed the name of 'Foreign Relations' to 'Diplomatic Relations'. We considered 'International Relations', but it sounded too similar to 'International Trade'. Besides, panelist pointed out that 'Diplomatic Relations' is more descriptive.

- Panelist suggested having a separate bureau for Minting & Engraving, but Moderator noted that this was already covered in Currency & Banking.

Following is our "final" Federal structure: [We made further adjustments later.]

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Communications & Transportation | Foreign Affairs | Defense |
| - Postal Service | - Immigration | - Land Defense |
| - Air Traffic | - Diplomatic Relations | - Sea Defense |
| - Railroads | - International Trade | - Air Defense |
| - Electronic Comm. | - Cultural Exchange | - Space Defense |
| - Airports & Harbors | Public Services | - Intelligence |
| - Highways | - Public Information | Administrative Services |
| - Language Resources | - Disaster Relief | - Personnel |
| Justice | - Social Services | - Security |
| - Copyrights & Patents | - Environmental & Consumer Protection | - Transportation Services |
| - Business & Securities | - Occupational Safety | - Accounting & Budget |
| - Law Enforcement | - Public Health | - Infrastructure Maint. |
| - Elections | [continued] | - Procurement |
| | | - Building & Floor Planning |

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Science | Domestic Affairs | Treasury |
| - Research & Development | - Water & Power | - Currency & Banking |
| - Space Exploration | - Census & Statistics | - Revenue Collection |
| - Meteorology | - Agriculture* [*may be able to jettison] | - Government Payroll & Pensions |
| - Measurement Standards | - Arts | - Asset Management |
| - Earth & Sea Exploration | - Territorial Administration | |
| | - Domestic Trade | |
| | - National Parks | |

135b) State

[As we indicated at the beginning of Answer 48, the model structures for States and Localities are intended only as a default recommendation. Those jurisdictions may adjust the structures to suit their particular demographics, topographies, economic potentials, collective political philosophies, etc., etc.]

State executive functions according to our Answer 48 included Apportionment, Insurance Regulation, Gun Regulation, Vehicle Registration, Driver's Licenses, Occupational Safety, Job Training, Conservation, Environment, Law Enforcement, Taxation, Judiciary, Elections, Disaster Relief, and Street/Highway Maintenance.

Question 42 (continued)

What functions should be handled at the Federal level, and what functions should be handled at State or Local levels?

Noted in Session 81 that the State Transportation Department can cover Vehicle Registration, Driver's Licenses, and Highway Construction & Maintenance.

Question 49 (continued)

Are we happy with the basic set-up of the Federal government as outlined in the Constitution?

Decided in Session 81 that Judiciary at the State level is to be handled in a separate branch. If not established elsewhere, agreed at this point that the basic model for all jurisdictions at all levels of American government is to keep Administrative, Judicial, and Legislative functions in separate branches.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

We noticed in Session 81 that we hadn't accounted for Corporations in Answer 48. Agreed in discussion that the current system of having Corporations in obscure States is way too complex, and not always very fair to everyone if a lawsuit is needed against a Corporation domiciled in a different State. Agreed that we should allow incorporation at the Federal level, in the Bureau of Business & Securities. Also agreed that we still can allow State incorporation, if one is doing business only within that State, since it may be easier and/or faster and/or cheaper than going through the whole nasty Federal process. Panelist added that requiring Federal incorporation

for Interstate Commerce would make accounting easier and more consistent, particularly due to different tax laws in the different States.

Public Services at the State level comprises Occupational Safety, Job Training, and Disaster Relief. [Occupational Safety therefore was now in our Fed/State list.]

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Decided in Session 81 that the State Law Enforcement Department (could come up with a different name later, if desired) would have the Gun Control function; didn't know yet if it needed to be a separate bureau, but we showed it as such for the present. Also includes functions/bureaus of Investigation, Prosecutions, Prisons & Parole, and Police.

Elections would have Election Administration and Apportionment.

Administration added as a function. Agreed at this point that all governments should plan on having an Administration Department.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

Panelist in Session 82 (January 2002) asserted that Theodore Roosevelt first conceived of incorporating businesses at the Federal level.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Panelist asked in Session 82 whether we want to have a Science Department at the State level, to take care of any issues not dealt with by the Fed. Moderator indicated probably not, since a State agency probably would need to share results with everyone else anyway, so may as well do it at just one level. Any issues which are too insignificant for the Fed to manage maybe shouldn't be managed at all.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

Question arose in Session 82 on administering Beaches and preserving Coastlines. While we hadn't originally allocated the Beaches function in Answer 48, Moderator suggested at this time that the County level probably is best, since some States

don't have beaches at all. [Then again, we observe in the Third Pass that some Counties don't have beaches either, so we may need a better argument than that.] Panelist suggested that Counties may be too subject to special-interest money, and might allow development in areas which should be maintained as wilderness. We found that this might violate Subsidiarity, unless there's a really good reason to do it at the higher level. Panelist wondered what would happen if every County decided to allow development of scenic areas, to the detriment of the public interest. Moderator pointed out that certain communities -- such as Carmel, Big Sur, and Monterey -- have a vested interest in maintaining the areas as scenic for tourism, and that individual propertyholders would fight the appearance of a bunch of 7-11's along the highway. Even if they should all decide that way, however, they're probably in a better position to determine what's actually in the public interest than people who live hundreds of miles away. In any case, States can designate certain areas -- whether on the Beach or elsewhere -- as wilderness or animal-conservation areas, or to be used for some other express purpose, under the direct management of the State, but most Beaches may yet be managed locally.

We added Beaches to the list of County functions at this time.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Agreed that Conservation and the Environment should be in the same department as one another. Agreed with panelist's note that the Public Services Department is basically concerned with delivery of services to individuals, so that it probably is not the best place for these functions. Moderator added that it would be good to have a Department with the word 'Environment' or 'Environmental' in it somewhere, to help show our commitment to these purposes. Moderator noted for information, though, that Environmental Protection was then a function of the Federal Department of Public Services. Confirmed that we didn't want a Consumer Safety agency at the State level, since so many products are manufactured and distributed all over the place. Because the types of issues being dealt with by the Environment agency at the State level probably will be largely different from those handled by the Fed, the agencies didn't need to be organized in the same way.

We settled on a 'Department of Conservation', since some functions will not be Environmental, and since we had begun to dislike the glut of compound agency names which were starting to appear in our lists. Bureaus of the Department could include Environmental Protection, Historical Landmarks, Wilderness Areas, etc.

Environmental Protection can work similar to Disaster Relief: Give each Locality a chance to take care of the problem first, and step in at the State level if the problem is too widespread or if the Locality is too slow or resource-light, then introduce the Fed if the State can't handle it all. State's Environment agency can be concerned primarily with Air and Water pollution, since that can move all over the State.

Taxation might be handled in a Finance Department.

Insurance might be handled by same department as Corporations. Not technically necessary for insurers to be incorporated, but otherwise officers could be on the hook for millions in claims. We also might want to allow Banking to happen at the State level, to avoid all the Fed regulations, same as with regular Corporations. Considered naming the unit 'Department of Companies & Corporations', but we still wanted to avoid compound names. Looked at 'Department of Commerce', though non-profit corporations are not commercial ventures. Also considered whether we still need for charity-type organizations to be incorporated, once our simplified Tax system is in place. Noted in 'black book' to consider this in Subsection I-D-2.

First pass at State structure, then:

| | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Administration | Law Enforcement | Finance |
| | - Gun Control | |
| Transportation | - Investigation | Commerce |
| - Vehicle Registration | - Prosecutions | - Corporations |
| - Driver's Licenses | - Prisons & Parole | - Insurance |
| - Highway Constr. & Maint. | - Police | - Banking |
| Public Services | Elections | Conservation |
| - Occupational Safety | - Election Administration | - Environmental Protection |
| - Job Training | - Apportionment | - Historical Landmarks |
| - Disaster Relief | | - Wilderness Areas |

Some discussion of Corporations in Session 83 (January 2002), with note that it may need to move to another department if we end up having non-profit corporations.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

Panelist asked in Session 83 whether we need Corporations at all. Noted that we could look further in I-D-2 if desired, but our preliminary response was to point up their main features, being perpetuity, limited liability, and the ability to sell shares.

Question 418 (continued)

Of these basic types, which is the fairest method of taxation, or is it appropriate for more than one type to be levied at once by a single jurisdiction?

Discussion of Sales Tax arose in Session 83, generally favorable, though a panelist suggested the possibility of exempting certain staple goods. Moderator objected.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Possibility raised of enabling limited Zoning at the State level, to prevent undesirable developments immediately next to County lines. Panelist cited example of a large

housing development from I-5 to the Ventura County line. Moderator still thought that it would be fairly rare to have a large development right next to a County line, with nothing on the other side. Such conflicts also could happen on Interstate and International levels. Panelist noted that the Fed then exercised Zoning control over non-Federal lands surrounding Mount Vernon. Found to relate to Question 21.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual need to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

By a motion and a second from non-author panelists in Session 83, we began looking at this Question yet a fourth time. This came from considering the distinction among international, interstate, and intercounty Zoning questions.

Mover pointed out that Citizens of autonomous entities like States and Nations might need to defer to Citizens of other autonomous entities. Moderator pointed out that our model at the time was that we didn't have any Citizens, and that you live where you live, and you vote where you live. Mover now asserted that acceptance of the group's then-current Answer 21 would effectively sink the whole Project.

Mover asserted that one of the reasons for having Nations is to share common political ideals, and that abolishing Citizenship would weaken shared ideals. Also asserted that people from poor Nations would flock to richer Nations, lowering the average economic condition the latter. Before addressing these assertions, Moderator read the lists from Session 26 of reasons to keep or drop Citizenship.

Mover cited that Vicente Fox (then the President of Mexico) was encouraging Mexicans to get educated in America, and then return to Mexico. Moderator brought up the example of East Germany. Mover yet asserted that too many people coming into a richer Nation would cause a problem, owing to fewer available resources. Moderator asked whether we should therefore get rid of the Statue of Liberty. Mover said No, because it had historical and artistic value.

Mover asked about Voter Registration, and Moderator read from the conclusion to Session 59, about how all residents shall be permitted to vote who have passed either the standard educational curriculum or a special civics test, excepting those with serious criminal history or other mental illness. Mover then acknowledged that we might be able to do everything without Citizenship which we currently can.

Mover reviewed the portion of our General Summary pertaining to Question 21 prior to Session 84 (February 2002), and reported that he didn't find anything manifestly untrue or illogical. However, he felt that he didn't have enough information on the rest of our findings (not having read the rest of the Summary) to determine whether the conclusion actually had a sound basis.

Asked at this time who would be enforcing Natural Human Rights in the absence of Citizenship, with response that we had previously found there to be no Natural Human Rights, and that all Rights are civilly granted. After some further discussion, mostly about the fact that we were starting this Project from a position of assuming only a world of 6B [*sic*] people running around randomly, we agreed to conclude the current Reconsideration of Q21 without a finding. Previous result stood.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Resumed discussion of higher-level Zoning in Session 84, panelist re-asserting that the possibility of conflicting land use across County lines might be problematic, and Moderator again questioning what we should do at the Interstate and International levels if we agree that it actually is problematic.

Panelist brought example of a prison proposed for building in the City of Industry, which development his ex-wife successfully opposed, due to its proximity to five elementary schools in multiple Counties. (She needed to go to the State level, but possibly because the County didn't have enough legal teeth.) Panelist could see how this probably could happen with a development planned for a City near the County line. Moderator saw the problem, but still was not sure how much the State government could do about such a plan from hundreds of miles away.

Panelist proposed working solution which would keep decision-making for Local issues at Local levels. For certain unsavory developments (to be enumerated by State legislation, but which could include prisons, oil refineries, power plants, stadiums, etc.), construction in a given City shall require the consent of all neighboring incorporated Cities; if that City borders an unincorporated part of a County, then also get permission from the County itself. Moderator liked this concept.

At this point, though, Moderator raised question of what to do if the development is planned for a large unincorporated area of a County far away from any County boundary, or for a large incorporated City like Los Angeles: Should we require the permission of Burbank or San Fernando to get a prison built in Wilmington? Panelist proposed revision that State legislatures could hold hearings and debates to define an "impact radius" for each type of unsavory development, and that any developer would need the permission of any City with territory falling within that radius, and/or any County with unincorporated territory within that radius; permission would need to be obtained from Local councils, and we could leave the State out of it. Agreed on this point, which relieves us of the necessity to deal with these issues at either an Interstate or International level.

Therefore, we concluded that we don't need any kind of Zoning agency at the State level.

Resuming regular order, we now looked at our preliminary model State structure:

- Administration expanded to include bureaus for Personnel, Payroll, and Internal Auditing, the last to check State agencies for compliance with financial directives.
- Finance expanded to include Taxation and Investments.
- Since the Investments function is also an internal area, we combined the two departments into a 'Department of Administration & Finance', with five bureaus.

- Non-author panelist proposed an agency for Consumer Protection. In discussing specifics, considered possibility of adding another agency to the Law Enforcement Department. Moderator countered that it would be better to have standards set and enforced by one agency in the Commerce Department, so that we have people involved in the process who know about Products and Buying & Selling and Consumption and suchlike. Agreed after some discussion to create a 'Consumer Affairs Bureau' within the Commerce Department. They can set standards for products manufactured within that State, can act as advocates for consumers who are getting shafted, can provide expert testimony, and can defend their own standards in any legal case. Best for this advocacy to happen in Consumer Affairs, since Law Enforcement is more the venue where this stuff is getting processed.

- Moderator noted that the existence of a Bureau of Apportionment was contrary to what we had stated in Session 48. Since it was an *ad hoc* function in that model, Apportionment doesn't need -- and shouldn't have -- a separate Apportionment Bureau. Considered merging the remaining Elections office into the existing Administration & Finance Department, but felt at this point that it would be better to keep it as a separate department, particularly because Administration & Finance already had five bureaus. Therefore, we kept Elections as a separate department, without any enumerated bureaus.

- Agreed to have an Accounting office to collate all Accounting information and provide periodic reports, including as to budget variances. Budget Committee (or equivalent) within the Legislature can prepare the actual Budget, and investigate significant variances, possibly with the help of the Internal Auditing Bureau. Other than this, we may not need a unit for Budgeting within the Executive Branch.

Considered in Session 85 (July 2002) moving the Federal Bureau of Accounting & Budget from the Administrative Services Department to Treasury, but non-author panelist pointed out that it is better to have an outside check against the Treasury Department, so we left it as it was.

Also considered moving the Federal Elections Bureau from Justice to Administrative Services, but non-author panelist felt that this Department has enough to do already, and that we don't want to give too much power to that Department head.

Panelist saw problems with keeping Internal Auditing in Administration & Finance, since they might be subject to intra-departmental reprisal if they find something goofy. Thinking that Law Enforcement Department might be better, especially since some accounting practices might be statutorily mandated. Considered making Auditing a separate department, but then they might get too powerful. Another reason to move it out of Administration & Finance would be to make that department as non-controversial as possible. Wherever we might move it, panelist wanted to have some protection for the head of the agency, such as requiring Legislative approval for dismissal, so that they could feel protected while finding and reporting anomalies. Agreed to move.

Investments Bureau could include Real Estate for public buildings.

Adopted model State structure, as follows: [As with the other levels, we made a few additional adjustments later.]

| | | |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Elections | Law Enforcement | Administration & Finance |
| | - Gun Control | - Personnel |
| Transportation | - Investigation | - Payroll |
| - Vehicle Registration | - Prosecutions | - Taxation |
| - Driver's Licenses | - Prisons & Parole | - Investments |
| - Highway Construction & Maintenance | - Police | - Accounting |
| | - Internal Auditing | |
| Public Services | Conservation | Commerce |
| - Occupational Safety | - Environmental Protection | - Corporations |
| - Job Training | - Historical Landmarks | - Insurance |
| - Disaster Relief | - Wilderness Areas | - Banking |
| | | - Consumer Affairs |

135c) County

County executive functions according to our Answer 48 included Fire, Education, Drug/Liquor Regulation, Emergency Health Care, Animal Regulation, Sewage Management, Workers Compensation, Social Work, Public Health, Entitlements, Beaches, Job Training, Conservation, Environment, Public Transportation, Parks, Arts, Taxation, Judiciary, Elections, Disaster Relief, and Street/Highway Maintenance.

Noted that we need a Law Enforcement mechanism here, since Counties are basically the administrative regional arms of the State.

We removed Judiciary to be a separate branch.

Performed preliminary grouping into seven departments: Health (Fire, Drug/Liquor Regulation, Emergency Health Care, Animal Regulation, Sewage Management, Public Health), Education, Labor (Workers Compensation, Job Training), Social (Social Work, Entitlements, Disaster Relief), Civic (Beaches, Conservation, Environment, Parks, Arts), Transportation (Public Transportation, Street/Highway Maintenance), Administration (Taxation, Elections). Basically happy with seven departments, though noted that we might tweak up or down. Next steps were to consider the numbers of departments, finalize their scopes and names, confirm assignment of functions, create bureau names, and polish.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

When we began reviewing our County model in Session 86 (August 2002), we checked for Utilities, and reminded ourselves that we had it as a Federal function. Occurred to us that we may need local distribution outlets, and that Counties may also want to generate their own power. [Third Pass was relieved.] We went back and saw that Water/Power originally was a County function in our model, and that we had moved it to Federal in Session 79. On reviewing those notes at this time, we didn't see anything to preclude this being a shared function. Agreed that the Fed can arrange for distribution to Counties, and that Counties can then arrange for distribution to People; Counties also can arrange for private purchase and/or generation, possibly in competitive pricing with what's passed out by the Fed.

Agreed to add Job Placement as a Labor function. May not need in every case, if it can be adequately handled by private firms, but better to have it in the model structure, so that those County governments can use it who need it.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

We were seeing potential in Session 86 for some relation between the Water/Power function and the Sewage Management function, so we put both in the Civic group.

We added Personnel, Payroll, and Accounting to the Administration Department at the County level. Non-author panelist expressed desire for an Audit function reporting directly to the Board of Supervisors. However, because we were tending toward a council-manager system for Counties, everything would all be in one structure. Moderator also brought up example of the Internal Affairs Division being part of the City Police structure. Now had Accounting/Audit as a bureau of the County Administration Department.

Panelist voiced concern (again) that the Accounting/Audit people need to be free from reprisal, though Moderator didn't want them to have so much job security that have no motivation to perform at all. Agreed that these factors don't really impact our model structure materially, and that we could defer that discussion to later.

We changed Accounting/Audit to Budget & Auditing, and combined Personnel and Payroll into one bureau, since the overall operation is not very big.

Noted that we probably don't need a separate Labor Relations function, as it could be managed by the Council or Manager.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

Traffic Management added as a County/City function, to cover Traffic Lights, Stop Signs, Speed Limits, Checkpoint Investigation, etc. Much of this crosses City boundaries, so it should be at the County level, but we may also wish to allow Cities to have their own Stop Signs and Traffic Lights, insofar as they don't interfere with the rest of the County.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Looked at functions in the Social group, and considered that they may all relate to economic privation, but panelist noted that Social Work can also involve Personal

Counseling, Adoptions, and other such non-economic items. We went along with panelist subsequent suggestion to add Child Placement as a bureau within the Social group, and to call the Department 'Social Services'.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

Added the Coroner function to the Health group of County functions, and combined Public Health with Emergency Health Care as the 'Medical Services' Bureau.

Considered moving Drug/Liquor Regulation to the City level, both because they have more of a Police mechanism and because some of us might like there to be an area of the County where one could be free from regulation. On further reflection, though, many laws in that area will be made at the State level, so Counties should administer them, and we probably do want provisions against consumption by minors to be in effect all over the place, so probably happy where it was. Agreed to keep in Health because our County model then contained no Police Department.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Tried to figure out what to do with the remaining County departments, in that Arts didn't seem to fit with the other items. Toyed briefly with moving it into Education, but it would need to get totally absorbed in the department title, and would be tough to work into the structure of the Education Department. Agreed to move it into Social Services, because it is a Social Service, and because it leaves a better after-taste after all those Consumption-Based Entitlements.

Agreed to combine Parks and Beaches into a 'Parks & Beaches' Bureau for those Counties which abut Beaches, and to leave it as just 'Parks' for those which don't. Discussion of where to put Parks & Beaches; toyed with various possibilities (including Social Services), and finally settled on making a separate Department of Parks & Recreation; didn't need to include Beaches in the title, but it covers Beaches as applicable. Toyed with putting Arts back in there, but this will be a bureau-less Department, so the Arts function might get lost, so we kept it in Social Services.

Conservation and Environment combined into a bureau-less 'Environmental Protection' Department.

Water, Power, and Waste Management were three bureaus in a department for which we couldn't figure out a good name, even upon considering titles with 'Utilities' or 'Infrastructure' in them. Moved the Sewage Management function to the Environment Department, since it is an Environmental consideration, and left Water/Power as its own department.

With multiple functions in the Environmental Protection Department, we now broke it out into three bureaus, being Conservation, Waste Management, and 'Ecological Restoration', the last of which would concern itself with toxic cleanups.

Second pass at County structure: [Does not include Sheriff added in Third Pass.]

| | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Education | Water & Power | Social Services |
| Health | Parks & Recreation | - Social Work |
| - Fire & Rescue | Environmental Protection | - Entitlements |
| - Drug & Liquor Regulation | - Ecological Restoration | - Arts |
| - Medical Services | - Conservation | - Disaster Relief |
| - Animal Regulation | - Waste Management | - Child Placement |
| - Coroner | Transportation | Administration |
| Labor | - Public Transportation | - Taxation |
| - Job Training | - Traffic Management | - Elections |
| - Job Placement | - Street & Highway Maintenance | - Personnel & Payroll |
| - Workers Compensation | | - Budget & Auditing |

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

We reviewed the second pass of the County structure in Session 87 (August 2002), and a new panelist noted that we might do better without a City level of government at all, so that we don't have lots of small geographic areas with different legal systems, and so that we could consolidate all Law Enforcement functions at the County level in a 'Security' Department. He also suggested introducing an agency at the Federal level to supervise Churches, and to monitor the ideas with which they're indoctrinating people.

Both of these were revolutionary ideas, even for this group, and we found that we'd need to meditate on them, and discuss them among other group members before we could feel good about adopting them. Moderator also wanted to review our group's previous findings on Government Organization.

That panelist was from Malibu, and did not manage to cover the large distance to defend his ideas more than once, but we considered them in Session 88 (September 2002) with another new panelist.

We discussed his concept of eliminating City government from the loop, and found against it, since some Counties are very large and/or populous, and we couldn't expect them to handle adequately all the functions which we had assigned to the County and City levels.

We also discussed his concept of a Federal agency to monitor Churches, and were inclined against this one too, as we would rather leave such issues to individual freedom and the freedom of assembly. If they actually defraud or otherwise victimize someone, then we can deal with that in the same way as any other legal violation. Otherwise, let 'em alone.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Agreed in Session 88 to add a tenth County department for Records.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

We need to be able to deal with Environmental situations which cross political boundaries, but where the source is not always clear. Apparently helpful to have an Environment agency at each level of government, for that reason.

Question 42 (continued)

What functions should be handled at the Federal level, and what functions should be handled at State or Local levels?

New panelist in Session 88 saw multiple agencies on our draft list which he'd rather not have Government manage at all. Moderator personally concurred, but acknowledged that multiple other people had different opinions, and that we hadn't really gotten into the Economic aspects yet. So, we agreed to leave those in for now, just in case we did end up keeping them, since easier to trash later if desired.

Education being brought down to the County level is a good example of Subsidiarity. It means that local governments will have higher operating budgets, but we saw that as a good thing, if we are making higher levels smaller, which we were.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

Panelist in Session 88 (who at the time was a candidate for Congress) made a pitch to eliminate Arts at any level of government. Not yet making any decision as to Fed and City, but agreed to take it out at the County level [changed later], in exchange for adding a Facilities Management Bureau in the Administration Department, which we should have anyway. Facilities Management would make any decisions as to placing paintings or sculptures in public buildings, but we would not have an agency which goes out of its way to fund artists, who in the group's then-current opinion should rely on private investors, who the panelist found would continue to exist. Best [we thought] not to have government officials spending forcibly-collected tax dollars on artistic expressions which some taxpayers might not like very much. If we want to have a mural by the freeway, or some other such civic-beautification project, then the applicable governing council can adopt and fund it, possibly with the help of a citizens' commission, but we felt that we don't need separate agency.

Discussion of Disaster Relief program. Panelist wanted to make sure that we don't provide people with an incentive to engage in risky behavior, such as building a house on a faultline or mudslide. Okay to provide emergency shelter, food, and water, but we didn't want to go so far as to subsidize people rebuilding their homes. Also didn't want to subsidize any one person who suffers damage, as this might easily indicate that the individual engaged in especially risky behavior, but we should limit our relief to situations where lots of people are hurt. In general, the Moderator concurred with these observations, and noted that they were all part of what we could define when we got to looking at the functionality of the individual units, and also when we looked at Government Spending in Section II-B. In general, though, we agreed that we do want to have an agency at County level for Disaster Relief.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Agreed in Session 89 (October 2002) with new panelist [who ended up attending over 50 Sessions!] to merge Records with Elections. Tentatively calling it 'Records & Elections'.

New panelist made very good point that Social Services and Labor should be combined into one department, to make it easier for someone receiving benefits under the Social structure to be referred for gainful employment. We added that this would reduce Fraud possibilities, since the Benefits Bureau could find out more easily when someone who has already been receiving benefits has found employment.

Now looked for a more descriptive name for the combined department. Found that 'Social' doesn't really describe too well what's going on in these areas, while 'Economic' leaves out Child Placement, and 'Socio-Economic' is just too heavy a word for ordinary people to get their mouths around. Panelist noted that all these agencies are providing help to people in bad situations, and Moderator suggested calling it the 'Public Assistance' Department'; so agreed.

Agreed with panelist's suggestion to change the name of the Environment Department to 'Environmental Services', both because it more accurately describes the different functions which have been assigned to it (particularly Waste Management), and also because the previous name makes one think that we are just cordoning off certain areas of the Environment for protection, and stopping ourselves only from doing anything which will have the least impact on those certain areas.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

Panelist in Session 89 asked about the Restaurant Review function. Agreed that it's better to administer at the Local level, both because the Local officials probably would know the area and people a lot better than Fed or State agencies, and because a lower level of government probably would be more responsive to individual complaints. Checked previous notes, and found that Public Health was a

function in only the Federal and County levels, so it needed to go there. Settled on adding a 'Restaurant Inspections' Bureau to the County Health Department.

Question 42 (continued)

What functions should be handled at the Federal level, and what functions should be handled at State or Local levels?

Panelist in Session 89 asked about the Tourism function, and we had to admit that we didn't seem to have allowed for it in our previous structures. Agreed at this time that we don't need that function at the Federal level, since the country is so dang huge, but that it would fit well as a bureau in the State's Commerce Department. Also, since a number of Cities may want to promote attractions within their borders, we agreed to include it as a function at the Municipal level.

Agreed that we don't want to go crazy with having to get Permits for every single little thing. If anything, we'd like to reduce the Permit-granting from current levels significantly. Insofar as we do need any Permit-granting, though, we felt that it fits best at the Municipal level, so added there as a function at this time.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

We moved Garbage Collection from City to County, since people who live outside of incorporated City boundaries generate Garbage, too. Considered changing 'Waste Management' Bureau to 'Sewage Management', and creating a separate bureau for Garbage Collection, but couldn't think of an appropriate bureau name. On further reflection, decided to keep the bureau as 'Waste Management', and establish three sections for Garbage Collection & Disposal, Sewage Management, and Recycling.

New panelist agreed with recent findings on Arts funding and Facilities Management.

Considered moving Permits to County level, but decided against. Unincorporated areas of the County are places where we want to have a bit more freedom than what one might find in incorporated Cities, and there probably will be less impact in a more sparsely-populated area, so a Permit will usually not be as important. Only time where we anticipate a Permit being needed in an unincorporated area is when streets need to be blocked for a film shoot, art project, or other such enterprise, for which they can simply get permission from the Department of Transportation.

Added a Fish & Game Bureau in the County's Environmental Services Department.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

New panelist liked that we had Waste Management in Environmental Services, rather than in Water/Power, since the ES people probably would be more inclined to do the

job right, and probably would have greater expertise in the area. No other immediate problems, but we agreed to look at it again next time.

Briefly considered in Session 90 (October 2002) using 'Sanitation' for 'Garbage Collection', but refrained from adopting it, since it could also be confused with Sewage, and because 'Garbage' didn't particularly bother the panelist all that much.

Panelist made good point that Building Permits still need to be granted outside of incorporated Municipal areas, if only to maintain appropriate safety standards. Agreed to expand the County's Health Department to 'Health & Safety' (also because it already contained the Fire/Rescue function), and to add a bureau for Building Permits, to be called 'Building Permits & Inspections'. Okay for them to perform periodic inspections of existing Buildings, as well as oversee any renovations.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

Looked over list of Municipal functions in Session 90, and saw only one which might better be moved to Counties, that being the Airport/Harbor function. For one thing, Airports and Harbors might be planned to cross existing City boundaries, or existing Cities might break up to create a boundary through an existing Airport or Harbor. Also, there may not be an incorporated City where an Airport/Harbor might want to go. Also, Municipalities may not have the resources to manage a big Airport or Harbor. Also, they may need to hire staff from outside the local Municipality, and it's easier for prospective employees to find the job opening if it's not buried in some other City's listings. Also, insofar as Noise or Pollution or other such factors create an impact on other nearby Cities, it is easier for Abatement to be managed by an entity which has jurisdiction over the entire area. Agreed at this time, then, to move the function to Counties, and to add two bureaus to the Transportation Department to receive it, being 'Airports' and 'Harbors'. Considered keeping them as one bureau, but the operations are sufficiently large and distinct to warrant separation. Considered calling them 'Airport Supervision' and 'Harbor Supervision', but didn't see any particular need, and the longer name might sound too pretentious or something.

Discussed whether Cities should/could have their own Airports, given the transfer of the primary function to Counties: Maybe we could go this way, but we were then thinking that there was no real need for Cities to have separate Airports, and that there could conceivably be too much confusion -- and an attendant impact on Public Safety -- if we have too many levels managing Airports. Therefore, theoretically allowing, but currently recommending against.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

No further changes! Following is our model County structure as we left it in Session 90: [Again, we made a few additional adjustments later.]

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Water/Power | Records & Elections | Environmental Services |
| Health & Safety | Public Assistance | - Ecological Restoration |
| - Building Permits & Inspections | - Workers Compensation | - Conservation |
| - Fire & Rescue | - Counseling Services | - Fish & Game |
| - Drug & Liquor Regulation | - Entitlements | - Waste Management |
| - Medical Services | - Job Training | -- Sewage Management |
| - Animal Regulation | - Job Placement | -- Garbage Collection & Removal |
| - Restaurant Inspections | - Disaster Relief | -- Recycling |
| - Coroner | - Child Placement | Transportation |
| Education | Administration | - Public Transportation |
| Parks & Recreation | - Facilities Management | - Traffic Management |
| | - Taxation | - Street & Highway Maint. |
| | - Personnel & Payroll | - Airports |
| | - Budget & Auditing | - Harbors |

135d) Municipal

Functions according to our amended Answer 48 included Police, Libraries, Zoning, Permits, Tourism, Public Transportation, Parks, Arts, Traffic Management, Taxation, Elections, Disaster Relief, and Street/Highway Maintenance.

Some discussion in Session 90 about Arts, with agreement that any government involvement in the topic (and, we were allowing for the possibility that there is to be none at all) should be limited to local events. [Reconsidered in the Third Pass.]

We added Jails, Civic Events, and Administration to our function list.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

Made initial pass at assigning most Municipal functions into department groups, but had some trouble with Disaster Relief, and decided at this time to move Elections to be an entirely County-based function! [Note refers only to removing local admin from the City list; we still had it under Fed & State.] One reason was that we couldn't see what else to do with it. Another reason was that the County has all the Records and stuff, and the City would need to work with them anyway, including probably needing to list City races on the County ballots (unless we want to have separate City ballots, which would be even more of a pain). We can do the same basic function with the elimination of a layer of bureaucracy. Thought about having a bureau in the Administration Department to handle the internal communication of Election parameters to the County, including as to available positions, terms of office, qualification requirements, etc. However, we felt that there probably wouldn't be that much for a single full-time person to do in this regard, much less a whole Agency. Better to have the City Manager (who should be in charge of administrative communications with other governments, anyway) communicate any such info to the County on a one-time basis.

Requests for Disaster Relief can go through the City Manager, and be subject to approval from the Chief Executives or governing councils or administrative agencies

of higher levels. Local management of Disasters can happen through the Public Safety Department, which can also cover Police and Jail, as well as Environmental Safety if we ever decide to re-introduce that function to Municipal governments.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

First pass at City structure, then:

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Public Safety | Transportation | (unknown Dept. name) |
| - Police | - Public Transportation | - Tourism |
| - Disaster Relief | - Traffic Management | - Arts |
| - Jails | - Street/Highway Maint. | - Civic Events |
| | | - Parks |
| Libraries | Administration | |
| | - Taxation | |
| Building Permits | - Personnel | |
| | - Facilities Management | |

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

We added Gambling Regulation at this time as a State function, and as a bureau in the Commerce Department, in anticipation of possibly legalizing it in Section III-D.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Jails Bureau became 'Bureau of Corrections'. Taxation expanded into a 'Finance' Bureau. 'Civic Events' became 'Special Events'.

What do we do with Museums which do not have an Artistic orientation? We could have a 'Bureau of Historic Preservation', which could also accommodate the historic side of what we know as 'Natural History', in that we're displaying and educating as to the way that certain biological species existed at previous times.

Moderator thought that Libraries should be treated in a separate Department, because it was a huge operation (though so is Police), and because it was more educational and erudite than fun and cultural. However, panelist successfully argued not only that Libraries were a part of our Civic Culture, but that we should promote them in the new environment as being a fun part of our culture. Therefore agreed to make Libraries a bureau of what we called the 'Cultural Enrichment' Department.

Toyed with the idea of futzing with the 'Building Permits' Department, as it now seemed pretty small in comparison, including by expanding it to 'Permits & Licenses' in general, but we didn't want the agency becoming bigger than it really needs to be, just to achieve parity with other Departments, so left as is.

Question 42 (continued)

What functions should be handled at the Federal level, and what functions should be handled at State or Local levels?

Panelist in Session 90 asked about "Indians" [by the Second Pass referenced as 'Native Americans']. Feeling at the time was that if we are doing anything with them at all, then it should be within the Federal Domestic Affairs Department. However, we agreed that treating Native Americans separately is antithetical to the mission of this Project, same as assigning separate areas for African-Americans. People and Communities should be able to live as they wish, and practice whatever traditional rituals they wish, as long as they are not injuring or threatening anyone else, without our needing to set aside Reservations or accord them any other special treatment. Panelist suggested that providing Reservations is one way of doing Penance, but Moderator claimed that it ain't makin' it, since they never really liked being herded into Reservations. In addition, entire panel disliked the concept that they can break our laws and achieve Sanctuary on the Reservation. Could revisit later, but agreed for the present not to treat Native Americans separately. [Changed in Second Pass.]

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

City structure looked pretty good at this point. Agreed to consider for another week.

On further reflection in Session 91 (October 2002), owing mostly to the fact that one little department for Building Permits seemed incongruous with the rest of the setup, but also because maybe there are some other Permit/License functions which we should allow for (including Dog Licenses?), we decided to go ahead and expand the Building Permits Department to 'Permits & Licenses'.

We added a 'Parking Enforcement' Bureau to the Transportation Department, though we agreed that we should minimize the amount of enforcement needing to be done.

Passing the final City structure:

| | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Administration | Cultural Enrichment | Permits & Licenses |
| - Finance | - Libraries | |
| - Personnel | - Historic Preservation | Transportation |
| - Facilities Management | - Tourism | - Public Transportation |
| | - Parks | - Traffic Management |
| Public Safety | - Arts | - Street & Highway |
| - Police | - Special Events | Maintenance |
| - Corrections | | - Parking Enforcement |
| - Disaster Relief | | |

Finally finished with Question 135 in October 2002, 11 months after starting it!!

[Second Pass summary projected that we would organize all these disparate discussions during the Third Pass according to the different agency names which we considered, whether ultimately adopted or not. On further reflection, we found it net-better for this Third Pass document to show the full evolution of our model, especially as to the names and relationships of government agencies, partly so that we can more easily locate the original notes for any questionable passage, but largely to demonstrate that we put invest extensive time and effort into our model, and that we were not afraid to change our minds whenever sufficiently persuaded.]

Subsection I-D-1: Executive Branch of Federal Government

We began in October 2002 to examine the functionality of all administrative agencies at all four levels of American government, beginning with the Federal portion, for which a few general Questions preceded the agency-specific topics:

Question 136

What current Federal operations or agencies should be discontinued in their entirety?

We felt in Session 91 that ATF (Alcohol, Tobacco, & Firearms) and HUD (Housing & Urban Development) could go away immediately. IRS (Internal Revenue Service) was converted during Question 135 to the Revenue Collection Bureau of the Treasury Department. Energy was converted to the Water & Power Bureau of the Domestic Affairs [later Interior] Department. HEW (Health, Education, & Welfare) and HHS (Health & Human Services) were rolled into the Public Services Department. Education and Entitlement functions were devolved to Counties. Beyond this, we found that we didn't really need to consider this topic very much, since we should just implement the structure which we had decided in Answer 135a.

Question 125 (continued)

What guiding principles should be observed by government agencies?

In the course of general discussion during Session 91, decided that each government agency should have some kind of reception area, where anyone can walk in and present their concerns, and be satisfied that they will be seriously addressed.

Question 131 (continued)

At the Federal or State level, should the department heads (aka Secretaries, aka Cabinet members) report directly to the Chief Executive, or first to the Vice-President or Lieutenant Governor who in turn reports to the Chief Executive?

In the course of general discussion during Session 91, noted that a customer who is dissatisfied with the response (or lack thereof) received from a certain government agency can take the problem to the next higher level, all the way up to the Chief Executive's office if needed, this being one of the advantages to having all Department heads report to the Vice-President or Lieutenant Governor.

Question 137

What Cabinet departments should exist at the Federal level?

Asked and answered as of Session 91, according to Answer 135a.

Question 137.5

Do we want to continue to call the head of a Department the 'Secretary'?

Agreed in Session 91 that the name could stand changing. Could call them 'Chief', 'Minister' is not bad but might suggest a religious personage, and 'Manager' is unappealing. Panelist smiled at 'Director', so that's it, rather more descriptive of that individual's responsibilities.

Question 138

Other than the President and Vice-President, and their personal staff, should any employee of the Executive Branch not be associated with one of these Departments?

Agreed in Session 91 that no such employee should exist if he/she doesn't have a specific function to perform, so the Question reduces to whether there are any functions which we want discharged at the Federal level and which are not included in the nine Departments which we identified in Answer 135a, and the panel said no.

Reading over the notes in our 'black book' of preliminary ideas reminded the Moderator that one of the original purposes in asking this Question was to look into the position of Chief of Staff. We now agreed that this position should be purely supportive of the President, Vice-President, Governor, etc., by overseeing their other staff assistants, and should not (unlike Frank Langella's character in the movie *Dave*) have any involvement in Executive administration or policy-setting. Vice-President should be over all Department heads, and policy-setting should be done by the President and Cabinet, within any parameters established by the elected Congress.

Question 138.2

What term of office shall be designated for the President and/or Vice-President?

In general, we would like the term to be short enough that we don't need to wait too long to get rid of a bad incumbent without recall, but long enough that the President is not spending all his/her time campaigning for the next election. Moderator was okay with 4 years, but could have gone with 3 or 5. Panelist indicated that a 3-year term might result in the President needing to campaign too much, but Moderator noted that the campaign process probably would be shortened by some combination of eliminating political parties (so no nominating process prior to some big convention), limitations on campaign spending, emphasis on public debates with all qualified candidates participating, and no polls/surveys prior to Election Day (so no way to gauge progress throughout a lengthy campaign). We therefore would need some other reason not to go with a 3-year term, not that we were pushing it.

Before proceeding further, though, we decided to research why the 4-year period in current use was selected in the first place. We found nothing relevant during Session 91 in either 'The World Almanac' or 'The Amendments to the Constitution'. Panelist reported in Session 92 (November 2002) finding nothing during the week on the Internet or at the UCLA library. We therefore decided to take a field trip to the Pasadena library, to research the rationales of the original Constitutional Convention.

We returned from the library with two books. 'Understanding Our Constitution' by Jethro K. Lieberman gave no reasons for the 4-year term at all. 'To Secure These Blessings' by Saul K. Padover was much more helpful. According to the latter:

- Argument for a shorter term included avoiding impeachments.
- Arguments against frequent elections included that Georgia and South Carolina were too far away to send electors.
- Ellsworth argued for 6 years because a shorter term would mean that the Presidency would be attacked for necessary evils, and not have sufficient power.
- Williamson asserted that anything less than 6 years would be too expensive, and thus discourage some good people from running.
- They decided on re-electability before deciding term length.
- Wilson moved for 3 years on the basis of re-electability, but wasn't clear on why 3 years would be better than some other term.
- According to p.272, some people favored 1-year terms for members of the House of Representatives.

Generally, while there was some very interesting background and funny transcripts of speeches, yet there didn't seem to be a clearly defined rationale for finally settling on 4 years, nor was it indicated when the decision was made to go from 7 years (as resolved on 26-Jul-1787) to 4 years (as indicated by motions made on 6-Sep-1787 to replace the 4-year term). However, we could see so many rationales in support of many different extrema that there was no one really compelling reason for us to adopt any one particular timeframe, so we felt free to make up our own minds.

After noting the first five arguments in the list above, we decided that -- given the re-electability option which we had designated in Section I-C -- we shouldn't have more than 6 years per term, since the President could do whatever he dang pleases, and we would need to go through what at the time we called "all that impeachment nonsense" [remember, this was back in November 2002, so it was after the Clinton impeachment but before the guy who came after Obama], as the one guy said.

After noting the preference of some people for a 1-year House term, a panelist suggested that people wouldn't turn out to vote if the elections were that frequent, since they don't think that their vote matters all that much. Moderator noted that their perception might change if they were called upon to vote more frequently, and if it once became evident that we were placing greater reliance on their opinion. However, we agreed that it would take a new person a while to get to know the details of the job, the needs of the rest of the country, etc., even with improved communication technology.

In light of there not being a strong rationale in the Constitutional history for one particular timeframe, we started to explore our own ideas. We agreed that 6 years is too long, as the President would be even more powerful than before, and therefore would be more subject to getting kissed up to. Also shying from having too frequent elections. We do want to allow time for particularly good or bad programs to

demonstrate themselves as such in practice before we consider whether to change course, but this could take different amounts of time for different programs.

Agreed at beginning of Session 93 (November 2002) that a 2-year term is too short for the Presidency. Moderator had originally been thinking in terms of giving them a year to learn the job, another year to implement new programs, another year to gauge the effects of the programs, and another year to campaign. We agreed in discussion, though, that it shouldn't require a whole year to learn the job, nor one to campaign, particularly with our revised process. We then thought that 6 months or so may be enough to learn the mechanics and bureaucracy, and also to cultivate relationships with members of Congress, and that we should need 6 months or less for campaigning, and at least 6 months to get new bills pushed through Congress. Then, with 12-18 months to gauge results, we would be looking at 3 years at least.

We still wanted the term a little longer, though, because incumbents in a 3-year term might feel too pressured to do a bunch of nice-sounding-but-not-really-good-for-the-country-in-the-longer-run stuff, if only to satisfy the pundits who want to see results within 100 days or something. Therefore, 4 years is probably better than 3.

Unlike the people at the Convention, we have the benefit of seeing the 4-year term in action, and we don't have a particular problem with it. It does seem to strike a pretty good balance between giving people enough time to do their thing and allowing reasonably quick turnover in case someone is really bad.

We were trying to avoid the trap of accepting the *status quo*, though, so tried next to compare 4 and 5 years. Because we had accepted most elements of the Constitution in A49, that would include that the President should be impeached only for "high Crimes and Misdemeanors", but we also need an easy mechanism to replace a Ford-type President who doesn't do anything but hasn't committed any crimes to speak of. Because the Recall requirements would probably end up pretty high (in order to discourage a surfeit of attempts), we wanted to allow the normal re-election timeframe to be more manageable. In sum, while we could be persuaded to accept 5 years, we were leaning toward 4 years as the optimal range. So concluded.

Question 138.5

Should any action be brought against an Executive whose spouse is found guilty of treason?

As long as the actual guilty party is removed from the occasion of having any undue influence over the Executive (as probably would be the case, since you probably want to incarcerate any such person, whether the spouse of an Executive or not), there shouldn't be any ongoing undue influence, and no reason to remove the sitting Executive. Only problem is if the Executive is under the lingering influence of previous interactions, with a resulting conflict of interest, but this probably would need to be demonstrated before we resort to terminating a sitting Executive.

In sum, we found in Session 93 that we should remove the treasonous spouse from being in a position to cause any further undue influence upon the sitting Executive. We also should conduct an investigation as to whether any previous influence presents a problem with the Executive's current motivations and policies. If there is insufficient inculpatory evidence of this, then no further action need be taken.

Moderator also concurred with suggestion that the Executive should not be in a position to pardon his/her spouse. Let's leave this for the Legislature or the Courts.

Can also have similar investigations for other treasonous parties having had previous contact with the Executive, but we were not so nervous about these in Session 93, since we perceived that it's really the 'Cleopatra complex' which presents the biggest danger, using a sexual relationship to influence political policy. [Reconsidered later.]

Subsubsection I-D-1-a: Foreign Affairs

Began review of specific government agencies during Session 94 (December 2002):

Question 139

Given some number of discrete nations, and an i.o.o. ('international oversight organization') to keep things cool overall, what types of peaceful interaction might one nation want to have with another?

Trade, tourism, intelligence on criminals, currency exchange, sharing medical and scientific discoveries, space/geophysical exploration, disaster relief, air/oceanic travel, postal delivery, political protection for travelers, diplomacy, special events (conferences, Olympics, etc.), student exchange, and others.

Question 140

Is it reasonable to expect that relations between nations will always stay normal and peaceful, so that such activities can be carried out easily?

No.

Question 141

Is it appropriate to have a separate Department which specializes in maintaining peaceful and constructive relations with other nations?

Yes.

Question 142

Shall we continue to have an ambassador appointed for each nation in the world, or what?

Argument against having Ambassadors is that we could then devote fewer resources to public functions, and have a larger labor pool to produce more goods and provide more services within our Nation. Argument in favor is that it is highly useful to have at least one person on the payroll whose job it is to stay current on a given Nation's laws and customs and language and political structure, in order to facilitate our interactions with them. Also helpful for this individual to live within that country for most of the time, in order to absorb local culture more readily, and to be able to speak to more different people there in our behalf, to tell them 'our side of the story'. We found the arguments in favor to outweigh the argument against, so as of Session 94 we will continue having an Ambassador for each Nation.

Question 143

Shall each ambassador report directly to the Director of Foreign Affairs (that is, the former Secretary of State), or is it better to have intermediate bureau chiefs covering different geographic areas?

We felt in Session 94 that it makes more sense to have at least one intermediary level, so that the Director of Foreign Affairs doesn't have 198 ambassadors reporting directly to her, and so that not every single little local issue needs to escalate to the Director's personal attention.

Question 144

Should consuls, legates, and other associate staff be appointed by ambassadors, by the Director of Foreign Affairs directly, by ambassadors with approval from the Director of Foreign Affairs, or by some other means?

According to our *American Heritage* dictionary (1981 hardbound edition), a Consul is an official appointed by a government to reside in a foreign country and represent its commercial interests and give assistance to its citizens there, and a Legate is an official emissary especially of the Pope.

There are enough of these positions possible that we felt as of Session 94 that we probably can treat them the same as just about any other government employee, *viz.*, that they are nominated by the incumbents of the positions to which they will directly report, with approval coming from the next-higher management level. In the case of a particularly sensitive or critical position, even higher levels (up to and including the national Legislature) may ask to be involved also.

Question 144.1

For what term of office should diplomatic appointees serve?

While it had not been specifically asked in the original Outline, we also treated in Session 94 the terms of these positions. We found that they generally should serve until they retire or their performance is found to be sufficiently unsatisfactory as to warrant removal. They probably don't need to be switched every time that the domestic political administration changes, since continuity is an important element of good ongoing foreign relations.

Question 145

Shall embassies established here by foreign nations continue to be treated as sovereign territory?

Yes. One of the main purposes for having Embassies is to provide protection for a Nation's citizens traveling abroad. In order to provide this protection, we found in Session 94 that it's highly helpful -- if not essential -- for there to be a geographical haven where these people can go, and where that Nation's security can provide them with physical protection, and where that Nation's laws would apply.

Same goes for Consulates: If a foreign national is traveling in L.A., and the nearest place that they can get services from their government is in Washington City, then

that's not going to be very much help. Best to have Consulates available in different major Cities to provide adequate facilities for people traveling in different areas of your larger countries. If a particular Consulate is so small that they are just leasing office space on an upper floor of some building, then the entire building need not be treated as foreign territory, and a local firm still can manage the infrastructure and maintenance of the building itself, while the foreign Nation's laws would apply once you pass through the doors of their office space.

Question 146

The 'diplomatic immunity' question: Shall some or all visiting diplomats be accorded either partial or total immunity, allowing them to commit certain acts which are in violation of the host nation's laws?

We had stated in a previous Answer that the laws established by any given jurisdiction should apply to all persons sojourning within their borders, whether they're living there or visiting or just passing through. It was therefore expected as of Session 94 that people will want to familiarize themselves with such laws before entering that jurisdiction. As expected as this is, it is even more expected for diplomatic personnel, whose job it is to be familiar with the laws and customs of the states with whom they are trying to maintain good relations. Ignorance of the law, then, is most definitely not an excuse for diplomatic personnel to violate it.

Only other reason that we could see for wanting to maintain diplomatic immunity is to try to maintain good relations with the Nations which sent those diplomats, by not punishing them for their crimes. We found this reason to fail also, though, since it doesn't make a whole lot of sense to maintain good relations with a Nation whose diplomatic personnel deliberately or negligently violate the laws of the Nation hosting them. It should be the job of that other Nation to try to maintain good relations with us, by making sure that their diplomats are respecting our laws and customs, as we should do for those Nations to whom we are sending our diplomats.

We therefore find that the institution of diplomatic immunity should be discontinued. No objection to treating arrested/convicted diplomats in special ways, as it would clearly create more problems than it would solve to stick them in the same ratholes as the rest of the random scummy thugs; perhaps have separate VIP detention centers, and/or arrange with the Nation of origin to withdraw them voluntarily, and/or ask that Nation's permission to punish them, and/or something else. Whatever specific treatment those individuals get, though, they should most definitely not get away with violating the criminal codes of the host Nation.

Question 146.5

The 'travel checkpoints' question: To what extent (if any) should we be maintaining checkpoints at points of entry, for either disease control and/or criminal screening?

Discussion of Question 146 during Session 94 led to broader discussions on extradition and screening of foreigners at our ports of entry. We noted that we had discussed intercontinental disease-screening checkpoints in the course of Question 36 (on whether individuals or consortia could buy part or all of a given Nation), and agreed that we could run criminal background checks simultaneously, at least to check whether there's a 'red flag' registered with international law-enforcement

agencies which would warrant detention. Discussion was now extensive as to how intense this coverage should be, as we need to balance the rights of those people who have legitimate needs to travel internationally without undue delays with the needs of nations like America which are the targets of terrorist threats.

Question 146 (continued)

The 'diplomatic immunity' question: Shall some or all visiting diplomats be accorded either partial or total immunity, allowing them to commit certain acts which are in violation of the host nation's laws?

We read the preceding notes at the beginning of Session 95 (January 2003), to see whether we had missed anything important, since those notes were largely constructed several days after the meeting. Panelist offered reminder that one of the strong points of our discussion was what should happen as to checkpoints for adjacent countries. She also mentioned that another point of discussion was the extent to which it would be okay for countries to patrol their own borders as much as they like.

At this time, we determined that we should consider Question 146 as 'asked and answered', and that we should formally add Question 146.5 on checkpoints.

Question 146.5 (continued)

The 'travel checkpoints' question: To what extent (if any) should we be maintaining checkpoints at points of entry, for either disease control and/or criminal screening?

We had already established as of Session 95 that it is okay to maintain disease-screening checkpoints for intercontinental travel, and that these probably are not necessary for travel within a continent, since it then appeared to be pretty unlikely that a disease completely foreign to a given country would be introduced by an intracontinental traveler. [Of course, we learned better as a result of COVID-19.]

As to criminal screening, we had stated in Session 94 that it would be okay for a quick background check to be performed at the same time that the disease screening is processed. The traveler's passport number can be run through an international master database, which would show 'red flags' for bad-act allegations which are so serious as to warrant the accusee's detention wherever he may be found in the World. Also okay to have 'orange flag' indicators which suggest that either local authorities or authorities in another country should be notified of the accusee's whereabouts, though the bad-act allegation is not so serious as to warrant immediate detention. Important in any case, though, that any such screening is able to be conducted very quickly, so that the other 99½% of us who are normal and legal and legitimate can go about our business with minimum delays.

Now, while disease screening may need to happen only on intercontinental travel (since it's the diseases for which the local population has not yet built an immunity that we were trying to capture here), some Nations may also want to set up criminal-screening checkpoints for land travel between countries, particularly those in a state of hostility toward one another. We hoped and intended that the I.O.O. would mitigate such international conflicts, as one of the few things which it would get to do with the limited legislative authority which it then had in our model, but we felt that we must acknowledge that it may not always be completely successful, that

some Nations may remain in a state of hostility, and that we therefore may not always get to move anywhere that we want in the World as easily as we now move about the States. [We had already experienced the 9/11 attacks by this point.] From a global perspective, we recognized that the extent to which a given Nation wishes to defend its own borders is an internal decision, with which the international community should generally not interfere. However, we found it okay for the I.O.O. to establish and maintain a general goal that all Nations should generally aim toward open borders, so that we can get closer to becoming a warm and happy international family (whatever that means). In any case, though, if a given Nation wishes to mitigate travel within its borders, then we will not stop it.

From an American standpoint, as of Session 95 we wanted to keep the borders as open as we practically could, particularly since at the time we didn't have any major political problems with our immediate neighbors. If we found later that immigration or drug traffic constitutes a major problem for us, then we could discuss making heavier border patrol an element of our Agenda. [Revisited in the Third Pass.]

If the I.O.O. has a problem with any Nation's internal border-control policy, then okay to initiate a media campaign or some other means of indirect influence, to generate global public opinion to encourage the Nation to fix things, provided that they do not directly interfere with the execution of the Nation's desired policy. In general, we recognized that indirect influence of public opinion is one of the more important tools which an i.o.o. (especially one with limited legislative authority) may legitimately wield, but we also wanted to make sure that this tool is not abused. The existence of three Houses in the body, and the requirement of a 2/3 majority to pass a policy statement [later replaced by a simple majority with veto authority by the other Houses], would combine to help mitigate the likelihood of abuse.

Question 147

The 'foreign aid' question: Under what conditions -- if any -- would it be appropriate for America to send free monetary aid to a foreign nation?

Panelist in Session 95: Primary purpose of American government is to take care of our own country, so we can provide aid to another country only if it is in our direct interests. However, we want to be careful about entangling alliances.

Moderator: Concurred that we should taking care of our own people first. If we have large numbers of people here who are hungry or homeless or diseased, or who -- for any other reason -- feel the need to resort to crime in order to obtain basic human comforts, then we have no business diverting our resources to other places without something in return. If, however, we're all doing okay here, then we have no strenuous objection to sharing some of our wealth with others who have less.

We seemed to be pretty close in our opening statements, and neither of us offered any objection to any point made by the other. We speculated as to possible reasons for a different Answer, and considered (deeming as generally impractical) the notion that America should be totally isolated from the rest of the World, along with the possibility that we should be acting out of pure altruism, and not be concerned with protecting our own interests. In discussing the latter point, panelist suggested that it's theoretically possible to act without any consideration of self-interest, but Moderator countered that even the fulfillment of the motivation to act altruistically engenders at least a slight amount of self-satisfaction. At any rate, Moderator

offered point that it's simply more practical to divert any supplemental resources to the needy who are closer to home than to those who live thousands of miles away.

In considering this topic, discussed some additional points:

Question 147.1

What happens to any refugees who are escorted out of a given country by the I.O.O.?

This generally should be treated on a case-by-case basis. However, a general guideline as of Session 95 is to leave them with the nearest country which can expediently accommodate them, because it's easiest to move them there, it's easiest to repatriate them if and when the opportunity arises, and it's most likely that the refugees will experience similar language and culture.

Question 147.2

Should a nation which chooses to remain politically neutral be obligated to supply military aid to the I.O.O. upon demand?

Agreed in Session 95 with previous finding that all nations in the World are subject to the I.O.O.'s policies, but we found it impractical to expect that we can force a nation like Switzerland or Fiji to supply troops if they are not able and willing to do so voluntarily. Since we don't want to create the perception or reality of giving these nations free military protection, however, we saw as the most practical approach to impress upon these nations that it is in their interests to help the I.O.O. maintain an environment in which international military aggression will not be tolerated, in order that those nations may more easily maintain their desired neutrality.

Also, would those nations want to cede global enforcement capacity to only a small number of nations (like America), who may easily go overboard if not held in check? If they don't respond to these motivations, though, then we can't force them to play.

Question 147.3

How shall we define 'crossing a border with military force'?

In addition to the brigades of troops, the battalions of tanks, the squadrons of bombers, and the firing of missiles across the border, any suicide bombing or other guerrilla-type tactic should count for this purpose, if the perp is acting on behalf of one Nation against another Nation. Summary definition, then, should be whenever an attack is launched in one Nation's name against the territory of another Nation.

Question 147.4

But, what if the attack is allegedly in a given nation's name, but that nation actively (and truthfully) disclaims all responsibility?

Well, then, since that Nation is potentially on the hook for the I.O.O.'s supreme displeasure, it clearly would be in that Nation's interests to help the I.O.O. to take this guy out, and to do whatever else it may take to redress the situation.

=====

Panel had no specific Questions on any other individual countries as of the beginning of Session 96 (January 2003), so okay to proceed with Question 148:

Question 148

The 'Canadian relations' question: Given that America and Canada (with the possible exception of Quebec) are so similar in culture, history, language, natural resources, and government structure, and that there has long been a strong economic cooperation between them, and that there is little or no border security to speak of, and that some have suggested that many Canadians (again, possibly excepting those residing in Quebec) don't have as strong a sense of national identity, might it be better (assuming that all details could be worked out) for the two to be one nation?

Panel in Session 96 did not actively accept or dispute the given premises, so was not in a 'position to take a position' on the Question as phrased. [We in the Third Pass take particular exception to the suggestion regarding 'national identity', and counter-suggest that many Canadians would rather be Canadian than American.]

In a more general sense, though, one panelist asserted that America is too geographically big as it is, and questioned what advantages there would be to making it any bigger. We read notes from our 'black book' of preliminary ideas, including that the entire area could be handled much more efficiently, and that we would have lots more room for people, but she added some counterpoints:

Turned out that some of the panelist's non-Quebeçois Canadian friends had revealed that they were generally uncomfortable with large governments, and that they had a culture of trust and openness which differs from our culture of fear and hyping the bad news on our TV. Might a merger therefore cause our murder rate to spill over there? In any case, these differences suggest that a merger probably wouldn't work.

Subsubsection I-D-1-b: Defense

Question 149

Do we want to continue to have some standing armed force in place to guard against military threat from outside forces?

Yes, no objection as of Session 96. We probably will continue to have nasty bad guys around, even if/when we get the I.O.O. and all else the way that we want it, and we need to be able to respond to those threats quickly whenever they arise.

Question 150

Under what circumstances -- if any -- should the U.S. Armed Forces initiate a military attack against another sovereign nation?

Discussion noted our presumption that we were speaking about U.S.-initiated actions only, and not instances where we are participating in an I.O.O.-sanctioned repulsive action. It also did not include responses to direct attacks against us.

Panelist asserted in Session 96 that we had previously discussed of the possibility of incurring when we have a sufficient economic interest, though Moderator did not recall our having reached any conclusion along those lines.

We should also list out reasons for not attacking other countries, lest people think that our non-inclusion is an indication of permission, rather than simple oversight.

One reason not to attack another country is as a result of a trade embargo: The goods are theirs to begin with, so they should have the option to sell them to or trade them with the U.S. or not.

Panelist also didn't want to use military action to expand our borders any further, notwithstanding that it's been done through history a lot; Moderator had no objection with this position. In that we may not have been the only ones to think this way, we need to be able to convince others, and we felt that we can thus: With the insight afforded to us by our improved communications technology, we are now able to recognize a couple of key facts, being (1) that the same objectives for which we previously fought military campaigns can also be achieved through mechanisms which will afford a higher quality of life for everybody [with the possible exception of those individuals who really like the idea of frequent/ endless wars, per Third Pass], and (2) that there is a positive value in the diversity of different world cultures.

This should be sufficient [we felt] to establish that the U.S. Armed Forces should never initiate a military aggression; our only military action should be defensive, or in participation with I.O.O.-sanctioned repulsive actions, which are also defensive.

Question 151

If parties within a sovereign nation are violating laws or principles which we in the U.S. perceive to be accepted internationally, then should we unilaterally move in to try to coerce them to adjust their actions?

Asked and Answered as of Session 96.

Question 152

What about the frequent contention that following the Cold War the U.S. is or should be the world's "policeman"?

People's thinking about the U.S. in that role was based on conditions which were current as of Session 96, including a 1-house I.O.O. with little actual legislative authority or enforcement power, the absence of a global policy against military aggression, and only limited assistance to refugees who wish to escape from alleged human rights violations. Once we have all the elements of our Agenda in place, it will not be necessary for the U.S. to act as the world's 'policeman', if it ever was.

Question 153

If some unilateral action beyond the defense of our allies is OK, then should the Department of Defense still continue to have that name?

Not applicable as of Session 96.

Question 154

Should service in the military be a requirement for all Americans?

Considered potentially difficult during Session 97 (January 2003) in the absence of Citizenship, but not necessarily impossible.

If we did ever do this, then some people probably would leave the country in order to avoid conscription, and could sneak back in easily if we don't patrol our borders that much. However, if we have this kind of universal draft going in, and if people do actually try to dodge it (as we consider to be rather likely), then we'll probably want to exercise our option to patrol our borders more closely.

We found the argument to be convincing that the insufficiency of volunteer forces should send a signal that the country is not that interested in pursuing some given war, or in maintaining a military atmosphere in peacetime. Good to provide incentives for service, but let it stay volunteer.

In discussion of this Question, we touched on the alleged economic advantages of war, but noted that some of these may be illusory or short-lived.

Question 155

Should the military be permitted to draft certain citizens for service?

Same argument presented in Answer 154 applies here: If you need a draft, then you probably shouldn't be at war in the first place.

Question 156

Given that a peacetime military is to be staffed by volunteers, should any restrictions be placed on who is permitted to serve?

They should have the physical capability to perform some jobs in service, and they should pass a psychological evaluation. They should have the mental capacity to understand and carry out orders, so a test of minimum intelligence is appropriate. They should not belong to any group which has expressed ill will toward the U.S.

Question 157

Should enlistment in the Armed Forces be denied to anyone on the basis of gender?

No, but the same requirements for service should apply to all soldiers and recruits: If one needs to be 5'7" or able to bench-press 300 pounds in order to operate some machine, then apply that requirement to everyone, notwithstanding any alleged unfair treatment predating Session 97.

Possibility discussed of behavioral problems resulting from men and women working in close proximity, but we should establish and enforce whatever operating rules we need to have in place. Experience has shown that our soldiers generally are very professional when they're on duty, so this shouldn't present a big problem.

Pregnant women in Service should be re-assigned as needed to duties which are not hazardous or physically over-strenuous, and should be given a healthy maternity leave when the time comes. In no wise should they be discharged from Service as a result of getting pregnant.

Possibility also discussed that the presence of women in combat might cause some soldiers to protect them before following their own orders, but we doubted that this stereotype would really hold true all that often. Insofar as it does tend to happen at all, it can be trained out.

Question 158

Should enlistment in the Armed Forces be denied to anyone on the basis of sexual preference?

For starters, we should disallow any sexual advances to happen while on duty.

Question 159

Given the admission into the enlisted ranks of all combinations of gender and gender preference, how should we arrange barracks and latrine assignments?

Panelist suggested while we were discussing Question 158 in Session 97 that we have all soldiers shower separately, so that they never need to worry about anyone checking them out. She concurred with Moderator's observation that most soldiers are capable of following whatever operating rules exist, so Moderator saw no reason for such a requirement. She would still prefer separate showers if possible, at least for the two primary genders. In any case, though, they will not always have such luxuries in the field, so they had better get accustomed to dealing with whatever conditions may get thrown at them.

Question 158 (continued)

Should enlistment in the Armed Forces be denied to anyone on the basis of sexual preference?

Not only did we see no reason in Session 97 to disallow homosexuals in the military, but Moderator felt (no contradiction) that we should actively welcome and encourage any volunteers that we can get, since they may be in short supply one day.

The same standards of physicality and performance and treatment should apply to all soldiers, regardless of gender or sexual preference.

Question 159 (continued)

Given the admission into the enlisted ranks of all combinations of gender and gender preference, how should we arrange barracks and latrine assignments?

Original phrasing of this Question in the 'black book' (compiled back in the mid-1990's) was "If homosexual and bisexual men and women are to be permitted in the military, how should barracks and latrine assignments be arranged?". We expanded

the Question at this point of Session 97 to include what we should do as far as heterosexual men and women in the same space.

Moderator made pitch that nudity is not sex, that people can be desensitized toward nudity if they are exposed to it more, that we increase their sexual urges by prohibiting them from any visual or tactile contact with the genders of their preference, and that heterosexuals probably would need to be viewed by homosexuals of the same gender anyway, unless we make some special provision for that as well. Panelist acknowledged that it's okay to have desensitization training in boot camp (in preparation for situations when it's actually necessary), but suggested that we still should have separate arrangements by gender whenever practical afterward, since [some/many] women would still feel uncomfortable showering in front of men. Extensive further discussion, as summarized following:

Reasons in favor of relaxed restrictions

- Since soldiers may find themselves in situations where they don't have the luxury of separate barracks and latrines, better get used to hanging out together.
- We had already decided in favor of equal treatment for all genders and orientations.
- Same orders which would communicate to a gay man that he shouldn't harass other men (including by staring) should work for straight men harassing women.
- Part of the desire to ogle people comes from the social prohibition against nudity; shared nudity becomes far less eventful and problematic if (as in the case of nudist camps) it is not prohibited.
- People wouldn't sign up for the military in the first place if they didn't feel that they could control their urges to the extent necessary.
- If the non-existence of a sexual outlet is that problematic, then perhaps we should consider allowing for such interaction, even if it means providing separate facilities. Should also be considered, though, that intramural romances can vitiate the cohesive operation of a military unit, just as it does within an office.

Reasons against relaxed restrictions

- Okay to train them for the possibility of shared barracks and latrines, but soldiers should otherwise feel comfortable while they can.
- Female panelist would rather ban gay men from the military than shower with a straight man. (Stated in reference to alleged impracticality of separating all genders/orientations; would rather not need to resort to this extreme measure.)
- May not be practical to segregate by orientation, but can easily segregate by gender; better to require straight men to put up with gay men than to require women to put up with straight men.
- Same standards which might enable unisex arrangements in the 'real world' might not apply in the military, where they must remain in the same space for extended periods, and where they may not have an outlet for sexual tension.
- People may have other motivations or incentives for enlisting, although they still should know that it would be a necessary condition to restrain sexual energy for months at a time, and that they still must accept these restrictions if they are going to earn whatever incentives may be coming.

Came up during above discussion: How do you know whether an advance would be welcome or unwelcome? If you have to advance, then it's probably unwelcome.

Before reviewing the arguments from the previous meeting, panelist suggested in Session 98 (February 2003) that relaxed restrictions in the latrine might work if showering were more ritualized, such that people felt and operated as though they were on duty. [We didn't care for this suggestion in Third Pass, however, because we can't get past the image of a drill sergeant shouting "SQUAD -- Wash....BUTT".]

We then read the lists compiled during the previous meeting. Panelist mentioned several points not included in the original writeup, including:

- Ratting on harassing individual in shower might not be easy to expect, particularly for women.
- Things which women need to do in the shower might be more embarrassing than what men do.
- Women might have reservations about enlisting if restrictions are relaxed.
- There are different degrees of harassment, depending on the genders involved.
- Shouldn't force temptation on soldiers, and should make it as easy as possible for them to deal with their sexual tension.

In further discussing panelist's concept about ritualizing shower activity, Moderator noted that this wouldn't extend to sleeping arrangements in the barracks, since sleeping needs to be a relaxing endeavor. Panelist responded that she had no problem with shared barracks; the co-showering was her big problem. So, we were agreed with that. Also, non-shower latrine activity can be shared, since we have individual toilet stalls anyway. This left only the actual showering itself.

For this, panelist suggested that we treat showering as an on-duty activity, where you don't casually 'cheat' with your bodies, you're looking straight ahead, and you're focused only on your own activity. Not necessary to totally choreograph your shower, since different people need to do different things, but treat the activity with a military protocol, to make everyone more comfortable. Question of practicality of being relaxed in the barracks and in non-shower latrine activities, needing to snap into 'military mode' for the 5-10 minutes that it takes to do your thing in the shower, and then standing right back down again when you're done; but, we guessed that it could be managed, since -- even though they're not trained actors -- they are yet trained soldiers who need to 'snap to' whenever a superior officer enters the room.

Moderator raised question of enforcement of this approach, since panelist had previously suggested that many people might not feel comfortable reporting breaches on their own. We certainly don't want to deal with the installation of video cameras in the shower. Panelist suggested having 'monitor duty' rotate among enlisted personnel, so that we also wouldn't need to deal with the discomfort of being scrutinized by superior officers. But, then, that person's job would be to stare, so.... Panelist was not sure, but suspected that this person would act more responsibly if that's his/her job, same as a gynecologist. Also, this person wouldn't want to jeopardize his privilege by abusing it. Also, better to deal with one person staring than a whole showerful.

Agreed to try different arrangements in different military units, to see which work best and worst, including to have a shower monitor. [Revisited later.]

Question 160

Should we continue to have one or more agencies which deal with the secret gathering of intelligence information on individuals and activities in other countries?

We already had an Intelligence Bureau in Defense Dept. Confirmed in Session 98 that it is okay and worthwhile to conduct covert surveillance on potential enemies.

Question 160.1

What can/should we do to combat terrorism?

We now looked at a black-ink note written into our 'black book' from the national Mensa SIG which worked on this same Project (and which used a 'purple book' to record its deliberations and findings, but used both blue and black ink, since purple-ink pens are not always easy to find), that we should consider addressing a separate Question on combatting Terrorism, before someone tells us to do it. [Packaged in the Second Pass as a separate Question.]

Most of this will depend on the technology and political climate of the day, so we felt in Session 98 that there was little which we could say of any lasting value. What we could designate on a general basis was that a very large part of combatting terrorism is identifying who's behind it, so that they can be stopped. Most of this activity can be conducted by the Intelligence Bureau of the Defense Department, and we noted that we absolutely do not need a separate department for such operations, notwithstanding that the GW Bush administration had recently created one. For, a department with the name of 'Defense' should be able to undertake that job all by itself. Once the Intelligence Bureau has identified the leaders of terrorist networks, they can tell the Air Force, who can take it from there. If the terrorists have sent biological weapons over here, then the Intelligence Bureau can share information with the Public Health Bureau of the Public Services Department, and they can take steps to stem any epidemic.

Combatting terrorism is generally similar to combatting a military threat: Any nation may react to defend itself against an incursion, and the I.O.O. can/should assist in that effort, if not manage it entirely. A nation may also act to prevent an incursion from taking place, if the evidence is compelling enough that such an incursion is immediately imminent, but it may be more prudent to present such alleged evidence to the I.O.O. for adjudication before a pre-emptive strike is launched.

Question 32.1 (continued)

Do we want to discuss specific potential policies, and/or specific remedies that the I.O.O. would allow?

Further discussion in Session 98 [recorded in the blue book's Summary section] of what nations may do militarily, versus what should be entrusted to the I.O.O.

In general, a nation may react unilaterally to any actual military or biological incursion across its border, or it may appeal to the I.O.O. to take appropriate countermeasures. If there is sufficiently compelling evidence that an attack is immediately imminent (including by a 'terrorist' or other organization acting independently of any particular nation), such that there is insufficient time to obtain I.O.O. authorization, a nation may act unilaterally to cross its border and prevent the attack, but they had better be in a position to justify their actions before the I.O.O. later, or else be subject to retaliatory action themselves. Otherwise, such matters should be left up to the adjudication of the I.O.O., which derives its power from the delegates of all the member nations, and which therefore may subject to de-authorization any nation which should happen to become overly corrupt.

Question 32.3 (continued)

Should the I.O.O. get involved in a nation's alleged violation of human rights?

Added in Session 98: The I.O.O. may use any of several means to communicate to all people in the World that they exist, and that they are available to transport people out in instances of alleged human rights violations. This assistance may be construed as either a non-example of interference with local government or an exception to that rule. The I.O.O. probably should rotate any military personnel stationed at local embassies, in order to mitigate the possibility that they'll turn into a renegade independent military force. Helpful if personnel stationed locally are familiar with local language and customs, but not strictly necessary, provided that local diplomatic personnel are.

Question 159 (continued)

Given the admission into the enlisted ranks of all combinations of gender and gender preference, how should we arrange barracks and latrine assignments?

New panelist in Session 99 (March 2003) added another shower solution, being to construct walls or doors or curtains as needed, in order to keep individual showers separate without needing to rely on live monitors or other such measures. We allowed this as another option to experiment with, but noted that it still perpetuates the stereotype that people of different genders may not see each other naked except under very restrictive conditions. Agreed that we would like to get away from that concept if we can. [Reconsidered in the Third Pass.]

Question 32.1 (continued)

Do we want to discuss specific potential policies, and/or specific remedies that the I.O.O. would allow?

Agreed in Session 99 to amend our finding, by having that attacked nations may responded unilaterally and/or appeal to the I.O.O. for assistance.

Question 31 (continued)

If there is an i.o.o., then how should its enforcing arm be staffed?

Discussion began in Session 99 of how to contact the I.O.O. in case of emergency attack, and of what they then do. [Mind you, this was in March 2003, before cellphones and other advanced communications technologies became so widespread. We're reproducing the original discussion here for historical fidelity, but in doing so we recognize as of the Third Pass that what we can do with our communications may be either empowered and/or impeded as a result of ongoing changes in our technology, including through the influence of shape-shifting hackers. The specific steps here are less important than the overall idea of certain people clearly being 'in charge' at any given moment, so that the job of global defense is not dropped because everybody thinks that somebody else is doing it, and is not getting doubled up because of contested authority. Whatever specific adjustments may ever need to be made to the following paradigm as conditions evolve, above all make sure that all relevant stakeholders understand exactly what the latest rules and procedures are.]

Anyone in the U.S. could contact the I.O.O. in case of trouble, but it may go from the Defense Department to the chair of the U.S. delegation in the I.O.O. [specifically, in the 'House of Nations', according to our model in effect as of the Third Pass]. Or, we can have a 'hotline' which goes to key I.O.O. installations simultaneously.

Question 28 (continued)

If there is to be an international oversight organization, then should it have its own geographic territory?

Added in Session 99: Good not to have only one central office for the I.O.O., since that could get knocked out by a belligerent Nation, leaving no command and control. Can have central headquarters with multiple satellite offices around the World, which could be hooked up together electronically, so that a hotline message going to one office gets to all the others. [Model expanded later.]

Question 31 (continued)

If there is an i.o.o., then how should its enforcing arm be staffed?

If a decision needs to be made by the I.O.O. before all the delegates in the proper house(s) have a chance to convene, then it would be good to have an 'action committee' for Defense, who can make quick decisions which would be subject to ratification or overrule by the General Assembly.

Extensive discussion on makeup of the Defense Committee: We were thinking that fewer than 9 delegates might result in poorly-considered decisions. With more than 15, we may not be able to rely on them to make quick decisions. Discussion hinged on who should be on-call, and whether off-call people should be able to attend and vote if they wish. Non-author panelist argued that having to remain within 15-30 minutes of the Committee room (agreed that videoconferencing was possible, but not totally desirable, since you lose the facial expression and body language and vocal nuance which facilitate important communications) is very stressful for people doing this sort of work, even if they're rotating on the Committee for only a few months at a time, and that they should be compelled to be off-call at certain times. We didn't want to tell an international delegate that it's time to take a wee-wee, and didn't want to prevent a delegate from voting who is available and knowledgeable, and didn't want to reduce representation on the Committee unnecessarily.

Upon further discussion, agreed that all Committee members -- whether on-call or off-call -- get to participate and vote if they wish, and that all Committee members would get the same signals as all other Committee members, the off-call members having the option to decide whether they can and would like to get to the Committee meeting. First signal may be just a red flash on the pager [again, it was 2003, don't laugh, at least not too hard], if it's a really quick and critical situation, and on-call members would be expected to 'jump to' immediately. Second signal could be a text message ("Paraguay invades Chile"), to give the on-call people something to think about on the way down the elevator, and give the off-call people information to help them decide whether to get activated.

Consideration of size of Committee: Non-author panelist expressed preference of at least double the number of people who are to be designated as on-call, but the Moderator didn't think that we would need that many. Could go with it, however, in

consideration of the apparent fact that it allows individual members to be on-call for shorter periods of time, but only if we can allow a smaller quorum, such as 7, which the non-author panelist didn't want. We argued that a quorum of 7 doesn't mean that we're likely to actually have that number, since more delegates will probably want to participate if this is such a rare circumstance; however, the other panelist didn't readily accede to that possibility, and maintained that the danger is too great that a bloc of 4 delegates could twist the Committee to do the wrong thing, especially if a belligerent Nation is waiting for those 4 to be on-call. Also thought about 9 on-call and 21 max (we ideally wanted both parameters to be odd), but 21 seemed like a lot for a small 'action committee' which must debate and decide quickly, without needing to rely on Rules of Order.

Moderator then tried to push the 7-15 model, but the other panelist wanted 10-20 (allowing one of the on-call people to get stuck in the elevator or something). At this time, the Moderator made a rare motion to adjourn, so that he could cogitate the on-call/off-call numbers some, without needing to worry about pushing his deadline to get up in time to administer the following day's City Election. Adjourned 11:49pm.

We considered the problem further over the next few weeks, and prepared a refined Defense Committee scenario. Details follow, accompanied by chart in 'blue book':

Committee should have at least 8 delegates actively participating (so that good-quality decisions get made), but no more than 15 (so that decisions can get made fairly quickly). The 15 total members of the Committee (who are appointed to 6-month terms on a rotational basis) will be divided into five shifts of three delegates each. The five shifts have staggered 5-week schedules, including three consecutive weeks of 'on-call' time (during which the delegates are expected to remain within 15-30 minutes of the committee's headquarters at all times) and two consecutive weeks of 'off-call' time (during which they can go wherever they want, but may still participate in deliberations if they happen to be at hand when the Committee meets). Thus, there will be 9 delegates 'on call' at any one time, and we can still rely on the quorum of 8 in case someone gets stuck in an elevator or something.

Different panelist in Session 100 (March 2003) agreed that this scenario "should work well". However, she felt that three months on the Committee would present too quick of a turnaround to allow people to get up-to-speed on all political and military currents. Agreed that a period of six months is better, allowing more people on the Committee to be sufficiently knowledgeable. [Updated in Third Pass.]

Subsubsection I-D-1-c: Finance

Question 161

What is or should be the main purpose of the Treasury Department?

[This was the phrasing of the Question as it originally appeared in our 'black book' of preliminary notes, but we recognize as of the Third Pass that this was a backwards way of approaching this topic. We had already established in Answers 48 and 135 what basic functions are to be handled by what we eventually came to call the 'Finance Department', including that it handles not only the Treasury of gold bars or plastic buttons or whatever we may be using at any point as a generally-recognized medium of exchange, but also everything relating to the fiscal health of both the Government and the entire Nation. All such Questions are really redundant at this

stage, then. When the Fifth Pass resequences all these Questions and Answers into a more logical sequence, Questions such as this will no longer apply. We will define first what functions the Federal Government shall perform, and then organize those functions into Departments, as we did above.]

However, we did confirm in Session 100 our finding from Session 81 that the Treasury Department should comprise four bureaus, including Currency/Banking, Revenue Collection, Government Payroll/Pensions, and Asset Management.

Subsubsection I-D-1-d: Environment

Question 162

If not resolved earlier, is protection of the environment a function which should be the responsibility of government?

Yes.

Question 163

Should environmental protection be a function of the Federal government, or should it be devolved to lower levels?

Panelist in Session 100 volunteered that "It depends on what you're talking about", and Moderator concurred: There are some environmental issues which are large enough in scope (particularly those involving the Atmosphere) as to warrant the attention of the federal government, which can have sufficiently broad representation of the entire area to make adequately-informed decisions, whereas other issues are so small in scope that they can/should be handled by smaller localities, without giving the Fed more to do than it already needs to have. [We therefore found that there should be an agency at the national level to treat environmental issues, but that similar agencies should also exist at more local levels of government.]

Question 164

Should all national issues of an environmental nature continue to be farmed out to different agencies and departments, or should they be brought together in one single organization?

Agreed in Session 100 on combining into one organization. [While not in the Q164 notes, we had also found by this point that environmental issues often dovetail with issues involving consumers of products, so that the same federal agency would consider both types of issues concurrently, but we modified our position later.]

Question 165

What functions should be handled by the Department of the Environment?

[This eventually became the Environmental Protection Bureau of the Interior Department, but as of Session 100 we were still thinking in terms of combining all functions of Environmental and Consumer Protection in one Department.]

Some specific functions which could be discharged by the combined agency include ecosystem oversight, air/water quality, and possibly endangered species. First element includes making sure that we're not shooting ourselves in the foot by destroying certain parts of the ecosystem, such as when our dumping pollutants into the Mississippi River caused an oxygen-depleted 'dead zone' in the Gulf of Mexico. Don't need research into clean-air technologies, since we already had an R&D bureau in the Science Department. Another function might be to instigate small artificial earthquakes in order to prevent larger ones; consideration of this possibility led to larger discussion on the proper name and scope of this agency.

If there is any such seismic stuff to be done, then perhaps it should be managed by the Earth & Sea Exploration Bureau of the Science Department. Couple of problems: It's not really Exploration, and it puts the Science Department in the role of taking action instead of simply gathering information for other entities. Function probably is better suited for Public Services, which we saw as a more proactive department.

Question 161.3

Why are we trying to protect the environment?

Considering the proper name and scope of the applicable Federal agency, we asked ourselves in Session 100 why we are trying to protect the environment. [Packaged as separate Question in the Third Pass.] Our common perception seemed to be that we want to maintain a place where people can live healthily, though we recognized that other people want to maintain elements of the environment for their own sakes.

Question 165 (continued)

What functions should be handled by the Department of the Environment?

Panelist in Session 100 wanted to pick a name for the Environmental & Consumer Protection agency which would be more suggestive of why we're doing what we're doing. Moderator was afraid that changing the name of one element of the bureau might create the appearance of two different functions being performed by the bureau, which might tend to suggest that the two agencies should be separated, which we did not then want to do [although we ended up doing so later], since we wanted a single management structure deciding any issue where the needs of the Environment conflict with those of the Consumer.

Panelist further clarified that her desire was to show that our purpose in combining the Environmental & Consumer Protection functions was to show clearly why we were putting those functions together, being to strike a balance which allows the two sets of needs to coexist. She did not feel that the current name did that adequately. Agency should have a single common mission statement, reflected in the name.

Discussion ran to who provides protection for business providers. Moderator suggested that they are the ones presenting most of the dangers against which this agency would be providing protection, and that they therefore don't need that much protecting. Panelist suggested that they should have a voice in the formation of any public policy which might tend to inhibit their ability to earn their livings. She was advocating an expansion of the role of this agency to include protection of business interests, the idea being that business providers are part of the ecosystem too. She wanted Commerce and the Consumer and the Environment to all live together.

At this point, Moderator posted on the whiteboard all the then-current bureau names for Public Services and Domestic Affairs. Panelist suggested in response that the functions for providing a sustainable environment for human beings go beyond the scope of what we had established in our structure. She wanted to see a structure which makes sure that the three elements of Consumer, Producer, and Environment work together to the maximum degree possible, with a name something like 'Environmental & Human Sustainability' or something. Moderator was wondering whether this went more into the policymaking realm, and whether this would be better suited for Legislative evaluation.

Question 132 (continued)

Should the President (or Governor, or other Chief Executive of a jurisdiction) have unilateral authority to establish, adjust, or eliminate Departments in the Executive Branch, or should the Legislature have complete authority, or some kind of hybrid?

Moderator asked panelist during consideration of Question 165 in Session 100 whether she concurred that policymaking should generally exist in the Legislature, with policy administration and enforcement generally existing within the Executive Branch, and she said Yes.

Question 165 (continued)

What functions should be handled by the Department of the Environment?

We then asked whether the ideas which the panelist envisioned [for maintaining a harmonious balance among Businesses, Consumers, and the Environment] went more toward policymaking or policy enforcement, and she answered the former. We thus concurred that this topic was better suited for the Legislature, and for a specific Committee in particular. We made a note in the 'black book' at this time, to actively consider creating such a Committee. [We actually did so later on.] With this proviso, panelist concurred that the then-present structure was probably adequate.

On further reflection, we agreed that that the E&C Protection Bureau probably was an adequate place to manage this seismic business of making small earthquakes in order to prevent larger ones, since it's kind of environmental protection (in that we're doing stuff to the environment to prevent a more catastrophic problem), and because it's a more active activity, whereas the Science Department was for more passive information-gathering.

Before we left this topic, though, panelist reasserted that a better name for Environmental & Consumer Protection should be found: If policy is set entirely by the Legislature, then there's no need for Environmental & Consumer Protection to be maintained within a single agency. We figured, though, that the Legislature would set general policy, and that the Executive Branch would set more specific regulations which are consistent with -- and subordinate to -- those general parameters, in which case the Executive agencies would still have some power of implementation, and in which case it still therefore would be important for the needs of the Environment and the Consumer to be balanced. If this is the case, though, then panelist maintained that the needs of Businesses must also be considered and duly balanced, so a more inclusive name should be selected for the enforcing agency.

Moderator was still having a hard time envisioning what we could expand the name and scope of this agency to, in such a way as to continue to distinguish it from the rest of the Executive Branch. Panelist still wanted to know why Moderator was appearing to give preferential consideration to two legs of the triad, and continued to want this stuff kept in the same agency. We suggested that any protection needed by large or small Businesses may have been obtained through the Legislature already, whereas individual Consumers and the Environment may still be victimized on an ongoing basis, and thus need the continued intervention of government. Panelist wanted to think that about this some more. Adjournment at 11:11pm.

Question 132 (continued)

Should the President (or Governor, or other Chief Executive of a jurisdiction) have unilateral authority to establish, adjust, or eliminate Departments in the Executive Branch, or should the Legislature have complete authority, or some kind of hybrid?

We undertook further discussion in Session 101 (April 2003) of the size, scope, and name of what was then being called the Environmental & Consumer Protection Bureau of the Public Services Department. Panelist resubmitted that it would be highly useful to have the name reflect the agency's mission of building a sustainable relationship among Consumers, Business, and the Environment. Moderator resubmitted that most of this policymaking should be done within the Legislature, and that the Administrative agency is more for implementation. Of course, there would be some smaller-scale policymaking happening within the Administrative agency, but most/all of this would not involve protecting Businesses, which will have their primary recourse for alleged shafting in the Judiciary Branch. Small businesses can get severely injured before having Judicial recourse, though, as well as Consumers, so they need equivalent protection. However, this agency would be protecting Consumers on the large scale, by performing ongoing inspections of foods, gas-dispensing machines, and other consumer goods; they would do little or nothing on the individual scale. With this proviso, and on the condition that there would be a Legislative committee to establish an harmonious policy among Business and Consumers and the Environment, we were okay with the name and mission of the Administrative agency as originally proposed. [We still changed it later.]

Question 165 (continued)

What functions should be handled by the Department of the Environment?

Agency should -- as noted above -- concentrate on implementing whatever policies are established by the Legislature which pertain to the relationships among Consumers, Businesses, and the Environment. In particular, they should perform testing of goods which are marketed to Consumers on a national scale.

Agreed in Session 101 that the function of producing small earthquakes to prevent larger ones should be one of the primary responsibilities of the Environmental & Consumer Protection Bureau, since it comes under the heading of protecting the Environment from catastrophic disaster, and because this department is more action-oriented than the Science Department. Agreed that the Earth & Sea Exploration Bureau of the Science Department definitely should be involved in the process, though, in an advisory capacity. We recommended that it be made a standing order for the E&C Protection Bureau not to undertake any such action

without first consulting the E&S Exploration Bureau, probably in the form of taking testimony at a public hearing.

That appeared to settle things as far as functions to be handled by the Environmental & Consumer Protection Bureau.

Question 165.5

Should the government be allowed to mandate fluoridation and/or chlorination of drinking water?

Possible arguments in favor of the practice include providing public service to supplement whatever brushing and flossing people may or may not be doing, and to help prevent health-care costs and loss of income arising from when people need to go to the dentist more often than necessary.

As to fluoridation, panel agreed during Session 101 in favor of individual choice. Some people (such as General Ripper in *Dr. Strangelove*) might not want fluoride in their tap water, so they shouldn't be compelled to take it.

As to chlorination, we concur that it may be in the public interest to provide treatment to water which comes from polluted areas, or which needs to travel long distances through lead pipes or other yukky conduits. However, this should be managed at the local level.

Question 166

What emphasis -- if any -- should be given by any level of government to the preservation of so-called 'endangered species'?

As of Session 101: "Some."

Question 167

Why is it necessary to protect species?

[Noted in Third Pass that we will need a less-leading phrasing for this Question.]

Panelist in Session 101: If a species gets eradicated or severely depleted, then it could have a negative impact on the ecosystem, since certain predators might be necessary to keep things in balance.

But, what about a species which is already endangered, and of which there are only 3-4 specimens living in zoos somewhere? The ecosystem has apparently evolved around them, so it shouldn't be that much of a deal if those remaining specimens happened to die out. Answer is that we should distinguish between causing species to become endangered and what to do with species which already are:

As to the former, we should make sure that all our resources are sustainable; in the case of species, we probably will not know what effect a species depletion would have on the ecosystem until it happens, and it might be too late by then. (For this reason, it's important that we have a standing policy, probably adopted by Legislatures at the applicable levels, to place limitations whenever a species begins

to be hunted commercially.) If the species is already severely endangered, then it no longer need be a major government concern, though private institutions certainly may take preservational steps if they wish. When in doubt, err on side of caution.

Non-author panelist asserted in the course of discussion that we are a formidable predator, and that some responsibilities come with that status. No dispute as to the first part of that statement, but some people might question the second part. As to that, panelist suggested that the primary consideration is practical, not moral: If we begin to hunt a species to its severe depletion, then we could be causing an environmental impact which will be worse upon us than not having hunted that species in the first place. The morality of the hunting -- and the question of whether or not we 'owe' anything to those species -- can be debated separately, but we didn't need to undertake that debate here, since the practical considerations sufficed.

In sum, our First Pass position was that "emphasis ... given by the Government to the preservation of so-called 'endangered species' [should be limited to] making sure that there is not a serious depletion of any species in the World that would cause an unhealthy shift in the ecosystem balance; if a particular species is already endangered, with only a few specimens surviving in controlled environments, [then] preservation efforts may be continued by private organizations, but need not be an emphasis of Government." [Modified in the Second Pass, as described later.]

Question 167.5

Are there any additional ways that we can improve conservation efforts, particularly of paper goods?

We stated in Session 101, "If you want to conserve, then just do it." [See later.]

Subsubsection I-D-1-e: Science & Technology

Question 168

Should there be a single Federal organization to coordinate and (in some cases) fund all scientific and technical research going on in this country?

Panelist in Session 101 suggested not, on grounds that people should still be able to conduct private research, without the Government needing to be involved. Panel agreed, however, that all research which is coordinated by the Government should be in a single agency.

Question 168.5

If so, then shall this organization be a Cabinet-level department, a separate branch, or what?

Seemed in Session 101 to be a good fit where it then was in our model, as one of nine Cabinet-level departments. If it were to be made into a fourth branch of government, then we could have issues with reporting relationships, communication, accountability, and leader selection. As it is, we know how to deal with any issues arising. We saw no benefits to making Science a fourth branch of government, and we saw multiple potential downsides. Agreed that the model was good as it was.

Question 169

What functions and issues shall be handled by the Department of Science?

We agreed in Session 101 that we didn't want to get too specific at that time. For one thing, the simple 'mission statement' of coordinating all scientific and technical research which is being coordinated by government should be sufficient. For another, we can't expect to isolate every single program which exists at any given time, and we have even less chance of predicting all the needs and desires and opportunities which will come up in future years. Panel determined to pass on this Question. However, we kept it as a placeholder for specific issues to be added later.

Subsubsection I-D-1-f: Commerce

Question 170

Is it good to have Agriculture, Transportation, Energy, Labor, and Commerce in separate departments?

Panelist in Session 101 wondered aloud what these different areas had to do with one another, and Moderator cited that all of them are factors of commerce and/or have commercial aspects to them. Panelist then suggested that we have a Department of Commerce which comprises all these areas, and Moderator responded that that was the original intent, but that the then-current model stated differently.

We took this opportunity to review our then-current standard model, and we didn't see anything so manifestly awful as to require reconsideration. In particular, we continued to find that the issues of domestic and international commerce differ from one another in multiple ways, that the ability to assign the Postal Service somewhere is only one of multiple reasons to have a Communications & Transportation Department, and that Science is a good place to deal with Energy questions.

Subsubsection I-D-1-f-i: Agriculture

Question 171

What functions or issues should be handled by the Bureau of Agriculture?

Functions of making sure that food is safe and that product labels are accurate had been assigned to the Environmental & Consumer Protection Bureau of the Public Services Department. Function of monitoring production levels to give growers an idea where to emphasize could be handled by a private association. No immediate need seen to maintain this bureau as a public agency. We left it on the org chart tentatively, with notation that maybe we could jettison it later. Panelist was to get some background from her father's side of the family, who were growers in Oregon.

Question 172

Should the Federal government be in the business of paying farmers not to grow certain items, or generally to set price levels?

Best reason that we could see in Session 101 why anyone would advocate this would be to provide sufficient incentive for people not to grow certain items of which we've

already got too much. But, this can be seen by any consumer or grower, by simple inspection of price levels, if nowhere else. Another possible explanation is that somebody's bribing somebody, but we're not prepared to tolerate that.

In general, we do not believe that this is a good practice.

Question 173

But, what happens when a large sector of the agricultural community ignores (for whatever reason) the suggestions of the Bureau of Agriculture as to the need to focus on different crops, or when some lack of communication results in an overabundance of certain crops?

Even if they were stupid enough to ignore the recommendations of the Bureau of Agriculture (or whatever private association may perform that function), which we felt in Session 101 to be pretty unlikely, given that growers do nothing all day but talk about their crops, they would learn their lessons pretty quickly. We wouldn't have only one crop in our agriculture, anyhow, since multiple farmers routinely grow a variety of crops. Also, as noted in the 'black book', we've got preserved foods.

Question 171 (continued)

What functions or issues should be handled by the Bureau of Agriculture?

Panelist presented in Session 102 (April 2003) the results of her research on the then-current USDA (United States Department of Agriculture), viz.: They obviously did a lot with monitoring consumer safety on meats and other food products. Agency apparently was started by Lincoln, and it was tentatively named the "People's Department"! Duties recently included hunger prevention, food stamps, WIC, school-lunch programs, 192 million acres of national forest and rangelands, conservation encouragement on 78% of privately-owned land within U.S., outreach of housing and telecommunications and water to the rural U.S., and finally the meat and poultry and egg standards. Agency branded itself as a 'research leader' in human nutrition and new-crop technology. They sought to insure an open market for U.S. agricultural products, which a new non-author panelist speculated as meaning the prevention of collusion among growers. They also sent food to needy countries. Agencies included Farm & Foreign Agricultural Service; Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services; Food Safety; Marketing & Regulatory Program; Natural Resources & Environment; Research, Education, Economics; and Rural Development.

Upon hearing these results, new panelist made good note that the USDA probably had more use in the 1800's than it did now with our improved communications technology. However, it would still be useful for information on crop production to be shared in the public sector, since to share this information privately would raise anti-trust concerns, and since we couldn't necessarily rely upon growers to share the information honestly if they were allowed to do so without oversight.

New panelist also noted that the central agency would be able to provide satellite and other high-tech monitoring of rainfall, water flow, and other factors which could influence production decisions.

General agreement was that there continues to be a value in having an agricultural agency in the Federal structure, though it doesn't need to be a full Department, and

also doesn't need to do all the stuff which the then-current Department did. Also agreed that the Bureau of Agriculture should basically help to maximize the quantity and quality of our agricultural output. Food stamps, WIC, and school-lunch programs are the sort of consumption-based entitlements which were scheduled for consideration in Section II-B.

Question 171.5

What should our timber policy be?

New panelist in Session 102 pointed out that National Forests are very different from National Parks, in that the latter are for tourism, while the former are lands which have been set aside for commercial logging. Since preservation of the forests was at that time a function of the Department of Agriculture, this topic was on point for us now. How did we feel about this? New panelist noted that the business interest will be to harvest the timber as quickly as they can, maximizing short-term profits at the expense of sustainability. Why didn't we simply sell all that land to private interests, so that the firms would have a greater motivation to maintain sustainability? Because this might result in all the land being raped of lumber or converted to condos, the theoretical reason for the National Forests being to maintain a strategic reserve. Moderator suggested that we could keep some acreage in reserve, and sell the rest to private industry; panelist also noted the possibility of leasing land for a few years, though the producers might then still be motivated to rape in the short term. Panelist gave Georgia as an example that privately-owned land was already being converted for other usages, so the National Forests were actively used. Also noted that we need to maintain a certain amount of forests for oxygen production.

So, what should our timber policy be? Previous panelist noted that one of our considerations should be what would happen if all our available commercial timberland were converted to more profitable uses. We speculated that such an eventuality would cause the price of wood/paper products to go so high that timber production would suddenly become a profitable enterprise again. Further, the rise in prices would give us more motivation to conserve, and help to bring about the paperless society which we had been hearing so much about as of April 2003.

A big difference between this function and most other agriculture is the period needed for renewal of the resources: You can get a new onion crop in one year, but you need 20-50 years to renew timber resources.

Finally determined that our decisions in this area would depend largely on what we decide on basic land-use policy. Made note in the 'black book' to consider this topic in Part II. Whatever we would decide as to policy, we currently felt that the land should be managed by the Asset Management Bureau of the Treasury Department, not the Department or Bureau of Agriculture. [Modified in Second Pass.]

Question 171 (continued)

What functions or issues should be handled by the Bureau of Agriculture?

As to the encouragement of conservation on 78% of privately-owned land, we didn't know where they got the 78% figure. One non-author panelist thought that the whole statement probably was bullshit, and we all agreed in Session 102 that any conservation should be relegated to the Environmental & Consumer Protection

Bureau of Public Services. Model did not then bring housing and telecommunications and water to rural areas, for we then felt that housing should be managed at the local level, telecommunications by the Federal Department of Communications & Transportation, and water by the Water & Power Bureau of Domestic Affairs.

Considered relegating meat/poultry/egg standards to the Environmental & Consumer Protection Bureau, but a non-author panelist noted that we may want to maintain standards which provide for humane treatment of livestock, and/or other provisions which do not directly protect consumers. Also provided example of Mad Cow Disease arising in Britain, and requiring the killing of an entire generation of livestock due to improper feeding procedures. Agreed that it is worthwhile to have an agency provide for safety and humane treatment during production, and that this function would be better for the Bureau of Agriculture than for Environmental and Consumer Protection, which still would concentrate on safety and accuracy of foods which have already been packaged for consumption.

Research functions were to be handled by the Department of Science. Insuring an open market should be limited to preventing collusive activity, which could be part of the mission of the Business & Securities Bureau of the Justice Department [as we then had things organized]. Non-author panelist noted that it would be better for this agency to enforce anti-trust provisions across multiple industries, to make it harder for people within those specific industries to cozy up to them.

Any foreign aid should be managed by the International Trade Bureau, or some separate bureau of the Foreign Affairs Department. Selection of which farmers to buy from probably can be driven by lowest bidder.

All agencies in the current USDA are also taken care of in the foregoing, except for Rural Development, which a non-author panelist identified as probably being an anachronistic holdover from Lincoln's time.

Subsubsection I-D-1-f-ii: Communication

Question 174

Should any agencies regulating communication (such as the FCC) be included in the new Department of Commerce?

This had already been addressed in the construction of our Federal model as of Session 102, with no motion to modify. [Construction changed later.]

Question 175

What functions or issues should be handled by the Bureau of Communication?

This was the original phrasing of the Question in our 'black book', and the notes from Session 102 likewise indicate that this matter had already been addressed in the construction of our Federal model as of that time, with no motion to modify. [Notes apparently were referring to Session 81, by which we had determined that the Department of Communications & Transportation should include bureaus for Post Office, Electronic Communications, and Language Resources.]

Question 176

What restrictions -- if any -- should be placed on what material is broadcast on radio, television, the Internet, and other media?

Panelist in Session 103 (May 2003) suggested that this might be a consumer-affairs issue; not sure whether that would warrant management by the Environmental & Consumer Protection Bureau [as we then called it], but there is an issue of content and making sure that the content matches what is advertised. Moderator wondered how this could be managed under the then-current model, since E&CP was projected to deal with objective measures on health-related matters. Panelist acknowledged that the standards would be more subjective, but suggested that they are health-related, since a young child's mental health could be affected by certain images.

Second non-author panelist suggested having enough bands to allow anyone to broadcast within a one-mile radius.

First panelist suggested that we should be able to broadcast anything, but have a rating system which accurately reflects the content of potentially-objectionable material, and allow the technology to block broadcasts with certain ratings.

Second panelist suggested that broadcasting would go the same way as books, being that the free material will be of an educational nature, like the books in the library, and that entertainment programming would eventually go to only paid cable. His rationale was based on the premise that the primary reason for keeping pornographic literature separate is to protect it from the greasy fingers of the porn-reading public, an assertion for which we didn't see a whole lot of evidence.

First panelist asked about specific restrictions. Moderator acknowledged that images of violence can cause unhealthy copycatting, but didn't understand what potential danger images of sex and nudity would present to pre-pubescent kids; first panelist responded that pre-pubescent kids still sometimes have sexual intercourse, and in an unhealthy manner for people their age, so copycatting could still be an issue. Moderator suggested that we need to educate our kids about sex a lot earlier in their lives, anyway, so images of sex and nudity shouldn't present as much problem; first panelist responded that kids may not pay that much attention in school, so we need to allow for the possibility of some uneducated kids copycatting. Second panelist noted that kids on farms may need to monitor the sexual activity of animals, or hear stories being discussed by others in the household; first panelist responded from her family experiences that farm people don't know that much more than anyone else.

Further discussion of this sex business. Stipulated that at the time we had a lot more unplanned pregnancies at younger ages, and that it was a problem. Also stipulated that kids at the time learned about sex a lot earlier than before.

First panelist didn't want ratings so specific as to take up a whole screen before each show. Moderator suggested that this objective could be helped by reducing the number of categories on which we need to have ratings, and that the sex category maybe could be dumped. First panelist felt, however, that many people would prefer that category to remain, and that it is a reasonable preference. Second panelist concurred, and suggested that this is the reason why we have rooms in houses.

On the question of simple displays of nudity, Moderator asked why we should have a rating for that category, and first panelist asked why not. Moderator responded that one reason to remove the category is to reduce the number of categories with which parents need to deal for each show, and that another reason is the psychological impact on the child. First panelist responded that psychological impact is a matter for parents to decide, and that government should not take away this prerogative; also noted that we had come up with only three rating categories so far.

What about drugs and drinking? Moderator noted that alcohol drinking must be warned up front, and that no drinking be allowed during commercials. First panelist felt that it's reasonable for there to be at least one category for this area. Looking at how many categories we should have for it, first panelist suggested that we may not need one for drinking alcohol or smoking pot, but maybe one for harder intoxicants.

In general, first panelist suggested that the number and range of categories could be left up to the public, by the use of occasional polls which could reflect changing social mores. Agreed that this would be a good thing to include in Census questionnaires.

What about radio? It's relatively easy to have a 3-second screen on TV summarizing the content of the upcoming program, but it's harder to do in radio. Second panelist noted a proliferation of possible stations to switch to if you don't like what the current station is playing, but Moderator noted that the damage is already done if something comes over the radio which you might find objectionable. Panelists noted that most radio stations make clear what they're going to play, so it's relatively easy to predict, at least for music stations. First panelist would like periodic short announcements on what type of programming is coming up; Moderator preferred that there not be such requirements, since it would take longer, and since it's harder to do in a spontaneous radio format. [Modified in the Third Pass.]

Moderator wondered why we even need any kind of radio rating at all on the basis of allegedly-objectionable vocabulary. Extensive discussion on the subject, first panelist's main point being that there will always be some words which are intended/designed to be used for purposes of shocking or provoking people, and that it is reasonable for parents and others to want to know that these words may be coming up in a given broadcast. Moderator was not a big fan of it (not being a big fan of government regulation in general), but guessed that he could go along with having another periodic Census question as to what words should be considered offensive. (Agreed that fill-in-the-blank may be better than leading people by asking yes/no on a pre-written list.) Then, we could have a periodic warning broadcast on radio as to whether one or more of these words may be used in the course of their programming, and then leave it up to the DJ's to live within those constraints or not. At least, it's a better compromise than an outright ban.

Internet sites should be subject to the same anti-libel rules as all other media. We shouldn't be able to send unsolicited e-mail's, and there should be a cost for doing so. How can we enforce it? Charges could be added to the bill issued by the ISP.

Discussion expanded to include telemarketers and printed 'junk mail', all of which we would like to see eliminated. If we did this, then members of a social organization such as Mensa could still call or e-mail one another about local events, even though it is unsolicited, because people joined the organization and [may have] provided their contact information for organizational business.

First panelist argued that unsolicited ads are inappropriate, on grounds that one's home and phone and mailbox and computer are personal property, and that their unsolicited advertisements constitute trespassing. If this argument is valid, then it might successfully vitiate the freedom-of-speech protection which the advertisers might claim. Panelist didn't want all unsolicited communications to stop, only those attempting to sell something.

Discussion of different technical options on blocking at the receiving end or prohibiting/taxing at the sending end, but we knew even then that hackers may be able to get around anything, even an attempt to trace the source of an e-mail. Panelist would try to get more information on our technical options, if we were agreed on the philosophical point that this is all her inviolable personal property.

On the philosophical point, first panelist thought that her right to personal property is inviolable, and second panelist thought that advertisers should be able to get to you by any method if they're willing to pay enough for it. Discussion, including the concept of 'eminent domain', and the differences between physical land and electronic media. One question which the first panelist asked of the second panelist was whether an advertiser should be able to post a physical sign in her physical frontyard. This depends on whether she has an absolute right to her private property, which depends on the concept of eminent domain.

If we do not have eminent domain, then you may have an absolute right to your private property, and an argument might be made that this right extends to your virtual property (telephone, computer, etc.). If we do have eminent domain, then an advertiser might have a right to post a sign on your frontyard, and this right might also extend to your virtual property. Adjournment at 12:15am.

At the beginning of Session 104 (June 2003), Moderator reported the absence of an earlier finding on eminent domain.

Panelist reported that she had a conference call with her brother and his roommate, a hacker type. She asked whether it was possible to make spam e-mail's illegal, and to enforce it. Simple answer was 'No'. Nature of the Internet was for postings to be untraceable. A company could automatically create an address which sends out millions of spams, and then immediately invalidates itself, so that the messages couldn't be traced back. [Third Pass: We may never get around this problem.]

Other solutions to reduce spams involved setting up one's own server, selecting an address which does not contain common words, or setting up filters to weed out messages with spam-like words. However, none of these solutions would necessarily eliminate all spam, maybe reduce it a bit.

Also, even if someone came up (or thought that they did) with a technical solution to block e-mail, the Internet was then so new and undisciplined that someone would probably find a technical way around it by the day after next.

We probably don't want to regulate the Internet too much, even if we could, as that might tend to stifle the creativity which was then coming from the masses.

After further discussion, it became clearer that better regulation may be possible at some future point, and that the possibility is significant enough to make it worthwhile for us to consider the types of regulations which we would ideally like to have.

Moderator asked at this point whether our ability to suppress spams or otherwise regulate the Internet would/can ever match or surpass the ability of hackers to find ways around those regulations. At this time, panelist got on her cellphone to ask her brother and his roommate. (I loved it!) Response was that nobody knew where the Internet would be going in 50 years; regulation is made more technically difficult by the fact that all Internet files of any type comprise "bundles" which are the same size and type, so regulating any one element of the Internet would require regulating the whole thing, which would (allegedly) both be impractical and rob people of any privacy. Before getting to the value-judgment element of the discussion, Moderator wanted to know if we are constrained by this bundle business, or if there is another way of managing the Internet. At this time, panelist called her brother again (who was in a bar at the time). In order for all computers to be able to talk to each other, and fulfill the basic purpose of the Internet, a standard protocol was developed back in the 1940's. To enable different regulation would require replacing all Internet-access programs with a new protocol, which would necessarily be much more complex, and which people may or may not have the incentive to install, if we could even make it happen at all. As to the incentive factor, Moderator claimed that a number of people had been asking for e-mail/Internet regulation, and that distribution of the new protocol would be as easy as getting the ISP's to send out new CD's [compact discs; this was back in 2003] with the programs based on it.

After further discussion, it became clearer that better regulation might be possible at some future point, and that the possibility is significant enough to make it worthwhile for us to consider the types of regulations which we would ideally like to have.

We discussed in Session 105 (June 2003) the fact that regulations were then in place on websites and e-mail's, and that many carriers appeared to be observing them, though we were not sure why, since the laws seemed so difficult to enforce. Websites needed to be hosted on servers, though, and we could regulate the servers such that they could be held liable if any website was discovered on them which failed to comply with the regulations, thus giving them a motivation to make sure that no website got placed on their systems which failed to comply.

We then turned our attention to what kinds of regulations should or should not be in place:

Panelist claimed [again] that one's e-mail account and computer screen are private property, on which people shouldn't trespass without permission. She also didn't want them trespassing with a solicitation one time, and then need to be rebuffed; she didn't want them trespassing at all, until they got permission first. But, how do they get that permission if they don't solicit it? Answer was that people can sign up for solicitations on the company's website or elsewhere. [This argument seemed eminently logical as of the Third Pass: Don't call us, we'll call you.]

Her initial feeling was that pop-up ads were not as bad as spam e-mail's, though Moderator's feeling was the opposite: He thought that any action which requires you to do something which you wouldn't otherwise need to do -- especially if it interrupts something else which you're doing, but even if it's just a matter of needing to close all the ads when you're through with your main screen (which ads would still be taking up some of your active memory) -- is a violation. Panelist concurred, but could we convince people like the second panelist from Session 103?

Well, this goes back to our concept of 'eminent domain', and the question of the extent to which we really 'own' our own lives and property. Eminent domain was primarily an Economic question for Part II, of course, but some of our earlier Part I questions had given us a framework for reaching preliminary determinations. We rolled the specific points into new Question 362.5 in the Third Pass, as follows:

Question 362.5

Given this basic relationship between the Individual and the State, to what extent (if any) does/should a government be able to exercise 'eminent domain' over propertyholders?

As of Session 105, Answer 12 had given us that individuals generally may do whatever they want, if they don't injure or endanger others.

Answer 13 defined 'injury' in terms of preventing people from doing that which they would otherwise be physically able to do, and this could apply to finishing one's computer work without needing to close a bunch of windows, and other such constraints.

Answer 17 required some kind of government (or 'public organization') to moderate/supervise our interaction, but Answer 18.5 allowed us to disobey their laws under certain conditions, although the government would also be able under certain other conditions to uphold the original intent and application of its laws.

Perhaps most compelling of all was Answer 18, which said that Government must serve the needs and desires of the People, otherwise it defeats its own purpose. This implies that People come first, and Government second. It is only when we agree as a group to give up some of our freedoms, in consideration of the common good, that the State has a right to lay constraints on our actions.

This discussion segued into a big talk about Existentialism, especially as it applies to our finding [later overturned] that there are no Natural Rights, and whether there is some commonality or universality to which we should be beholden. We entertained informal discussion of the possibility of reconsidering Question 7, but no formal motion was made (yet). No finding was reached as to whether there is some unifying influence connecting all humans. During the course of the discussion, Moderator pointed out that we couldn't allow the likely non-consensus on questions of God or Religion or Spirituality or other such quantities to deter us from the necessary task of building a society in which we can all peacefully coexist.

Anyhow, bottom line of the review of A's 11-18.5 was that we were leaning away from the idea that Eminent Domain is a built-in factor of any society, and toward the idea that it is up to each society to determine the extent to which government should have the ability to regulate activity on ostensibly-private property.

Question 176 (continued)

What restrictions -- if any -- should be placed on what material is broadcast on radio, television, the Internet, and other media?

The above discussion on Eminent Domain was found to translate to local jurisdictions making decisions as to placing billboards on people's lawns, but telephone and

computer solicitations can happen across State and Local boundaries, so that would be more appropriate for adjudication at the Federal level. On this point, Answers 13 (our definition of 'injury') and 38 (as to maximum personal freedoms) seemed to speak against unsolicited solicitations, so we were finding that there should be none such, and that companies should enable opt-in modules on their websites, so that only those people who specifically request them will be sent any solicitations.

Other than this advertisement business, regulations on Internet content should naturally include observing any applicable non-Internet laws then in existence, such as those prohibiting libel and defamation.

Are there any restrictions which we want to impose which do not involve violation of specific laws? Panelist suggested one against propagating computer viruses, but otherwise panel generally concurred to keep the Internet pretty open, including to have no restrictions against sexually-oriented material or displays of nudity. However, we understood that different people had different opinions on the topic.

We entertained further discussion in Session 106 (June 2003), which included two new panelists. One of these claimed that the "garbage" on the Internet was "tearing our society apart". The other made a lot of statements about the possibility that more regulation could lead to more problems. Neither of these people was actually on the Net, though. After some random discussion, we got closer to the point:

Discussion of enabling parental blocking. Seemed pretty reasonable and widely-wanted for parents to have the option to block certain types of websites, but how could this be managed, assuming that we have the technical capabilities? Probably most effective to block on the basis of keywords, but what about non-verbal material? Returning panelist answered this by pointing out that one still needed to get to that site, and that they wouldn't be able to do it without the use of keywords.

Subsubsection I-D-1-f-iii: Domestic Trade

Question 177

Should interstate and foreign trade be in the same bureau, or separate bureaus?

No strong feelings were expressed on this topic at first in Session 106, so we mentioned the preliminary finding which we had reached during construction of our administrative model, being that these should be in separate bureaus, because the issues involved are largely different, including as to language, currency, legal structure, relative affinity toward the U.S., etc.

Panelist asked about our preliminary finding on the use of English as an official language, and whether that impacted this discussion. We were not immediately able to find any reference to any previous preliminary discussion on the topic, so it appeared to remain open. [Confirmed during Third Pass that we did not take up the topic until Session 120 in May 2004.]

Panelist asked what these bureaus would do at all. We mentioned the possibility of trying to encourage trade even if we're not doing anything to regulate it. Group also mentioned false advertising, consumer affairs, product safety, and toxic medications.

At this time, we read from our 'black book' of preliminary ideas, viz.: "Director of Foreign Trade would need to establish what goods we need in this country, and what goods we can spare to trade, whereas the Director of Domestic Trade is going to be concerned with making sure that imported goods are fairly distributed around the country, and that Congress' laws on interstate commerce are continually enforced; separate foci, but still could interrelate." Upon this, another panelist expressed trepidation about the possibility of ensuring a fair internal distribution at the expense of free enterprise, suggesting that this could lead to tyranny.

Functionality of the bureau(s) was seen to depend largely on what we would decide in Question 461, on how to manage trade in a no-tariff environment. However, the general parameters discussed in the 'black book' appeared to give us enough of a scope to conclude preliminarily that -- if there is enough for the government to do in the area of Trade regulation/facilitation to warrant a Trade-related agency -- it probably would be worthwhile to have separate agencies for Domestic and International Trade, as suggested in our preliminary Executive structure.

Moderator suggested that these factors probably have only limited dependence on Language, since whatever International Trade regulation/facilitation is going to happen would still need to happen whether we have 1 official language or 20 or 0, so we noted that we probably didn't need to consider the English-as-official-language Question as a condition precedent to dealing with this topic.

Subsubsection I-D-1-f-iv: Water & Power

Question 178

Does there need to be any Federal agency concerned with energy?

Panel in Session 107 (June 2003) agreed on Yes, since Energy is a topic of national interest and importance, and since we need to make sure that we are producing and/or importing enough energy to meet our needs, and that it is effectively distributed around the country (however that might be managed), and since Safety in production and distribution should be maintained at all times, and since we should be continually exploring and enabling new Energy technologies, and since we don't believe that we can rely on the Private Sector to take care of all these objectives.

Question 179

Do we agree that it would be good to manage Energy as a bureau within the Commerce Department?

Noted during Session 107 that we had eliminated the Commerce Department at the Federal level, choosing instead to break up the function into Domestic Trade (Domestic Affairs Department) and International Trade (Foreign Affairs Department). Water & Power had been made a bureau of the Domestic Affairs Department. So, the Question became whether we wanted to make any adjustment to that model.

We saw it as pretty much a Domestic Affair. It seemed to have too much of a science-and-research orientation to be a Public Service. We felt that it would be too involved with day-to-day administration to be a good fit in the Science Department. Moderator observed (without objection) that it probably is too narrowly focused to be

a separate Department. We concluded that it probably would be happiest as a Bureau within Domestic Affairs. [Everything got restructured later.]

Question 180

What functions or issues should be managed by the Bureau of Water & Power?

Basically, the areas mentioned in Answer 178 cover the general scope of the Bureau, if we include Water distribution as one of the main functions.

Panelist asked in Session 107 whether this bureau would cover Dams, and we responded in the affirmative, if they are concerned with interstate Water distribution and/or Hydroelectric production. She then asked specifically whether it would be appropriate for the Fed to get involved with a certain dam in Louisiana which allegedly was being mismanaged by the State government. [Remember, this was before Hurricane Katrina.] This dam apparently was entirely within Louisiana's borders, and apparently was in place more for flood-control purposes than Water or Electricity distribution. Moderator therefore suggested that it probably should remain a local matter. Panelist countered that the dam was in very poor condition, and that a severe thunderstorm might be enough to cause it to break, causing massive loss of life and property damage, and possibly destroying the Port of New Orleans, which she claimed was vital to the national interest.

This led to a broader discussion of the relationship between States and the Fed, since Moderator wanted to make sure that the Fed doesn't get to step in to take over adjudication of Local matters whenever they feel like it. We found in Answer 43 that the Fed can convert a State back into a Territory, with Congressional approval, if it finds that the State generally "ain't makin' it". Is a less drastic solution possible in less severe circumstances? Probably. Agreed that Fed can step in if the situation is serious enough, but we wanted to build in safeguards to prevent abuse of power.

Moderator mentioned possibility of requiring Congressional approval as a condition of any such action, but we were both leery of bringing every single little issue to the attention of Congressmembers, who must have a bunch of other stuff to do. Maybe we could simply get the consent of a Congressional committee. Panelist then suggested that the input of the Disaster Relief Bureau may be useful in determining whether the threat to public safety is sufficiently significant to warrant Federal intervention; Moderator liked this idea. Agreed that any Federal agency may step in to take over a State/Local matter if they obtain approval from the Disaster Relief Bureau on the basis of serious and imminent danger to the public. Also agreed with Moderator's suggestion that the intervening agency should also notify the applicable committee of Congress (made note at this time to make sure that there would be such a committee created in Section I-E), so that they would have the opportunity to reverse any interventive action taken by the Executive Branch, though the Exec would not need to wait for Congressional approval before proceeding.

Generally as to Water, panelist asked whether our previous findings as to Water quality (we had found in Answer 165.5 for individual choice on Fluoridation, and local management of Chlorination) had any bearing on the discussion: Answer was Not Really, since Water quality is basically a Local matter, whereas the present Question concerns itself with distributing Water effectively to all areas of the country, and adjudicating inter-jurisdictional disputes as to Water rights.

Disputes among Nations should be adjudicated by the I.O.O.

Any planning by the Water & Power Bureau for distributing water from a given water source should take into account the potential ecological impacts to the locality. Best for the Federal agency to notify the applicable State governments, who would then relay it to the applicable Localities, who could then send representatives to testify at informational hearings conducted by the Fed prior to its taking any constructive action. Will the Fed listen to the Locals? If they are doing their jobs well, then they will want to pay serious and sincere attention to the input of the knowledgeable Local people. They may have reasons for finally doing something else, but they should at least listen. But, government agencies often fail to do their jobs well. But, we have greater accountability in our model than we currently do in real life.

Pretty much everything else to be done by the Water & Power Bureau is a matter of case-by-case judgment.

Subsubsection I-D-1-f-v: International Trade

Question 181

What regulatory steps -- if any -- do we need to have in place with respect to import or export of goods?

Tough to address this Q without the economic concepts to be developed in Part II.

New panelist in Session 108 (September 2003, first in 3 months!) suggested that -- whatever we do on Economy and Currency and Trade -- we want the system to be fair, such as by being able to impose tariffs on nations which impose them on us.

We may want to default to having no regulations, but that could present problems, such as when a large foreign corporation (AT&T? McDonald's?) enters a developing country and causes more harm than good.

If we have a problem dealing with some nation on account of alleged human-rights violations or some other philosophical or political difference, then we can enact temporary trade barriers with them, if we really want to be so stupid as to restrict the flow of incoming goods. However, this would not necessitate the erection of permanent regulations.

Question 427

Shall we have measures on the books to prevent monopolies?

Discussion of market-share problems in context of Q181, packaged in the Third Pass as prelude to later Question: Tentatively agreed in Session 108 that we would prefer to prevent any one concern from getting too large of a share of the marketplace, but we probably couldn't hope to enable such a provision internationally, and De Beers is just going to need to keep its big diamond monopoly. That being the case, do we really want to prevent the import of diamonds into America, or restrict the flow by imposition of a tariff? Answer is probably negative, since we don't want to punish the American people whose needs and desires the Government is supposed to serve.

Question 181 (continued)

What regulatory steps -- if any -- do we need to have in place with respect to import or export of goods?

We were leaning toward no regulations, but we wanted to think about it some more.

Panelist in Session 109 (December 2003) asserted that the xenophobic approach is unsustainable, on account of inherent conflict. But, some conflict is inherent in many systems? On further examination, we felt that a particular type of conflict which is found to be problematic is where different rules apply for different participants.

In the specific case of Trade, we wanted to show that more than minimal regulation among trading partners is going to cause more problems than it will solve. Given, though, that many people -- including American manufacturers and labor unions -- perceived that we should maintain isolationist trading practices, this promised to be a non-trivial challenge. Two arguments which might help are (1) that as consumers they can expect to pay less for their goods in the absence of tariffs, and (2) that it's better to be an average Joe in today's economy than Pharaoh in ancient Egypt, which comparison can be extended into the future by allowing more entities to participate in economic competition with one another, which is facilitated by minimizing tariffs and other trade restrictions.

No other regulations were decided as to import of goods, except that agencies such as the current FDA and EPA should apply their same standards to imported goods as to goods manufactured in this country.

Subsubsection I-D-1-f-vi: Labor

Question 182

Are there any functions which need to be handled by a Bureau of Labor, other than simple statistical accumulation?

We did not see as of Session 109 any references to Labor in our model executive structure, or in our notes for the preparation thereof. We agreed now that there should be labor laws, which would be enforced by the applicable law-enforcement agencies, but saw no need for an administrative agency (other than for Statistics, which would be kept by the Bureau of Census & Statistics). Any disputes could be handled civilly through judicial litigation or arbitration or other similar means. [We modified our position in the Second Pass, and added a Labor-related agency to our model.]

Question 183

Whether or not there are any other legit functions to be handled by the Bureau of Labor, should the collection and/or analysis of labor statistics be here, or elsewhere?

Both for specialization of functioning and for minimization of redundancy (and also for cross-referencing among different types of Statistics), we felt it best in Session 109 to keep all Statistics-keeping in one agency.

Subsubsection I-D-1-f-vii: Transportation

Question 184

What functions or issues should be handled by the Department/Bureau of Transportation?

We identified the following in Session 110 (January 2004): Interstate highways, major bridges (including possible certification of engineers), air traffic control, rail traffic control, security for interstate transportation, land appropriations, regulations on transported goods, pilot/conductor training, satellite control for the Global Positioning System (GPS), highway maps, safety regulations on individual vehicles, and future space transportation. We felt that this agency should not be involved in ferries, research & development, auto traffic control, measurement standards for gas pumps, time-zone definitions, or 'black book' suggestion of auto-emission controls.

Debated whether to enact safety regulations such as seat belts and helmets at the Federal level. Moderator preferred that such issues happened locally, to allow for different communities to have different preferences as to the degree and types of regulations which they desire to have; new panelist preferred to see it at the Federal level, both to increase efficiency of the regulatory process and to mitigate corruption of regulatory officials. Agreed to compromise, to allow for some regulations to be enacted and administered at the Federal level, and others to be done more locally.

Question 27 (continued)

Should an i.o.o. set laws for the entire world, or just for those nations who choose to be members?

Side note recorded during discussion in Session 110 of Federal transportation policy: The I.O.O.'s Environment Committee (or whatever it ends up being called) would have jurisdiction over any national environmental policies (damming, poaching, etc.) which impact other Nations. Allow an appeal process.

Question 185

Should a State be able to create highways within its own geographic boundaries, without involvement from the Fed?

A lot of orientation occurred in Session 111 (February 2004), since a new panelist hadn't read any of the literature beyond the Calendar entry.

Agreed that the Fed generally has no business either specifically approving or specifically forbidding construction of a highway which does not cross any State border. One exception is if it can be robustly demonstrated that a given construction in one State will have a significant negative impact upon some other State, in which case that other State has a say, and can bring the issue to Federal court if needed. It is not sufficient for there to be a simple absence of positive impact, since that's equivalent to the previous *status quo*, but a definite negative impact is sufficient.

Another exception is if the highway is planned to cut through a national park or other federally-owned land, in which case the Fed should have approval authority.

Question 186

Should two or more States be able to pool their resources to create highways crossing State boundaries, without any involvement from the Fed?

Absolutely. In fact, the more that can be done without higher oversight, the better.

Question 187

Should the Federal government be able to mandate speed limits on any highway in any State?

Agreed in Session 111 with the idea that State authorities have much more knowledge about the specific features of each highway, such that they are in a much better position to determine appropriate minimum or maximum speeds.

Question 188

What about the issue of national energy consumption, which resulted in the 55mph limit imposed by the Fed in the 1970's?

Panelist in Session 111 suggested that something like this might be okay, if approved by a vote of State governors or other State authorities. We speculated that they might claim that approval by a legislature of State representatives (if such a thing ended up existing in our model) is sufficient to indicate State approval. Panelist responded that this is another reason why the Fed shouldn't try to mandate such issues to States and Localities at all, another reason being that such issues do not affect all States equally. Maybe best for the Fed to simply recommend. We concurred that something which needs to be mandated probably shouldn't be [!], since the higher authority was unable to convince the lower entities to go along voluntarily. Also, certain States might not enforce such a law anyhow, so the Fed probably shouldn't bother trying to make something like that happen nationwide.

Question 189

Should air-traffic controllers be permitted to go on strike?

Moderator introduced this topic in Session 111 by noting that our response might depend on what we would decide in Section II-E as to Labor and Striking in general. Panelist responded that she felt that we could answer the Question at this time, without needing to treat the general topic first.

Regardless of what we later conclude as to Labor and Unions and Striking, panelist asserted (and, Moderator was strongly inclined to agree) that there is an overriding public interest in workers within certain industries not being allowed to strike, including Police officers, Hospital workers, and Firefighters. In the case of Air-Traffic Controllers, not only would we have the serious public-safety threat which Moderator anticipated [even with advance notice], but panelist also offered that there would be way too severe of an economic impact if goods could not be delivered, if businesspeople couldn't make their meetings, etc.

Moderator offered that he had a personal bias against Organized Labor and striking generally, though he expected to support the option to strike when we got to Section

II-E, so we wanted to make sure that our response here was not unduly influenced by that bias. Panelist's response was that -- while she concurred that striking can be taken to unreasonable levels (such as with the recent action by grocery workers) -- she didn't feel as though she had a particularly strong bias as to labor and striking, one way or the other, so she felt that we had reached a pretty robust Answer.

In looking further at the possibility of bias within our panel, Moderator sought to anticipate whether we could convince the more militant Labor leaders -- particularly among the Air-Traffic Controllers -- that our argument was valid and reasonable, for our failure to do so might indicate that maybe we're not totally correct in our thesis after all. Panelist hypothesized that maybe we should just have the Fed set the laws, and require the individual employees to obey them or else flunk out of being an Air-Traffic Controller (ATC). In response, Moderator called up the argument which we had just recently made about the Fed dictating policy to State and Local governments; if we cannot convince them to go along voluntarily, then maybe it's a bad policy which we shouldn't be trying to enforce.

The above argument against striking by ATC's looked good to both of us at the time, but we noted that maybe it's not really the best approach, and that maybe we really were allowing personal prejudice to influence our Answers. Agreed that we should consider this further.

Another specific point to consider is that the job conditions which an employee assumed at the beginning of her employment might change over time. We need to consider whether an aggrieved ATC has any reasonable recourse if she doesn't have the possibility of striking.

Moderator also sought to consider the possibility that making the working conditions too severe (possibly including a prohibition against striking) might motivate the more-qualified people to blow off the job, putting us in the hands (literally) of inferior personnel.

On further discussion, Moderator realized that it's not really reasonable to expect to convince the ATC's of the reasonableness of our no-strike policy: Recalling our earlier discussions on Corruption [cf. Answer 3.7], Moderator noted that a lot of people will have a natural tendency to give personal interests precedence over a clearly-superior public interest, meaning that their bias against the policy might be more severe than any bias which any of our panelists might have against Organized Labor, so we could impeach and ignore their counter-argument. Thus, we can be satisfied of the robustness of our policy if we can simply convince a preponderance of the General Public and the Political Community, which we felt should be fairly easy to do with the arguments which we had here developed.

On the possibility of needing to settle for less-qualified personnel, non-author panelist pointed out that this is a free-market consideration, such that the Fed would seek to improve salaries and/or benefits and/or working conditions and/or other parameters in order to attract better people. However, in no case would we want to allow striking as a concession for such attraction.

As to the possibility of initially-acceptable conditions becoming unacceptable over time, we now identified two possible recourses which do not involve striking: Specifically, they can go to the Personnel Bureau of the Administration Department, which agency could/would have broad influence (if not actual power) to effect or

encourage changes among operating agencies. If this proves inadequate, then the allegedly-aggrieved employee could always initiate a civil suit in the (hopefully) independent Judiciary Branch. If that doesn't work, then we guessed that the employee needs to suck it up. Panelist also noted (and Moderator agreed) that such an employee who still bellyaches at that stage is not someone whom we want in a position of critical public trust.

At this time, we reviewed the notes in our 'black book' of preliminary ideas, and raised a couple of additional points: We agreed that an ATC walking off the job while his planes are in the air, particularly without arranging for adequate coverage, is presenting an immediate and serious threat to public safety, enough that the individual should be subject to criminal prosecution and whatever punishments may be forthcoming. (the Rack??)

If threatening to strike with notice, notwithstanding the notes in the 'black book', we now found that an employee who still bellyaches after pursuing the above-identified recourses has a potential conflict of interest which is so severe as to seriously compromise our trust in his performance, and that we should very actively consider immediate termination, rather than roll the dice with this person doing any further controlling work, even for free. Get out of my tower!

Subsubsection I-D-1-g: Justice

Question 190

Should there continue to be any Federal agencies concerned with the enforcement of Federal laws?

As of Session 112 (February 2004), "We would say so."

Question 191

Are we happy with the name 'Department of Justice'?

Panel in Session 112 felt that this is an appropriate name, given the agency's mission. It also was what the group stated in the model structure. Adopted.

Question 192

What should be the basic structure of the Department of Justice?

Guiding principle used in the model structure was that all agency names should clearly and accurately reflect what's happening in those agencies.

With the disclaimer that they had been composed before we developed our specific model structure, we read notes in Session 112 from our 'black book' of preliminary ideas, that there ought to be four main divisions: FBI (or equivalent), to investigate the possible violation of Federal law; Marshal's office (or equivalent), to provide the needed 'muscle' for arresting violators and restoring social order; Prosecutor's office, to present court cases against those accused of Federal crimes; and, Bureau of Detention, to administer Federal penitentiaries around the country.

Before we looked again at our model structure, panelist raised point that there might sometimes be overlapping jurisdiction between the FBI-equivalent and the CIA-equivalent. Generally, we perceived that the FBI-equivalent would concentrate on alleged violation of actual Federal laws by people currently sojourning within America's borders, whereas the CIA-equivalent would focus more on non-legislated military threats to our country, generally on the part of persons and organizations not based in this country.

Now looked at model structure, and found that the functions listed in the 'black book' all pertained to what we had designated as one bureau of the Department, being the 'Law Enforcement Bureau', to go with the other bureaus of Copyrights & Patents, Business & Securities, and Elections. Tentatively agreed to establish the functions listed in the 'black book' as Sections/Offices of the Law Enforcement Bureau.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

We wondered in Session 112 whether to keep Elections as a Bureau of the Department of Justice, as opposed to having it within the Department of Domestic Affairs. We noted that one of the original reasons for finally placing Elections within Justice (after much wrangling) was because much of their work would involve conformity with Election laws/regulations. Panelist not present for previous debate now suggested that another reason for keeping it within Justice would be that any checking of voter eligibility could be done more easily by the same Department which maintains fingerprint records of certain other individuals. In addition, any allegation of voter fraud could be managed more easily within one Department.

Question 192 (continued)

What should be the basic structure of the Department of Justice?

Panelist suggested that Background Checks might be a good function for this department, if only to check suitability for certain jobs, such as Police Officers or Air-Traffic Controllers. Moderator was receptive to this, provided that we make sure that their database is strictly limited to actual criminal convictions, and not what anybody had for dinner, or what people purchased on their credit cards, or what books they checked out of the library, or what videos they rented [remember, this was in 2004], or what Internet sites they visited.

Question 194.1

How do we make sure that the Government refrains from collecting unauthorized information?

We speculated during consideration of Question 192 in Session 112 [and rolled into this separate Question during Third Pass] that some agency reporting to either the Legislative or Judicial Branch should be charged with keeping tabs on how the Executive Branch does its thing.

Question 192 (continued)

What should be the basic structure of the Department of Justice?

With that, we agreed to have a 'Criminal Records' office as one of the five subsets of the Law Enforcement Bureau, the others being the Office of Investigation, the Marshal's Office, the Prosecutor's Office, and the Office of Detention.

Question 193

Should all of these report to the Attorney General?

Segmented during Session 113 (March 2004) into Questions 193a and 193b:

Question 193a

Should there be such a thing as an Attorney General?

Attorney General administered the Department of Justice as of Session 113, and oversaw the prosecution of Federal crimes.

Solicitor General represented the U.S. in front of the Supreme Court, and reported to the Attorney General; appearance could be as plaintiff or defendant or intervener (*amicus curiae*). Attorney General was not involved in civil litigation, only criminal. Solicitor General was mostly civil, but could still file briefs in criminal matters.

So, how did we want these positions to be configured in our model environment?

Agreed that we did want to have a position with primary responsibility for enforcement of Federal law. Also agreed that the functions of the then-current Solicitor General position should be handled by someone other than the Attorney General. No problem with changing these position names to something more clearly descriptive; specifically, we could call the AG the 'Chief Prosecutor' and the SG the 'United States General Counsel'.

Question 193b

Should the agencies of the Department of Justice report to either the Chief Prosecutor or the U.S. General Counsel?

Agreed in Session 113 that the Law Enforcement Bureau should report to the Chief Prosecutor. New panelist (a legal professional) wondered whether other bureaus also should report to the Chief Prosecutor; if their primary focus is Law Enforcement, then they should; if not, then maybe they shouldn't be in the Department of Justice in the first place. Solution may be to make the Attorney General a position separate from the Chief Prosecutor and General Counsel. Reviewed notes from Answer 192.

New panelist noted that we don't need to have all these agencies in one department. Moderator concurred, but noted his experience with large bureaucratic organizations that it's usually easier to coordinate related activities if related offices are organized together. Other panelist added specific reason that we don't want all government agencies to have access to all this information, lest we turn into 'Big Brother'.

Toyed with the idea of reconsidering Question 192: Moderator noted that the agencies then assigned to the Department of Justice had more of a legal emphasis; new panelist disputed this assertion, and felt that Agriculture and other agencies would need to spend just as high a proportion of their time dealing with legal issues.

New panelist moved at this time for a reconsideration of Question 192. Did we have group consensus to reconsider? She noted a possible personal bias as an attorney, in that she saw laws everywhere. On further discussion, consensus was not achieved to reconsider Question 192.

We could specify that the Director of Justice be a licensed attorney, but the lawyer panelist noted that this term can mean different things to different people. Perhaps better not to establish a specific minimum qualification to serve in this position, but simply to suggest to the appointing/confirming entities that those with stronger legal backgrounds should get preferential consideration. Discussion led to actually establishing a higher minimum qualification, not lower. Specifically, group leaned toward requiring both a J.D. and an MBA, the former because this position would have at least two attorneys reporting directly to it, the latter because the position would have primary responsibility for running a large bureaucratic organization.

Moderator asked about the fact that some degreed people don't know stuff and can't think well, whereas some non-degreed people are very mentally-skilled and knowledgeable. Non-lawyer panelist suggested that we could specify in our Education system that it should be made easier to achieve a formal academic credential without going through all the classes and programs; all agreed. Non-lawyer panelist preferred that we make experience as a Judge a minimum qualification for Director of Justice, but we did not end up requiring this.

Even though it was now expected that the Director of Justice possess at least the credentials of every attorney (and can therefore be deemed to be an attorney, regardless of what licensing provisions may exist in any State, Circuit, or other jurisdiction), we yet recommended the elimination of the title 'Attorney General', since we found that it is not sufficiently descriptive of what that job is responsible for at the Federal level. Therefore rested with the title of 'Director of Justice'.

New lawyer panelist clarified by e-mail during the subsequent week that the Solicitor General represented the U.S. in any Federal court, not just the Supreme Court, and that multiple people working out of that office could perform that function.

Question 194

Any other questions on any of these operations, or on the structure of the Department of Justice?

The same lawyer panelist expressed in Session 114 (March 2004) that she still had some reservations on the inclusion of certain functions in the Department of Justice.

Discussion of the Election function: We noted that the planned Federal office would primarily oversee campaign contributions and spending, and otherwise administer all Election regulations determined either legislatively or through referendum, whereas County offices would perform the actual Election administration, tabulate ballots, and check on voter fraud. But, one of the reasons why we included Elections within the

Department of Justice was to check on voter fraud more easily. Agreed that we should check the notes from when the previous model was constructed.

We identified from our original Answer 42 that Elections had been planned to happen in both Federal and State/Local. There also was a note suggesting that we “probably don’t need at Federal level, since personnel would be idle 3½ years out of every 4, and otherwise duplicating effort, and possible for Federal candidate to file in State election office.” Session 76 had Elections moved to Justice, with the rationale that it didn’t seem to be a good fit in the same department (Domestic Affairs at the time) which covers Parks and the Environment. Chart from Answer 48 showed that Elections had been moved from State/County/City to State/County in Session 90.

Key question, then, was why we didn’t move Elections from ‘Both’ to ‘State/Local’ in Session 43, given the note which we wrote down at that time. In the absence of any clear contemporary direction, we now felt that we could make our own decision:

Question 120 (continued)

Every election for every office in the country is decided by direct popular vote, except for the ticket of U.S. President and Vice-President, which uses the Electoral College established by Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution, and by the 12th Amendment: Should the Electoral College remain in existence any further?

On discussion of the Justice Department during Session 114, we concurred that we didn’t really need an administrative office for Elections at the Federal level, since the only actual National election is for President and Vice-President. Even if we introduce referendum/initiative at the National level, and whether we accept just an aggregate number of signatures or whether (as a current panelist suggested) we require a minimum number of signatures from some minimum number of States (the idea of this being to help establish that it really is a national issue), we still could have the State election offices submit their results to Congress, who (in the absence of the Electoral College) could oversee the tabulation of National elections and certify the results as needed. The function of making sure that National candidates stay within the contribution/spending limits could be conducted by an *ad hoc* task force within the Investigation office of the Law Enforcement Bureau of the Department of Justice.

Question 42 (continued)

What functions should be handled at the Federal level, and what functions should be handled at State or Local levels?

Therefore, we removed Elections from the Federal executive structure in Session 114, and moved Elections from ‘Both’ to ‘State/Local’ in the Question 42 chart.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Lawyer panelist asked in Session 114 about non-election bureaus then planned for the Department of Justice. Moderator discussed that there were two main reasons

for placing these in the DoJ, but not within the Law Enforcement Bureau, one being to distinguish Regulation enforcement from actual Law enforcement, and the other being to put enough bureaus together to make it worthwhile to have a department. Now that we had taken out Elections, the latter criterion was not as important, so maybe we could merge Business & Securities into the regular Law Enforcement structure, and move Copyrights & Patents to Public Services (for we are performing a service to those among the General Public who create these intellectual properties). Panelist added suggestion that Business & Securities might be a better fit within Domestic Affairs, but Moderator claimed that the other bureaus in Domestic Affairs had missions which were not primarily focused on compliance with fixed performance standards, whereas Business & Securities was much more focused on conformance with specific written standards. New panelist disputed this assertion, and claimed that the Bureau of Agriculture (as an example) is every bit as compliance-oriented as Business & Securities, so no prob to place Business & Securities in Domestic Affairs.

Question 125 (continued)

What guiding principles should be observed by government agencies?

While reviewing the structure of the Justice Department as part of Question 194 in Session 114, we added a general policy statement that we don't want government to be making any decisions about our actions based on subjective judgments. Rather, anything which they would have us do or not do should first have been approved and codified by the applicable elective legislature.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

On further discussion, two panelists expressed in Session 114 that they didn't want the Bureau of Agriculture performing any monitoring functions which aren't governed by a set of specific written standards, because we generally didn't want Government making subjective judgments on what they do or do not like about what private individuals and organizations do. Since we wanted specific written standards for this function, the monitoring function would more clearly become a compliance function. This being the case, we saw no reason not to include Business & Securities with Domestic Affairs, so Moderator acceded to the panelist's suggestion, and moved it.

Agreed to move Copyrights & Patents to Public Services. Therefore, the Law Enforcement Bureau became the entire Department of Justice, and what we had identified as Offices got promoted to Bureaus.

Question 193b (continued)

Should the agencies of the Department of Justice report to either the Chief Prosecutor or the U.S. General Counsel?

How did this decision impact what we had stated on Question 193? We agreed in Session 114 that the 'Chief Prosecutor' should be the head of the Prosecutor Bureau,

with no change to the Director of Justice, the U.S. General Counsel, or the elimination of the Attorney General and Solicitor General titles.

Question 191 (continued)

Are we happy with the name 'Department of Justice'?

Moderator asked in Session 115 (March 2004) whether we should change the name of the Department of Justice, since we were narrowing the focus of the Department to Law Enforcement. Lawyer panelist advised against it, since the General Counsel's office would likely have a significant workload representing the United States in non-criminal matters.

Question 193a (continued)

Should there be such a thing as an Attorney General?

Pursuant to the above continued discussion of Question 191, we decided in Session 115 to add a new bureau to the Department of Justice for 'General Counsel', to provide that position with all the bureaucratic support which may be required.

Subsubsection I-D-1-h: Citizen services

Question 195

Would there be any advantages to placing under one organization all agencies which provide direct benefit to citizens?

We changed the language of the Question during Session 115 from 'citizens' to 'American residents', in light of our previous decision to abandon the institution of Citizenship. [We restored it following reversal in the Second Pass of said decision.]

Some discussion of who would qualify as 'American residents' for the purpose of this Question, but we decided that we could table this.

Potential benefits include efficiency, central clearinghouse for all services, consolidation of records of who is receiving benefits, and easier checking on inconsistency and fraud.

Potential downsides are that someone who does successfully manage to create a second identity can access more services more easily, that workers may tend to field more questions and issues which actually are outside of their scope, and that outside entities can obtain more complete information on people more easily.

On balance, we felt that the potential downsides could be addressed operationally to a sufficient degree as not to outweigh the upsides, so agreed to combine into one organization.

Added a Question 195.5 at this time (on who would qualify as an 'American resident' for purposes of receiving benefits), but also determined that we needed to address the Immigration Question before we could answer it. Therefore also added Question 148.2 to the end of Subsubsection I-D-1-a, and started to address it at this time!

Question 148.2

What policy (if any) shall we set as to American immigration?

Non-author panelist opined in Session 115 that Immigration can serve a vital function, by providing new ideas, revitalization, diversity, and creativity. It also provides replacements for the Labor pool. In the case of America in particular, Immigration helps to foster the position which we had historically established internationally, of being the one place in the World where people can go to achieve Liberty and Opportunity if they're getting hassled too much in their own countries.

As to the Labor issue, the birth and growth of our own children may not be sufficient to fulfill all our needs and desires, so it might be beneficial to allow a supplemental Labor force to enter the country.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual need to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

Upon extensive discussion during Session 115, non-author panelist established that she didn't see how it would be possible for any nation to have an immigration policy in the absence of Citizenship. Moderator claimed that it is possible, since we had allowed for checkpoints at border crossings and ports of entry, and each sovereign nation would be free to establish any non-citizen criteria for prohibiting entry, whether based on Residence (however we may define that for the purposes of this topic, or however a given nation may define it for its own purposes), or on whether the subject already sojourned within that nation's borders for some given previous amount of time, or based on some other factor. Panelist's position was that any Immigration policy creates a sort of quasi-Citizenship through the imposition of a set of preferences or disadvantages on a group of people; Moderator conceded the effect of imposition. Further discussion. Panelist defined 'quasi-Citizenship' as "creation of rights, privileges, and responsibilities that are akin to Citizenship, but not designated as such": Moderator claimed, though, that a nation or other system can establish any combination of eligibility requirements (ER's) for any set of rights, without being "akin to Citizenship", and further that these ER's -- even as applied to Immigration -- don't need to involve Residency. After very extensive discussion, we appeared to reach a point of agreement (or, at least, acknowledgement) that it is theoretically possible to construct an Immigration policy which does not include Residency as a factor, even if it means that previous Residents who leave the area temporarily are shit-out-of-luck on their attempts to return. Dumb, but possible.

Question 148.2 (continued)

What policy (if any) shall we set as to American immigration?

Turning our attention back to American policy, non-author panelist asserted that it doesn't make sense to have an Immigration policy in the absence of Citizenship if we wish to maintain our value of American egalitarianism. Moderator concurred that an Immigration policy would be inconsistent with American egalitarianism, but didn't see that the Global institution of Citizenship entered into it. Panelist explained her position by associating American egalitarianism with American citizens only.

In any case, however we respectively viewed the value of American egalitarianism, entire panel wished to continue the role of America as the one place where people can come to, regardless of where they're coming from or why they're leaving. Therefore, we agreed not to have any restrictive Immigration policy.

Question 195.5

Who would qualify as an 'American resident' for the purposes of qualifying for the services to be provided by the Federal government to American residents?

When we introduced this Question in Session 115, we still had the No Citizenship model in effect. Within that context, we tentatively liked the idea (that is, if we could find a non-problematic way to make it work) of each Person having exactly one official Residence. Moderator also liked the idea of making it non-trivial to change your Residence, so that it wouldn't be so easy to vote in a whole bunch of different jurisdictions within a short time period.

Panelist in Session 116 (March 2004) projected that our attempting to limit service access to American residents only (however we might end up defining that expression) could negatively impact the ability of non-Americans to apply for Copyright/Patent protection here. We had not formally discussed Copyrights & Patents yet, but we had expressed some uncertainty regarding whether we wanted to manage that function nationally or internationally. Moderator now found that there may be way too much bureaucracy and individual involvement for international management to be practical. Also, panelist noted that we may not want certain inventions to achieve public awareness in all countries of the World. We were therefore thinking in terms of keeping it as a Nation-by-Nation function.

Given this, panelist noted that the then-current system allowed Copyrights & Patents to be registered in multiple countries, for the authors/inventors who wish to market there, and who are willing to abide by the rules and customs of those countries. (Example was cited of Japan's alleged practice of the time to allow unrestricted public access to any intellectual property while legal protection was in the process of being adjudicated, but panelist wanted to check the factuality of this citation.) We agreed that it would be reasonable to continue this practice.

Given this, we could either have the Department of Public Services generally restrict their services to American residents, and simply make an exception for Copyrights & Patents, or else generally open up the department to everyone; we preferred former.

For people who travel a lot, or who otherwise don't have a fixed Residence, maybe we should be allowing them to declare a place to receive mail, which might be relatively non-trivial to change. In any case, we felt that people shouldn't be disenfranchised who don't own or rent real property within American borders. Moderator suggested the possibility of determining Residence on the basis of where the majority of your stuff is. Panelist suggested having a declaration process which includes some qualifiers (maybe based on Time, maybe something else) which make changing non-trivial. But, we agreed that we wanted to allow for the very real possibility that people might need to move multiple times within short timeframes.

One of the panelist's problems with basing residency on Stuff is that you might have the majority of your Stuff with you in a temporary location (such as while attending College), and still have an affirmative intent to return to the jurisdiction where you had the greatest familiarity with -- and interest in -- the outcome of local elections.

Since we were not yet settled as of Session 117 (April 2004) on whether there should be a Residency requirement for soliciting any of the services of the Public Services Department, and since we might want some or all services provided by this Department to be provided to non-Residents (however that may be defined), we felt that this Question could be re-approached more generally as "Who gets to qualify for the services to be provided by this Department?".

Panelist suggested -- and Moderator agreed -- that the services of the Public Information Bureau should be open to all who request them, regardless of Residential affiliation.

As to Copyrights & Patents, panelist reported that she didn't have the opportunity to look up the Japan reference cited in Session 116, though she said that she still wanted to do it. However, we seemed already to have agreed that we wanted this function to be managed on a Nation-by-Nation basis, and that we wanted the American approach to be to open the services of this agency to everyone, provided only that they abide by our laws and customs.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

At a certain point of discussing eligibility for certain public services in Session 117, we were thinking that it would be best to simply review the remaining bureaus in the Public Services Department, to see how we felt about each, and then to draw any applicable generalizations from there. As we commenced this process, we noticed that Environmental & Consumer Protection and Occupational Safety and Public Health may be more national than individual, and that perhaps some or all of them should be re-classified into Domestic Affairs. Panelist suggested that one possible rationale for assigning them to Public Services is that an individual could submit a complaint about any of these areas, and derive an indirect benefit from whatever policy changes or enforcement increases might result.

Researched our earlier notes on the rationales of the original assignments: Session 77 had that Domestic Affairs was supposed to be a 'junk drawer' (the Moderator's paraphrase) of anything which happens within our borders but which does not classify anywhere else. Also, Environmental Protection and Product Safety originally were different agencies in different Departments, and got combined and assigned to Public Services later. Specifically, Environmental Protection originally was in the Domestic Affairs Department, and got moved to Science in Session 81; Product Safety was added to the Science Department in Session 80, since Science had Food & Drug Regulation and Measurement Standards, and since they all were involved with the safety and accuracy of consumer products and packaging; Environmental Protection was moved in Session 81 from Domestic Affairs to Science because some of those environmental issues could cross national borders; Environmental Protection

and Product Safety were combined together as 'Environmental & Consumer Protection', because of the similarity of functioning; Food & Drug Regulation had been dropped in Session 81, because the functions were covered in Environmental & Consumer Protection; finally, Environmental & Consumer Protection was moved from Science to Public Services because (1) it fit better with the Bureaus of Occupational Safety and Public Health (but, if these Bureaus shouldn't be in Public Services, then maybe Environmental & Consumer Protection shouldn't be, either?), (2) greater weight of regulatory officials, and (3) it made the Science Department less regulatory. Occupational Safety and Public Health were considered to be Category C (Health & Safety) in the original Session 76 listing, and remained there after that Department was expanded to 'Public Services' to include the function of Job Training; no other obvious rationale was seen for keeping these here.

Now considered possible re-assignment of some of these: Okay with previous decision that Occupational Safety shouldn't be in the Science Department, if they are going to be largely regulatory and enforcement-oriented in nature; if, however, they're concerned only with determining universal standards, and if we leave it up to States to perform on-site monitoring and enforcement (as well as establishing standards for more local industries and conditions), then maybe it could be moved to the Science Department; otherwise, panelist felt that it might fit better in Domestic Affairs, since people would not be deriving direct benefits from them. Moderator noted the irony of removing a 'charter member' of what originally was the 'Health & Safety' group of functions, which had gotten expanded to 'Public Services' upon the addition of Job Training. But, Job Training was no longer an agency at the Federal level of our model, because the function was considered to be part of the Social Services Bureau, which still was in Public Services.

On looking at the whole structure again, especially the fact that Job Training was no longer a separate agency, we started to find a lot more value in the original designation of a group of functions relating to Health & Safety. Environmental & Consumer Protection, Occupational Safety, and Public Health could all go into such a Department. Disaster Relief could also go there, since the idea of that agency is to help people who are affected by a serious disaster to be restored to a state of basic Health & Safety. Renaming 'Public Services' to 'Health & Safety', and then moving Copyrights & Patents and Public Information and Social Services to Domestic Affairs, would relieve the overlap problem which the panelist had noted, and which the Moderator reported as also having been more concerned about in recent weeks/months. But, would Copyrights & Patents be a good fit in Domestic Affairs, given that some/many of the users of that Department would be residents of foreign countries? Yes, because we were still talking about what's happening with those intellectual properties within these borders. Then, would Social Services be a good fit in Domestic Affairs, since they and Disaster Relief would both be concerned with provision of temporary housing? Yes, because Social Services would also be concerned with many more functions, including the Job Training which we had originally found to be outside the scope of a Health & Safety Department.

Therefore, decided at this time to rename 'Public Services' as 'Health & Safety', and move Copyrights & Patents and Public Information and Social Services to Domestic Affairs, which would then have 11 bureaus: Did we have any problem with that? We identified one which might not be so severe, being that one Department Director with so many Bureau Chiefs could easily have a lot harder time keeping track of the operations of all the individual Bureaus and the performances of the individual Bureau Chiefs. But, we were okay with hoping/expecting that individuals could be

selected for the different Bureaus who could relieve the Department Director of a lot of these concerns. We allowed for the possibility that this might need to be re-visited later [which it was], but we were okay to go with this revision for the present.

Question 195.5 (continued)

Who would qualify as an 'American resident' for the purposes of qualifying for the services to be provided by the Federal government to American residents?

We deemed this Question in Session 118 (May 2004) no longer to be applicable, except as to specific items which could be dealt with later.

Question 196

What functions should be administered by the Department of Citizen Services?

Found to be 'not applicable' in Session 118.

Subsubsection I-D-1-h-i: Post Office

Question 197

Should postal services continue to be managed by government, or should they be devolved to private enterprise?

Panelist in Session 118 asserted that it was then a private organization [challenged later], and suggested that it was doing okay as it was. Second panelist noted that the Post Office kept raising its rates, and suggested that maybe government should be overseeing rates and/or operations.

Moderator was leery of a private postal organization, since most regular people still send billions of pieces of mail every day, and they depend on an organization doing this reliably and at relatively low cost; if we make it private, then it would be a monopoly, and so would require government oversight. First panelist claimed that most mail would turn over to electronic venues in the near future, so a private postal service would need to keep rates low and the service reliable in order to remain competitive. Second panelist appeared to concur. Also, private organizations would have the means and motivation to operate more efficiently than a government organization would, and they also would be motivated to minimize the costs of any employee benefits.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Since the Communications & Transportation operations had been combined into one department in our model because because of the overlap element of the Post Office, and since that element was removed in Session 118, did we need these to be one department anymore? Probably not. OK to remove Electronic Communications and

Language Resources into a Communications Bureau of Domestic Affairs, though one panelist was concerned that involvement in launching satellites and other such might make the overall operation too big for one bureau; we recorded that we would see.

Question 198

Should the Post Office continue to be financially self-sustaining?

Rendered 'not applicable' as a result of Answer 197.

Question 199

What motivation does the Post Office have for keeping service timely, and for keeping costs to a minimum?

Rendered 'not applicable' as a result of Answer 197.

Subsubsection I-D-1-h-ii: Elections

Question 200

What are the functions of the Elections agency?

We had removed any Elections office from the Federal structure as of Session 118, but did we still need a place where people could file for national offices, and where signatures could be verified?

Question 42 (continued)

What functions should be handled at the Federal level, and what functions should be handled at State or Local levels?

After some discussion in Session 118, much of which related to the removal of the Electoral College (with which action one of the panelists was not totally happy) and other unrelated factors, agreed that we could keep the Elections function at State/Local levels: You file for national office in any State (doesn't need to be your State of residence), and they communicate with other States for verification of any signatures from those States. And, of course, State tallies could be combined trivially, without a Federal office.

Question 200 (continued)

What are the functions of the Elections agency?

As a result of confirming in Session 118 that the Elections function would remain at State/Local levels, this Q too was found to be 'not applicable'. [Reactivated later.]

Question 201

Shouldn't the election of Senators and Representatives be administered at the State level?

Session 118: "Yes, of course." [Third Pass: This is a leading form for this Q.]

Question 202

Should the federal Elections Office set any limits on campaign funds received, funds spent, or advertising space purchased?

All agreed in Session 118 that parameter-setting should happen at the Legislative level. If any monitoring needs to be done, then a Legislative committee or subcommittee can do it. [Modified later.]

Subsubsubsection I-D-1-h-iii: Statistics

Question 203

Should we continue to have a periodic Census?

Second panelist in Session 118 felt that we should, for otherwise we wouldn't know who we are. First panelist said that it depends on what we're using the information for, and noted that the original purpose of the Census was/is to determine representation for Congress.

Agreed that -- even if we change the structure of Congress in Section I-E -- there may be other uses for such information, and we probably couldn't rely on State/Local agencies to do it faithfully and accurately.

Question 204

But, if we have more accurate accounting of voter registrations now, including the earlier-discussed provision of registration expiration, then do we really need an exhaustive count of all citizens/inhabitants?

Possible reasons include shared government funding (which we hoped in Session 118 would go away), being able to provide services, makeup of Congressional districts (if we continue to have such representation), and generally knowing who we are.

Question 205

How often should the Census take place?

Two good reasons offered in Session 118 for keeping the 10-year timeframe were that it's approximately one-half of the current Generation Gap (so we'd capture any changes in between generational shifts), and that it's tied to our numeral base (so people could predict more easily that it's coming up, since it always happens in years ending in 0). Also, if we go too much longer, then we will miss a lot of useful information; if we go too much shorter, then it will tend to be cumbersome.

Question 206

What is the motivation of individuals and families to respond to the Census?

First panelist in Session 118 didn't feel a good motivation to participate, even if the information asked is relatively low. Second panelist wanted his identity to be known at different levels.

Even though the Government already knows much of our personal information, including residential address, it still is useful to have a periodic Census, both because some individuals may not be reflected in existing databases, and because Government information on the rest of us may be inaccurate or outdated.

Generally, different people have different motives for participating, some not at all.

Question 207

Some resident aliens may be reluctant to respond to the Census, since it may thus be discovered by certain authorities that they are "illegal" or "undocumented": How shall this problem be addressed?

First, make sure that it's widely known that any individual information will be kept strictly within the Bureau, with only aggregate data shared with other agencies.

Second, assess penalties for falsification or non-participation. Enforcement could be managed by random spot-check, comparing submitted information with what already exists in the government databases, and performing investigations of any anomalies.

Question 208 (continued)

Should all immigration be considered legal?

Already addressed in Question 148.2, with the Answer being Yes, in that no policy should be set.

Question 209

Don't we have only limited room to accommodate greater population?

Some aspects of the Immigration topic had already been addressed earlier, and some others were expected to come up later, so agreed in Session 118 to skip over Questions 209-212 for the present.

Question 210

Do we want to allow an influx of persons who are not subject to income tax?

Some aspects of the Immigration topic had already been addressed earlier, and some others were expected to come up later, so agreed in Session 118 to skip over Questions 209-212 for the present.

Question 211

If a lot of immigrants enter this country who are willing to perform certain kinds of work for lower pay than Americans, then wouldn't unemployment among Americans rise?

Some aspects of the Immigration topic had already been addressed earlier, and some others were expected to come up later, so agreed in Session 118 to skip over Questions 209-212 for the present.

Question 212

Legalizing immigration would make it much easier to import drugs into the country: Might this not be a good reason to ban it?

Some aspects of the Immigration topic had already been addressed earlier, and some others were expected to come up later, so agreed in Session 118 to skip over Questions 209-212 for the present.

Question 207 (continued)

Some resident aliens may be reluctant to respond to the Census, since it may thus be discovered by certain authorities that they are "illegal" or "undocumented": How shall this problem be addressed?

Second panelist in Session 118 remembered that a Third motivating factor is that we will send Field Enumerators to your home if you do not comply voluntarily.

Moderator added Fourth factor of simply wanting the Government to have the most accurate information possible, so that they will make the most appropriate decisions.

Question 213

What questions should be included in the Census?

First panelist in Session 118 suggested that we should ask for Age, Gender, Residential location, and nothing else.

Second panelist suggested that Occupation be asked. Moderator hoped that all Occupations would eventually be legal, or else people still might have a motivation to conceal certain information. First panelist insisted that some people still might prefer to conceal certain information, whether it goes to a possible illegality or not.

Acceptance of Moderator's compromise solution, to require participation on certain minimum questions, and to allow voluntary participation on all supplemental questions, since whatever sampling we can get is going to be way better than what the stupid polls of 1000-1500 people will ever tell us.

Minimum information should be limited to Name, Age, Gender (including Trans-Gender as applicable [even in 2004]), and Residential address of each individual.

Supplemental information may/should include Race, Religion, Employment status, Occupation, Educational background, Interests, Computers, Cars, and Household Income. OK with also including Sexual Orientation, with the note that 'Orientation' may be better than 'Preference', since the latter implies a voluntary choice.

Census can also include polling questions on whether warnings are needed/wanted for certain electronic images and/or for public utterance of certain vocabulary words. This should be a non-binding survey, and Legislators and Regulators may wish to maintain any existing restrictions if a diminishing minority which supports them is still substantial enough, or if they have some other reason for maintaining them.

Question 214

In both the current economic environment and the one to be described in Section II-A, there will be a need for the Government to monitor prices of various goods and services which are produced and provided in this country, to maintain basic price stability and to allow prices for particular goods and services to achieve their true relative values: Given what we have established as to the new Executive structure, which Government office is best equipped to discharge this function?

Domestic Trade Bureau of the Domestic Affairs Department.

Session 118 was our second most productive meeting, with 20 Questions dispatched.

Question 124.4 (continued)

In general, what Voting Method is best for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies?

Noted during Session 119 (May 2004) a revelation from a recent discussion on the general e-mail list for Los Angeles Mensa, that an added benefit of the #YesNoAbstain voting method is that it actually reduces the likelihood of a tie.

Subsubsection I-D-1-h-iv: Measurement Standards

Question 215

For what functions would we continue to need an operating unit for weights and measures?

Moderator objected to his own phrasing in Session 119, since the Question presumed that we do still need such an office, which to this point had not been established. Agreed to divide the Question thus:

Question 215a

Do we continue to need an operating agency for Weights & Measures?

Maybe not as of Session 119, since Measurement standards had already been set through long practice. But, how do we measure our various quantities? We need instruments on whose accuracy we can rely, so it would be helpful to have a Government office performing enough spot-checking of such instruments to keep the manufacturers honest. So, yes.

Question 215b

Would there be any other functions which the office for Weights & Measures would perform?

Non-author panelist in Session 119 thought of requiring this Office's approval for any patent application on a new measuring instrument. Our 'black book' didn't give any other ideas, so we rested with that.

Question 216

Should an office for Weights & Measures report to the Bureau of Statistics, or separately to the Department of Citizen Services, or to the Department of Commerce, or to the Department of Science & Technology?

Since none of the four agencies stated in the Q existed in our structure as of Session 119, we rephrased Q as “*Where should this agency fit in our Executive structure?*”.

Agreed that it provides the best fit with Science. Doesn't help Statistics operation all that much. Could have helped the Commerce Department, since the Trade function relies so much upon accurate measuring instruments, but we had broken up that function into Domestic and Foreign Affairs. Agreed, then, to leave it in its original place in the draft structure, as a unit of the Science Department which supports other Government operations as needed. [It still is there as of the Third Pass.]

Question 217

Should such an office continue to bear the name “Weights & Measures” or some other name?

Panelist in Session 119 suggested one reason for current usage as that many people associate ‘Measures’ with linear measures, as opposed to all measures collectively. She also noted that people are accustomed to the current usage, and suggested that it might not be worthwhile to change it, even though a generic name might be more rational. Moderator preferred to recommend the change to “Measurement Standards” from the ‘black book’ of preliminary ideas, both because “Weights & Measures” is technically redundant (you measure Weights, so why list Weights and Measures as separate quantities?), and because we’re recommending so many other structural changes that this would be as good an opportunity as any. Agreed.

Question 218

Do we want to promote the immediate change from ‘weight’ to ‘mass’?

This was a pet peeve of a certain Pasadena resident named Roy Begley (d. 2002), who brought it up in multiple City Council and Congressional District meetings.

Moderator preferred to make the change, but another panelist in Session 119 did not. Reason for the panelist’s disapproval was that ‘pound’ actually does reflect the force of gravitational attraction, whereas ‘kilogram’ is mass-only. Thus, we should make this change if and only if we ever convert to the Metric System (to be considered in Question 662.9), but not otherwise. Agreed.

Subsubsection I-D-1-h-v: Language Services

Question 219

Would it be helpful to have an office at the Federal level to clarify rules and standards for language?

Moderator of Session 119 lobbied in favor of such an office, citing that we could do a much better job of educating our diverse population, that we continued to receive a

large influx of immigrants, that English was rapidly becoming more of an international language (especially among diplomats who really need to communicate clearly), and that the then-recent definition squabbles on the national A2E list [the 'purple' group] demonstrated the difficulty which we then had even when communicating with other intelligent persons in our own country.

Another panelist suggested that such an office is not needed, citing that private organizations already performed this function (one being the American Psychological Association (APSA) for scientific writings, another being the Modern Language Association (MLA) for general writing), and that the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) and Webster's were standard reference sources. Moderator noted that the name "Webster's" was in public domain, and was used by several unrelated publishers of varying competency, and so did not actually denote standard usage.

Moderator asked how we could maintain any reliance upon these private organizations (including Associated Press, Strunk & White, University of Chicago, etc.) when there were so many bounding about. Panelist responded that most of these dealt with specific types of writing, whereas only the MLA was generic.

Panelist clarified in discussion that she still would favor private treatment even if the various private agencies did not exist, because Language is symbolic and is whatever is in current usage, and because a society's academics and scholars more often are the recognized experts on formal Language and monitor the shifts and evolution of modern Language, and because any Government effort to duplicate or supersede the scholars' efforts to study, describe, and standardize the Language would be wasteful.

Moderator: If this central source existed at the time, then why did we continue to have such problems in intranational communication, such as among the national A2E list? Panelist: Because people refrained out of laziness from checking these sources, and preferred to either go from personal recollection or look up a more convenient but less authoritative source.

Moderator: Might another part of the problem have been that many/most people simply didn't know about these sources? Panelist: If we didn't know about the sources, then it was because we were not being taught them, which was because the Educators didn't know themselves. Agreed that we do need to fix many problems in our Educational system, but were not sure that this is a reason not to have a central public reference source for Language.

Moderator: What would happen if we did change to having a central public reference source? Panelist: The uneducated people still would not know about it, because the Teachers wouldn't tell them. Moderator: Wouldn't it actually be more likely that this would get communicated, either because we specifically instruct them to do so, or because one public organization would stand out from the various private ones? Panelist: No, we can't rely on Teachers to teach certain things simply because we tell them to do so; we didn't really have multiple various private organizations, but rather had only two, the rest of which were variants for specific forms of writing. Moderator: We might be able to put stronger controls in our Educational system; still not totally clear on how changing would be worse than not changing.

Moderator: What if these certain private organizations ceased to exist, or if they did something kooky? Panelist: Other academic organizations had an interest in the continued existence of the APSA and MLA, because they had grown accustomed to

using those standards, and it made their lives easier to be able to rely on the continuity provided by these supervising organizations. It was unlikely that these organizations would do something really kooky, since continuity was important to them; even if they did, though, some people would follow it (simply because the Organization said to) and some would not (because they're happier with their current usage), and a standard preference would emerge eventually. Moderator: Would communication problems arise in the interim? Panelist: Not severely, since any changes probably would be fairly minor.

Moderator: But, wouldn't we want one standard usage, at least for important specialized communications, such as Politics or Diplomacy or Law? Panelist: Not seeing how a really big problem could arise in Political or Diplomatic circles. Was the Moderator aware of any real-life historical examples of such problems? Moderator: Didn't have any real-life examples offhand; it was more from many years of reading History and watching news reports and collecting other input suggesting problems arising from miscommunications. Panelist: As to Law, there was already a 'Blue Book' (which she believed was produced by the Harvard School of Law) which laid out standards for 'legal writing'. Moderator: What about resolutions on a ballot, or any kind of contract? Panelist: These were not part of what was known as 'legal writing', which included only legal briefs, filings, pleadings, and other documents which were internal to the Legal System; the generic standards would apply to contracts, legislations, and other documents which get viewed by the General Public.

Moderator: Still wondering whether this function really needs to be private, since a public reference source could be located and taught more easily, but may be okay for it to be private if it was already happening that way; needed to think about it some more. Agreed to rest the discussion at this time, absorb these thoughts during the week, and bring any additional insights and/or information to the next meeting.

Moderator clarified in Session 120 (also May 2004) that this function would cover both Vocabulary and Grammar.

Previous panelist continued to object to this being a public function, for a few main reasons, initially including:

- 1) If something can be done privately, then it generally should be. [But, noted at the time that we may not have previously agreed upon this.]
- 2) Existence of multiple private organizations suggests that different academic groups should continue to exercise supervision over their particular linguistic styles. [But, that doesn't mean that we shouldn't have a central source for general usage.]

Moderator and a new panelist supported the idea of having a government office for this function. Previous panelist offered three counter-responses:

- 3) They weren't teaching anything in our schools, so clarifying Language wouldn't help. [Another example of Everything interrelating.]
- 4) Grammar books already existed, so we didn't need a Government office. [But, how did those standards develop?]
- 5) There were both formal and informal approaches to English as Second Language.

Extensive additional debate, main opposition being that the then-current private custody of Language Standards was good enough, but Moderator still wanted the Language to be standardized for Education and formal communication, and to

communicate any simplification suggestions to a central body. On the latter point, panelist suggested that one should communicate any suggestions to the authors and/or publishers of Grammar textbooks, who probably would be able to point to different organizations and symposia.

Moderator suggested that we might have a bigger problem with evolution of Language [in America], since our population is [especially large and diverse]. New panelist suggested that the problem was really not that severe, and that Japan had greater diversity among its different Cities than we did between Coasts.

Previous panelist suggested that we don't want/need to copy what other cultures are doing. Moderator concurred, but would still be advocating for a central reference source even if no other culture had one.

New panelist suggested that this Office would pay for itself, by reducing Government waste resulting from miscommunications.

Moderator was not seeking to stifle anyone's creativity, and sometimes used informal constructions in front of certain audiences, but wished to be able to communicate formally with people in other parts of the Country or the World, and to be confident that we all learned the same rules for English.

Previous panelist still was not persuaded that a Government office was needed, because the rules and textbooks already existed, and they generally were in agreement, except possibly as to inconsequential points which don't affect comprehension. She asserted that any problems which occur in interpersonal communications stem from flaws in our Educational system, and from nowhere else.

Noted at around this point of the discussion that Legislative action could designate a private entity to have authority over designating rules and standards for Language.

Moderator noted that he tended to take people literally, but frequently misunderstood them, so differences did exist. Previous panelist noted that misunderstandings also stem from different styles of presentation. [Observed in the Third Pass that this statement contradicted her previous assertion that misunderstandings stem only from deficiencies in our Educational system.]

Moderator asked for an argument which didn't have anything to do with things already existing. Previous panelist presented an efficiency-based argument: When you do something in the Public sector, you're asking for complications, layers of bureaucracy, and other logistical problems; things can generally be managed more efficiently in the Private sector. New panelist generally concurred with this, but recognized that there could be exceptions; agreed. So, the Question became whether this function is one of the exceptions, and we conceded that the available evidence was not sufficiently robust, so we agreed to bag the concept for now.

Question 219.5

What should an office for Language Services be called, and where should it report?

Not applicable as of Session 120.

Question 220 (continued)

Shall there be one or more languages with which every resident/citizen of a given nation shall be expected to have some working familiarity?

In the course of considering Question 21 the first time during Session 30, we also reached a preliminary conclusion on Question 220. Specifically, we agreed that each nation -- including the United States -- should have one and only one official language, regardless of what we do with the institution of Citizenship, and that we were no longer going to print everything in multiple languages, except maybe in airports and at the diplomatic corps.

However, when we took up the Question in earnest during Session 120, we did not immediately take note of the previous finding, and we looked only at the context of America. New panelist said Yes to the Question as phrased. Previous panelist suggested that she would affirm the adoption of an 'official language', but objected to the text phrasing of this Question. Moderator read the notes from the 'black book' of preliminary ideas, viz.:

This is the so-called "official language" question. First, it must be understood and acknowledged that we are a nation which historically has been (and which we have earlier agreed to be) a congregation of many different cultures and languages, and there is no reason why such cultures or languages need to be abandoned when taking up residence and/or citizenship here. However, we need to be able to interact if we are to function as a society, and language--both spoken and written--is our principal means of interaction, particularly in political functions. Therefore, we can conclude that it is important for anyone who may have any interaction with government (including, but not limited to, political campaigns and voting) to be able to use the same language as used by those in positions of public service. Further, in emergency situations, such as a plane crash or a natural disaster, it is important that instructions from authorities be communicated quickly and understood immediately; if they have to be repeated in dozens of different languages and dialects, lives could be lost. (This applies also for traffic signs.) Still further, product labels and other printed items that have widespread distribution would need to be enormous, taking up valuable space and resulting in needless expense. Yet further, a particular idea that is communicated in several different languages can never be communicated in exactly the same way, since translations among living languages can never be exact, and we believe that it is counter-productive for different segments of the population to hear different messages, especially from the government on national concerns. Education also becomes a hassle, on and on. Therefore, while it is not necessary to discontinue the use of any language in certain private situations (including home, church, heritage groups, local business), each of us should be able to communicate with each other of us, in order for our society to function, so there should be one or more languages expected of everyone.

We agreed on having an 'official language', at least for purposes of Government publications, but still were fuzzy on the text of the Question. So, what does 'official language' imply, if not what is stated in the text of the Question? Answer is that there can be a social expectation without an official-language designation.

Having clarified that the text of the Question does not strictly call for acceptance of having an 'official language', Moderator still asked the Question in its text state. Agreed by all that this was a 'Yes'.

In addition, we wanted this expectation to rise to the level of 'official language', meaning that it is to be used for all official purposes, *i.e.*, anything involving the Government, including Education.

Question 221

Shall there be one of these languages, or more than one?

Referring to the text of Question 220 in terms of expectation of working familiarity, each panelist in Session 120 said '1'. Possible counterargument might be that expecting one or more languages would impede communications among people who don't already speak those languages. Valid response is about needing extra printing space and such, since a label could be printed in any of the multiple languages. Non-author panelist offered additional point that our communication is too poor now, so we need to have one or more languages of common expectation.

Another counterargument is that it becomes easier when having familiarity with multiple languages to communicate with other people outside of your social structure. Counter-counter is that we accomplish the same objective by having only one such language, and that we would be increasing the learning curve unnecessarily and exponentially to require more than one.

If we look at this Question in terms of 'official language', as opposed to an expectation of working familiarity, then no difference in Answer or arguments.

Question 222

For what purposes should any 'official' language(s) be used?

We had already decided in favor of 'official language' in the course of considering Question 220, so we got to address this Question as phrased.

Start with anything from or among Government entities, definitely including Public Education. However, Private Education is private (non-author panelists in Session 120 both said so), so they generally should be able to do what they want (subject to possible future refinements). Generalized the above such that pretty much all private entities have discretion to adhere to the Common Standards or not. This implied that we should end with Public Interactions as well as start with them.

Question 223

Does the selection of one or more 'official languages' constitute a violation of the Constitutional provision of free speech?

We all said No in Session 120. For one thing, we were not insisting that they use the Official Language, except for Government interactions. For another, a panelist who worked in the Legal profession cited that the 'free speech' provision goes to the content of speech, not the form, so no problem.

Question 224

Which language(s) shall be chosen as the 'official' languages of the United States?

Agreed on American English during Session 120, with the specification from Answer 223 that we are not seeking to infringe or regulate anyone's private speech.

We thought it okay to consider 'American' as being equivalent to the United States in this context, on grounds that the U.S. was the only country in the Americas which could have English as an 'official language'. [Corrected in Third Pass for Canada.]

Question 225

Shall we consider for the purposes of this discussion that there is only one version of English, or that there are multiple versions from which we must choose an official language for the United States?

Asked and Answered as of Session 120.

Question 226

If yes to Question 225, then which version shall we select?

Asked and Answered as of Session 120.

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We proposed Resolution #6 in Session 120, from page 31 of our 'black book' of preliminary ideas, as follows:

"For government and legal purposes, American English shall be considered the official language of the United States. Such resolution shall not preclude the use of other languages in private situations."

Acceptance of general principle, but panelist noted that we may have a problem including "legal", since that might move us to throw out a contract written in a foreign language, rather than do a good-faith job of trying to resolve it. This could create an inequity which would be more unfair than that coming from the Elections Office, since the contract originates as a Private Interaction. We thought about taking out " and legal" and adding " at least" after "purposes", but panel preferred to do just the former. Second sentence would indeed seem to make the extra phrase unnecessary, so we were okay with just dropping " and legal". Adopted as amended.

Question 227

Who should have authority to make a decision (or modify it later) as to 'official languages' in real life?

Leaned in Session 120 toward decision by an assembly which is designed to represent the views and interests of the Populace. It also could happen by direct Popular Vote, but Legislative designation probably would be more efficient.

Question 228

But, no such mechanism currently exists for national referenda on national ballots: How do/should we deal with this?

Question still is relevant, since we had left open the possibility for direct Popular Vote in Answer 227. Both panelists in Session 121 (May 2004) preferred for there to be national propositions on national ballots, and we agreed to make that an official group designation at that time, subject to modification when we got to Section I-E.

Question 229

How shall we address the fact that there are multiple variations in vocabulary and pronunciation even among different areas of the United States?

Non-author panelist in Session 121 didn't think that we should address it at all, because (1) it was not really a problem, (2) attempts to address this situation would require people to change in a way which would be violative of their Freedoms and Liberties, (3) differences should be celebrated instead of eliminated, (4) promoting homogeneity of Language might be inconsistent with our previous findings of No Citizenship [which finding we later reversed] and No Immigration Policy (though it would be more consistent with our designation of an Official Language), (5) potential ADA difficulties by requiring certain people to change their communications more than they're able to, and (6) asking for problems when deciding what the standard would be. Those her reasons might not have been exhaustive, but we decided to address them individually anyway, and then see where we were.

1 - Moderator offered counter-example of "Big Tom" and "Boston Rob" on *Survivor All-Stars*, when the latter often was unable to understand a word of what the former was saying; that was a pretty important situation, too, so addressing this alleged problem would make such interactions a lot easier. Also, regional differences had caused significant problems for America; when we can understand each other better, we increase our potential for getting along more peaceably. Non-author panelist raised the example of the Ebonics problem, but part of that problem was figuring out the extent to which we could require other people to change without being guilty of unfair discrimination. Moderator also noted the existence of multiple pronunciation possibilities for a given word in a given dictionary, and expressed that he was tired of it; other panelist felt that such additional possibilities would be helpful to foreign students who might be able to pronounce one variation but not another; Moderator felt that most people who could pronounce one variation could also pronounce all the others, but we saw that we might need to get more technical research on the point. In the course of the discussion, Moderator clarified that he was less concerned with how people pronounce their vowels than with how they pronounce their words; in other words, if two people in California and South Carolina prepared a dictionary of pronunciation, then they might write down different pronunciations, whereas Moderator would have liked them to be harmonized, but they still might pronounce the vowels slightly differently, which would be totally okay; even if there's a slight difference of accent, they still would fundamentally agree that it's supposed to be a 'long A' or 'short A' or whatever.

On further reflection, non-author panelist conceded generally that the designation of an official language logically implies a standard vocabulary and pronunciation, so it

does make sense for a standard to be designated by whatever entities have jurisdiction over the area. However, we both wanted to make sure that we are not impinging upon individual Liberty, nor eradicating valuable Cultural Diversities.

Question 230

Does the fact that a Federal office will be establishing standards for American English imply that American English will be a static or 'dead' language?

We recast this Question during Session 121 in terms of having designated American English as our 'official language'. Answer still was 'No', since the Language is going to continue to evolve, and any official supervision over the Language would be in the role of monitoring and publication, rather than forcing the Language to conform to certain Eternally Immutable Standards.

Question 231

By what mechanisms shall the Office of Language Services communicate its standards of correct American English?

Because we had determined in Answer 219 that there would not be an Office of Language Services in our model Federal structure, we began in Session 121 to consider this Question in terms of what the private supervising agency would do, or what conditions the Legislature might attach to its recognition of that agency. For example, they might require that the private agency publish a dictionary or other document every year or every five years or every twenty years or something, or they might even want to micromanage some of the specific points on Vocabulary or Pronunciation or some other element.

In the course of this discussion, non-author panelist acknowledged that any such Legislative findings probably would necessitate an Executive agency to implement them, or else they would need a Standing Committee to monitor the private organization. We agreed that that would be just about the worst possible place for Language monitoring to happen. She therefore was prepared to reconsider and modify our original finding on Question 219. Since the Moderator started from the position of having an Executive office for this job in the first place, he was prepared to go along with a Reconsideration without dispute.

Question 219 (continued)

Would it be helpful to have an office at the Federal level to clarify rules and standards for language?

We felt in reconsidering this Question during Session 121 that an Executive agency would be needed if we're going to have an 'official language'. Agreed that they shouldn't be 'reinventing the wheel', and that they should be paying close attention to what's already happening within the Private Sector, making specific reconciliation decisions only when necessary. Also agreed that this Office should be as small as practical. As far as we were concerned, they could take as long as they need to to put out their first official document, Quality being more important than Speed.

Question 219.5 (continued)

What should an office for Language Services be called, and where should it report?

'Language Resources' was the term which we had given to the Office in the original draft structure; no problem in Session 121 with retaining that term. Original assignment was as a bureau in the Communications & Transportation Department, which had been formed as a combined entity because of the overlapping presence of the Post Office, which we had since dumped. Language now therefore belonged [we thought] in Domestic Affairs. But, we already had a Communications Bureau in that Department, which bureau was concerned with Electronic Communications issues. Should this bureau absorb the Language function, or should we rename it and add Language as a separate bureau? Non-author panelist suggested adding Language as a separate bureau, but retaining the then-current name of the Communications Bureau, but we suggested that this could lead to confusion, since Language is part of Communication. Agreed to change 'Communications' to 'Electronic Communications', and to add 'Language Resources' as a new bureau of Domestic Affairs.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

After we decided in Session 121 to change 'Communications' to 'Electronic Communications', and to add 'Language Resources' as a new bureau of Domestic Affairs, the Moderator noticed that only a few areas remained in Transportation, and suggested that this function -- which appeared to be narrower in scope than Agriculture or Water/Power -- should be demoted to be a Bureau within Domestic Affairs. Non-author panelist suggested that it should be left as a separate department, since Infrastructure maintenance is so fundamentally critical to the functioning of our Government and our whole Country, whereas crops and energy could be imported from other countries if necessary. OK to leave as is.

Questions 220-226 (continued)

No change as a result of reconsidering Question 219, nor of Resolution #6.

Question 227 (continued)

Who should have authority to make a decision (or modify it later) as to 'official languages' in real life?

This authority theoretically could be moved to the Executive office, but we agreed in Session 121 that this is a Policy decision which is more appropriate for the Legislature, or for direct Popular Vote as a backup.

Questions 228-230 (continued)

No change as a result of reconsidering Question 219.

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At this point, one-third of the way through our Outline, we had been dispatching an average of 1.9 Questions per Session.

Question 231

By what mechanisms shall the Office of Language Services communicate its standards of correct American English?

Non-author panelist's Answer in Session 122 (June 2004) was that they should publish a book, with periodic updates; Moderator concurred with this concept. In discussion, panelist suggested that it could/should be a hardbound volume, but we felt that paperback might be better; some discussion on this point: Moderator felt that hardbound books would cost too much, given the necessity of periodic updates; panelist saw hardbound as highly helpful, just as Law codes were then published in hardbound volumes, since they were used by so many people; Moderator envisioned individual volumes to be handled by individual people, not so much by a bunch of strangers in a library; panelist saw possible use in schools, so hardbound volumes might be better; Moderator was also concerned about the possible perception engendered by hardbound volumes of a static or permanent Language.

We concurred that multiple different books probably would be produced, perhaps a Dictionary and a Grammar and a Punctuation guide. If so, then the Dictionary might change more frequently than some of the other books, so paperbacks might be more appropriate for some than for others. These volumes probably wouldn't be passed out to individual students in school, and they probably would keep one or more volumes in class for reference, in which case hardcover might be better.

On the other hand, hardbound books may encourage people to pay more attention and deference to the content than they otherwise would. But, would that be at too high of a price?

Moderator suggested that some people might want to buy these from regular bookstores for individual purposes, in which case they might not be used as often. Perhaps some portion of the proceeds could go to offset the Government's cost of production. In this case, people probably would want to pay less for their volumes; and, even if they're getting them for free, they might get pissed that the Government was wasting so much expense on hardbound volumes when the Language is going to continue to change.

Panelist felt that you would have no place to put updates if you have all paperback, as she envisioned 'pocket parts' within hardbound volumes where such paper updates could be inserted. Moderator felt that a smaller paperback update could go right next to the main paperback volume, until a complete new edition is published.

Panelist also felt that one of these items must be in every classroom if we are going to make the 'official language' plan work, and questioned on what Planet we could make the plan work without such presence.

The 'black book' of preliminary ideas didn't speak directly to hardbound versus softbound, but it did note that previous editions would need to be kept on file for reference, when evaluating contracts executed when those versions were current, suggesting the utility of hardbound volumes.

The final Answer was that the Bureau could make some of each, according to the type and frequency and breadth of usage, and the frequency and scope of any updates. [We found it quite humorous to review this discussion during the Third Pass, when physical books of any kind had become far less plenteous.]

Question 232

Are we sure that this [i.e., the creation of physical reference books for Language] is a justifiable use of Federal funds, considering that we are cutting so many other programs and services?

Moderator volunteered to strike the last phrase from the Question in Session 122, since we had not really established as a policy statement that we were trying to cut so many programs and services, this being a topic due to come up in Section II-B. Question was still valid and relevant without that phrase, though.

Non-author panelist answered the amended Question as 'No, but it is a logical use.' We originally interpreted this to mean that logical minds could rationalize it among themselves, but that we might/would have a hard time justifying it to the General Public or the Political Community or some other entity, but we thought (good!) to ask her about this before we settled on it. Turned out that she actually meant that it is a good use of Federal funds, but that she was not sure whether the Good outweighed the Cost, which matter we were not yet equipped to resolve.

Moderator suggested again the possibility that some/all of these volumes could be purchased by different people, and that the proceeds could help offset the costs of production, possibly to the point of zero Net Cost, or even to the extent that the bureau becomes a Profit Center. If so, then this could mean that this Question was not one which we needed to worry about so much. Panel concurred that the books should be purchased. [This matter was revisited in the Second Pass.]

Question 233

Given that American English is selected to be the official language of the United States, and that the Office of Language Services is in place to provide standards of communication, shall a minimum understanding of American English (written and spoken) be a requirement of citizenship, under the terms of citizenship as discussed earlier?

Deemed 'not applicable' as of Session 122, because we had earlier found that there should no longer be an institution of Citizenship.

Question 234

Shall any additional understanding of American English be required of those applying for driver's licenses?

Moderator struck the word 'additional' from the Question unilaterally in Session 122.

Panelist and Moderator both had mixed feelings. Moderator mentioned needing to follow traffic signs, but panelist pointed out that these could all be communicated pictorially; a speed-limit sign could be distinguished from a highway number by a

generally-understood scheme of colors and shapes. However, we agreed that they should be able to pass the test which is presented in the one-and-only-one Official Language, but that would be plainly evident by whether they pass the test or not. In addition, though, they're going to need to be able to communicate with Transportation officials ('Police' is not sufficiently descriptive, and we found the generic term 'Peace Officer' to be misleading), so they should have a facility above and beyond that which is required for test-passing purposes, so we concurred that there should be a Language test as part of the driver's-license application process.

Subsubsubsection I-D-1-h-vi: Disaster Relief

Question 235

Shall we continue to have an office at the Federal level for emergency relief in case of natural disaster?

Yes.

Question 236

Shall such an office replace such efforts at state and local levels, shall it supplement such, or shall such lower levels supplement it?

Non-author panelist in Session 122 suggested that "Fed shall supplement Local." Moderator personally agreed with this, but asked whether there might be some significant disagreement with that position 'out there'. Panelist said No, since that was how the process worked at the time, and she didn't perceive that there would be that much motivation on anyone's part to change it.

Question 237

What if state efforts to declare an emergency and to provide state relief are seen to be too slow?

Non-author panelist in Session 122 felt that it's up to the State to deal with it, and that the Fed should not be imposing itself unless and until it is asked to do so; to allow such intervention would be violative of the State's responsibilities to manage itself. Moderator noted that the Principle of Subsidiarity (see Answer 41) says that it's the lowest level which can adequately manage the function, which the State apparently is not in this type of situation; also, to force the victims of the disaster to live with those consequences is basically to penalize them for living within in a State which happens to be run by goofy people. Panelist responded that the People in the State were responsible for those individuals being in office, so they deserve whatever they get; Moderator felt that we might have a hard time selling that philosophy in the 'real world'. Panelist didn't believe that this type of situation could still occur with our modern communications technologies [but this was in June 2004, which was before Hurricane Katrina demonstrated how messed-up our communications could still be at all levels of Government]. Moderator added that the position of conditional unilateral intervention by the Fed was consistent with what we had said earlier as to the safety of regional flood-control dams.

Further discussion: Panelist claimed that our dam example did not apply, because that's a potential situation, so it's understandable that Local politicians might drag

their feet on it (since they're deciding to sacrifice long-term issues for short-term gains), whereas an actual disaster is a real and immediate event, so the local officials could be expected to respond if it is at all within their capacities to do so. Moderator noted that the Question covers both logistical limitations and problems resulting from 'red tape' or insufficiency of personal will. Panelist concurred that the Fed may step in if it's immediately clear to all 'reasonable minds' that the State has an unforeseen logistical incapacitation which prevents its ability to respond, but suggested that slowness resulting from any other factor is a matter of judgment, and that it would be inappropriate for Federal officials to substitute their judgment of appropriate response speeds for that of the Local officials, so they should not take any unilateral actions in such circumstances. Moderator concurred with this.

Question 238

How shall the Disaster Relief Office be funded?

Panelist in Session 122 asked how we are funding anything, and we noted that standard funding methods were to be treated later. Could we therefore answer this Question at this time at all? Checked the 'black book' for guidance, viz.:

Since the number and extent of natural disasters vary from one year to the next, along with the ability of states and localities to deal with them using their own resources, it would probably not be prudent to set a consistent budget amount each year to finance the operations of the office. Rather, staff actuaries should determine (and adjust on an ongoing basis) an appropriate level for a master fund, which would be kept in interest-bearing instruments that can be liquidated quickly. The amount of money kept in the fund should be high enough to provide sufficient relief when needed, but low enough to minimize the Fed's tax needs, and maximize the amount of money available for capital investment, which will benefit everybody's needs, including those who have been hit, or who may be hit in the future, by a natural disaster. Once the optimum level is determined for a given budget year, Congress can then see how much money is in the fund, versus what the actuaries feel is needed to maintain an effective but moderate safety net, and budget for the shortfall accordingly.

Panel agreed with most of this, particularly as to the need for budget amounts to be determined on a periodic basis, also as to the preference for keeping this funding level low enough as to not tie up Federal funds which could be better used for other purposes. One point of divergence was a panelist's inference (or feeling that it was implied) that "staff actuaries" refers to people who work directly for the Disaster Relief Office, whereas Moderator clarified that these people also could be working for general Budget offices.

Primary point of divergence was that it might not be most prudent to put actual funds in separate accounts, since the Government might be as inclined to raid those accounts as they had the Social Security Trust Fund in the past; this divergence may have resulted from general differences in our perceptions as to Deficit Spending, one panelist having actually expressed the viewpoint that Deficit Spending can be okay.

Agreed that it would be best to complete this Question after we had dealt with the basics on Government Funding & Spending. [Third Pass: We learned of MMT later.]

Question 234 (continued)

Shall any understanding of American English be required of those applying for driver's licenses?

Returning panelist suggested in Session 123 (June 2004) that she may have changed her position on whether Drivers need an English-language facility above and beyond that which is needed for test-passing purposes. At what point does the Government stop being paternalistic, and allow people to rise and fall on their own merits? Moderator suggested that it's when Public Safety is threatened, because someone can't understand when a Transportation official tells him/her that his/her actions are threatening the Public Safety. On further discussion, panelist clarified that she did concur about the "should" statement in the Q234 notes, but she did not concur that this rises to the necessity of a separate Language test.

We were invited to try to convince the panelist of our position. We mentioned that Public Safety is an important concern, but the panelist replied that every word and expression which a Transportation official could possibly have occasion to speak to a Driver will have appeared on the 'Rules of the Road' test (even the "Did" in "Did you see that Stop Sign back there?" appears in the expression "Did you sign your name on this form?"), though we were not convinced of the accuracy of this assertion. Even if it was true, though, we noted the big difference between written and spoken Language; even if one could make out the words in the written exam (performance on which could be facilitated by instruction courses geared specifically toward passing that test), one might not be able to understand the spoken word nearly as easily, and we don't want to rely on there always being a Transportation official near at hand who can speak that person's primary language.

Upon further discussion, panelist corrected her admittedly "sloppy" statement, and acknowledged that there may be some expressions which could come from a Transportation official which will not have appeared on the written 'Rules of the Road' exam. Given this, Moderator asked again whether there should be a minimum understanding of the Language above and beyond that which is required for test-passing purposes, and the panelist said Yes. Given this, and given that the bulk of what Transportation officials will be communicating will be related at least somewhat to Public Safety, shall we require an additional test? Panelist still said No. Moderator asked what we're afraid of by creating an extra test, and panelist responded that we don't want to give the Government something else to do. But, in looking at different traffic-stop scenarios, we allowed for the possibility that failure to understand an official who originally wanted to give just a warning or other general instruction might involve a traffic ticket and/or arrest if the Driver can't understand, and that's giving the Government even more to do. In looking at multiple different specific examples, though, including the whole bit about changing lanes without signaling, panelist raised various counterpoints as to why each specific example was actually non-problematic.

We therefore bagged the specific examples, and focused on the General and Theoretical: Given that a Transportation official has some issue with a Driver, something to say or a question to ask, or both, which is serious enough to warrant the consumption of time for both the Official and the Driver, and that some of what the Official is going to be saying could easily involve words and expressions which do not appear among the documents which the Applicant must read in order to obtain the license (there was some 'prescribed reading' which the Applicants were asked

also to read, which contained some additional language, but we can't rely upon them all doing this, if we can rely upon any of them at all), we could have a situation where not everything which the Official has to say/ask is going to be understood by the Driver: Is that the kind of setup which we want to have in our Society? Panelist agreed that it is not. Question then reduced to whether a separate Language-facility test will alleviate this condition to the extent of justifying its existence.

In the course of the preceding discussion, panelist suggested that some portion of the 'Rules of the Road' exam could be a free-form essay section, which would allow assessment of the Applicant's language facility. Having written up the previous discussion, Moderator now addressed two points in response to this suggestion: First response was that this separate free-form section would be basically tantamount to what Question 234 was asking in the first place. Upon further discussion, we settled on this being the case. Panelist said that she still didn't completely concur that a separate test is needed (though she acknowledged that this is basically the same as having two sections of the same test), but she was prepared to consent to it, which we deemed good enough.

Brief discussion of format: Agreed that an essay format would introduce too much subjectivity, even if the subject matter is on the Rules of the Road, so we probably should have some sort of SAT-type format, which still could be on that subject.

Subsubsection I-D-1-h-vii: Patents and Copyrights

Question 239

Any objection to continuing to maintain an office for Patents and Copyrights, or to placing it within a Department of Citizen Services?

Unfortunate phrasing of the Q, but we noted in Session 123 that we would do our best: No to first part, Yes to second part, as we had agreed to put it in Domestic Affairs, and we saw no reason to change that assignment at that time. [Did later.]

[We later noted for reference that we had already decided in Session 116 (within context of Question 195.5) that there may be way too much bureaucracy and individual involvement for international management to be practical, and that we therefore did want to have a Federal agency for Copyrights & Patents.]

Question 240

Should the Patent Office and Copyright Office be financially self-sustaining?

Moderator noted in Session 123 that this may have been the first Question since the lawyer panelist joined us (this was her 11th meeting) on which he was totally open to whatever was offered by groups. Answer offered by that panelist reduced to 'It depends': If there is enough volume of activity that the Offices' unit costs and overhead costs could be apportioned among all applicants, and still keep the fees at a fairly reasonable level (whatever that means), then Yes; if the volume is so low -- or can get so low -- that apportionment of overhead costs among applicants would raise fees to an unreasonably-high level, then No. Moderator agreed.

This was about as far as we could take this Question without getting into specific pricing models of overhead costs, which would be way beyond the scope of the

present exercise. However, panelist added that this function is so vital to our Society that we should make sure that the Office is adequately funded, even if there's not enough income from applicant fees to make the Office self-sustaining. For whatever it may have been worth at that point, panelist added that they should try to reduce Expenses before they set about to raise Fees. Moderator added that this certainly is a good philosophy, but that we would need later to figure out ways to compel such cost minimizations, and/or to demonstrate to the Agencies that cost minimization is in their interests, neither of which is a trivial challenge.

Question 241

What is the motivation for Patent and Copyright offices to minimize their operating costs?

We didn't think of anything offhand in Session 123, and were tempted to blow this off until the following week, but we read from the 'black book' first, *viz.*:

Two things: Hopefully, those offices would realize that keeping costs (and, therefore, fees) as low as possible would encourage filing of useful inventions and written works. In addition, operations of those and other offices in the Department should be continually monitored by the Secretary of Citizen Services and the U.S. Vice-President, to make sure that quality of service is maximized and cost of service is minimized, as their own positions (as previously discussed) may be in jeopardy if the public perceives the contrary.

Moderator was not thrilled about the first part, because a line employee or middle manager simply wouldn't care very much how many of these intellectual properties were being created, especially if their operating costs -- or large portions of them -- are underwritten by tax dollars. We felt better about the second part, particularly in that we had already expanded the role of the USVP to be more of a hands-on C.O.O. who would monitor the quality and operating costs of each Department much more closely, and had also gotten rid of Civil Service protection, so that Government employees and managers would be on the hook for poor performance or excessive operating expenses. But, we would look at this Question again before we finished.

Panelist in Session 124 (June 2004) didn't feel that a possible adverse job action would be sufficient motivation for line employees and middle managers to minimize operating costs, but she didn't know offhand what other factors might help more. Moderator suggested that a possible additional factor might be the prospect of having their operations reviewed and possibly changed by the Legislative Branch, if they once arrive at the collective impression that the fees being charged are too high. But, on what basis would the Legislature reach this determination, since that's basically the only place in this country where that sort of thing is happening? (No private-sector equivalent, and we didn't feel that a comparison with other countries would be very reliable.) Perhaps they could respond on the basis of multiple complaints received from new Authors and Inventors, or look at the historical pattern of fees as compared with the Consumer Price Index or other such measure, or assess the fee rate as a percentage of income earned from the intellectual property. As to the last possibility, though, the picture would be incomplete if high fees are turning off multiple potential Authors and Inventors.

In general, we didn't see much that we could do with this agency beyond what we can do with Government agencies in general, and that's not much more than

negative reinforcement, by threatening job actions and/or operational reviews if higher management or 'the other Branch' perceives overly-high operating costs and/or unsatisfactory quality of performance. Can probably also do things as far as Employee-Of-The-Month-type recognitions of positive performance.

Question 241.5

For how long should a given Patent or Copyright remain valid?

Panelist in Session 124 suggested 50 Years as a nice round window for Copyrights, since anything used after that probably is part of the overall Culture, and other people would want to be able to reference it freely. In the case of Patents, objects become obsolete a lot faster, so the duration of protection need not be as long.

Moderator was basically okay with this, but suggested a couple of possible enhancements. One possibility is to make a Copyright valid for the 50-year (or other) period or the lifetime of the Author, whichever is longer; panelist was okay with this. Agreed that we don't want it to be for the lifetime of the Author only; Moderator's reason was that it would create a motivation to bump the guy off; panelist's reason was that it would diminish the earning capacity of the property if the Author is elderly, since a prospective licensee wouldn't want to pay a lot for rights which would not have a very long duration.

Moderator also was concerned about the potential for Heirs to benefit from the intellectual creations of Ancestors. Panelist observed properly that it is generally okay for an individual to pass on accumulated wealth to any designee(s) of his/her choice, but Moderator was not sure about the extent to which this should extend to income not yet realized. On the other hand, income may be considered as earned if the property was created earlier. Of course, much of this goes to basic Inheritance topics scheduled to be taken up in Section II-G.

We considered adjusting the 50-Year-or-Lifetime model, as the non-author panelist toyed with the idea of increasing the value of the estate for descendants or other beneficiaries, but Moderator didn't see a particularly compelling reason to do this, so we were okay with leaving it as it was. Panelist noted, though, that the provision could create a problem if the original Author is a corporate entity; agreed, then, that the Lifetime option wouldn't apply unless the original Author is one or more natural persons. With the Lifetime option, Renewability is not a necessity. Toyed with the idea of allowing Renewability if the original Author is a corporate entity, but agreed that this would present a problem of consistency.

Back to Patents, panelist originally thought of a 5-Year initial term, but we agreed that that might be too narrow of a window to allow Development and Marketing and Production and Distribution of the new product in time for meaningful income to be realized; 10 Years is much better. But, why not make it an indefinite period? Because, Society also has an interest in eventually getting public-domain access to the property, and because another developer might be able to get the product out there if the original Inventor cannot, and we would like that person to have an opportunity to do so while the invention still is useful. We thought that beyond 20 Years, Society's public-domain interests kick in, and/or the utility of the invention might have diminished beneath the motivation for anyone to initiate an original Development and Distribution. Should we just make the period for 20 Years, or add a Renewability step? Agreed to make a 10-Year primary term, with option to renew

for another 10 (with payment of the applicable fee for the extra period of protection), so that the Inventor doesn't need to pay for the full 20-Year term if he/she decides that it wouldn't be fiscally worthwhile to do so.

Subsubsection I-D-1-h-viii: Social Integration

[Observed in the Third Pass that this title is highly misleading, because it probably would suggest Racial Integration to many people, which is a separate topic for Part III, whereas the present series of Questions concerns getting Homeless people reintegrated into society. We therefore will need a better title at some point.]

Question 242

How shall we deal with the problem of homelessness in America?

Moderator of Session 124 read from the 'black book', viz.:

Seven possible choices:

Kill them;

Arrest them;

Deport them to some place where we won't notice them;

Force them into the Military;

Let them stay as they are, where they are;

Give them a whole lot of our money and let them run amok; or,

Help them to reintegrate into society.

Panelist suggested that Killing and other such options might constitute violation of individual Rights, but Moderator responded that we had not yet adopted any such Rights in our model. (To our immediate recollection, the only Rights which we had actually established were Voting Rights, which expire when a person is no longer alive.) We then looked at Answer 38, and noted that we had adopted the American basic value of Maximum Personal Freedoms, and we concurred at this time that this would tend to speak against the first four options. Our discussion of Question 38 also included a general affinity for the idea of a one-stop-shopping place for Homeless and Immigrants, though we noted at this time that we were not bound by that preliminary finding here.

We examined the three remaining options with two new panelists in Session 125 (September 2004), viz.:

Let Them Be - It would be a problem to do this, because people don't want to see or smell them, because they drive customers away from businesses, because they present a Public Health hazard, because they frequently accost people, because they may be mentally ill and could be dangerous, and because we want to help them all. It's broadly identified as the Homeless problem because we don't like the *status quo*.

Give Them Money - They may not use our money very productively -- or at all -- if we were to give it to them, and there was no indication that any improvements would be permanent, so we wouldn't necessarily be solving the problem this way.

Help Them Reintegrate - Agreed that helping the Homeless to reintegrate into society is the best approach, both for their sakes and for ours.

Question 243

Should the mission to help the homeless reintegrate into society be a government function, or should it be left to private charities?

One panelist in Session 125 noted that absorption of the problem by the Fed could be a porkbelly project, while private organizations could be beset by corruption.

Second panelist wondered whether we needed to address the basic Economic principles before we could address the present Question, but yet suggested that a better approach would be to set these people up in low-cost housing and provide them with some kind of training, rather than to just give them a monetary gift and let them go with it.

Question arose about whether individual Rights to not be reintegrated override any public Right to be rid of the Homeless.

Also considered possibility of some people being beyond the possibility of reintegration, and what we might do with them.

Moderator noted that he would love to be able to entrust the Private Sector with fixing Homelessness, but was afraid that we cannot, else they would have done so already, and because they might have even fewer resources under our model than they had as of Session 125 (since we might have decided later to discontinue Government matching of charitable contributions). If we really want to be satisfied that this problem is being satisfactorily addressed, then there should be at least some Public involvement.

Second panelist added that it's a basic quality-of-life desire to know that the worst-case individual scenario would not be below a certain level, and Moderator concurred. Agreed, then, that Government should attempt to provide at least the minimal amount of support necessary to maintain a minimally tolerable standard of living for Everyone, along with the opportunity to reintegrate into society, and that Private charities can do anything supplemental which they may desire to and can do.

Question 244

By what means shall government address the problem [of homelessness]?

Panelist in Session 126 (October 2005 - yes, over a year after the previous Session!) noted that some people may not want Government help, but we responded that they're gonna get it if they stay in our Society. Live out in the woods by yourself if you want to, but Society has a say in what happens to you if you choose to sojourn among us. In particular, we don't want Homeless people clogging up our streets, presenting a Health & Safety hazard, scaring people, accosting them for money, etc.

Panelist liked our idea of setting up a network at the Federal level (as an exception to the Principle of Subsidiarity, since we would want to be able to cross State lines for housing or job placement without inter-State red tape) of places where these people would go to obtain any services which they need, to include Housing, Banking, Food, Medicine, Education, Job Training/Referral, Mailbox, Locker, etc. Panelist also mentioned Photocopy, Fax, and Computer/Internet.

Question 245

What services would be included in such 'orientation centers'?

Housing, banking, food, medicine, literacy training, job training/referral, English language, mailbox, locker. Panelist in Session 126 also suggested making Spanish-language training available, since some native Spanish speakers may need a better grounding in that before they could learn English, and so that they can at least get better jobs in Spanish-speaking environments in the meantime.

AIDS/disease screening is part of Medicine. Psychological counseling. Hospice care. Career counseling (incl. different backgrounds and personalities). Office services. Financial counseling, incl. retirement planning. Drug/alcohol screening and rehab.

Question 246

Would such facilities be open to citizens only, or could aliens use them who wished to integrate into American society and make positive contributions?

Question was considered 'not applicable' as of Session 126, because we had concluded in Answer 21 to eliminate the institution of Citizenship. [Revisited later.]

Question 247

How many orientation centers should there be, and where should they be located?

Generally in your more urban areas, not so much where there are homeless people (because people with homes are going to be using the job-referral and literacy and language-training facilities, too), but where there are lots of people generally.

Panelist in Session 126 liked 'orientation centers' generally, though we allowed that some orientation may be re-orientation.

Question 245 (continued)

What services would be included in such 'orientation centers'?

Services for battered women! Also, [they should be] a place generally for any runaway adults or children who may want a place to go in a hurry. Maybe parents could come and pick up their children there and maybe not (noted that a lot would depend on what we said in Section III-B), but we at least wanted the kids (and everyone else) to have a safe place to go if they're running away anyhow.

Question 247 (continued)

How many orientation centers should there be, and where should they be located?

If we have about 50,000 homeless in L.A., and if each center could accommodate no more than 500 people at once, then maybe we should have up to 100 centers in the L.A. area alone, or as many as 5,000 centers nationwide. Seemed more than we had originally thought about, but if that's what needs to happen.

Question 245 (continued)

What services would be included in such 'orientation centers'?

A lot of the work performed in these facilities would be by current or former users.

Question 248

Should these orientation centers be managed by the Federal government, or by lower jurisdictions?

Panelist in Session 126 raised possibility of inter-State reciprocity, but we would need to rely on both the reciprocity itself and the minimization of inter-State red tape. Agreed best to make sure at the Federal level that it's taken care of.

Question 245 (continued)

What services would be included in such 'orientation centers'?

Panelist suggested that users could be issued ID cards which might enable them to obtain services (medication, meals, transportation, etc.) for free or at a discount. Any such cards would need to have expiration dates, and be re-issued periodically as needed, so that the cards wouldn't still be used when the user is no longer in need.

Question 249

But, the exact needs of each center will be different, owing to variations in population patterns, culture, industry, street/highway layout, climate, etc.: If this is to be a Federal function, then how shall these needs be accommodated?

Panelist in Session 126 liked the idea of having Regions, Districts, Areas, etc., to facilitate communication and coordination among different places in the country.

Question 250

What shall this agency be named, and where shall it report?

We found in Session 126 that it should report to the Social Services Bureau of the Domestic Affairs Department. In that most/all other Social functions probably would be devolved to lower levels of Government in our Subsidiarity-based model, this may be the only function handled in this Bureau, so that's the Answer to this Question.

Question 126 (continued)

What is the motivation for any particular government agency to follow such principles?

Following note written into the 'black book' on Saturday morning 29-Oct-2005, nominally in the context of Question 126, but specifically relating to the Census:

We realized that there is an Economic solution to this Political problem, another example of Everything interrelating: There's an old line from numerous films and TV

shows where some yokel tells a policeman or judge or politician that "I pay your salary." We thought that it would be funny if the addressee once snapped back, "Yeah, but you have no choice in the matter." And, this is true, they don't. There's really no real motivation, then, short of the occasional altruist, for government workers to do their jobs while their salaries will still get paid, even if we dismantle Civil Service tenure, and the money will continue to come from forcibly-extracted taxation. Why should the government workers who are not elected pay any attention to us at all? Answer is that you make the taxation voluntary, letting the tax rate be dictated by direct popular vote rather than by the Legislature or the IRS. Then, the public could effectively give raises to the Government when it is doing well and/or when it clearly needs more in order to do what the public wants, and they could give them an effective salary cut -- thus necessitating individual salary cuts and/or layoffs -- when the Government is performing poorly and/or when the presence of governmental waste is perceived. Changes can happen by initiative or referendum at any regular or special election, and also by binding vote in each periodic Census, the Census form being made to indicate the current tax rate for the Nation and for your State and County and City, and then you write in your personal vote for any increase or decrease, and the Census Bureau averages them up to determine actual tax rates, and ultimately the amount of revenue available for the Government to work with. That puts the Public in control, and that will make both elected officials and hired government employees pay attention when a Resident/Citizen speaks. This also is another benefit to the Sales Tax concept (though it would also work with Income Tax if it were similarly structured), that it calls for just one single rate to apply across the board within that particular jurisdiction, so it would be easier to modify by popular vote. And, since putting this system into effect would involve the coordination of multiple different areas of Government simultaneously, that again is an example of Everything in the system interrelating, and of why we're doing this here Project in the first place.

Question 251

Should each deputy director report directly to the Director of the Bureau, or should there be intermediate 'regional directors'?

We had already determined in Answer 249 that we should have multiple levels. New panelist in Session 127 (January 2006) saw note in the 'black book' suggesting that we should not have multiple levels, but he disagreed, noting that the needs of the Homeless where he had grown up in the coal-mining regions around Pittsburgh were way different from those of the Homeless in Santa Monica. Moderator agreed, and we definitely allowed for multiple levels as may be needed.

Question 252

Once this system is up and running, could local jurisdictions pass and enforce stricter ordinances against vagrancy, loitering, begging, etc.?

Panel in Session 127 was generally okay with Moderator's position that some additional strictness would be okay, since we now had a viable alternative for them. However, panelist suggested a limit, such that people may still engage in what we called 'passive panhandling', simply asking for money on the side of the walk, without accosting or blocking anyone. Okay to bring them to centers (repeatedly if necessary), and okay to suggest to them that the centers would present a better alternative, and okay to discourage the Populace from giving them money, but

ultimately allow them the freedom to do what they want, as long as they are not actively harming or threatening anyone.

Any community which does pass such an excessive law should be subject to what we concluded in Answer 18.5, where the applicable Judiciary could suspend or overturn such laws pending confirmation by a supermajority of the applicable Legislature.

Question 253

The description of this "orientation center" sounds very much like the old "poor house" concept: Might it not be considered degrading for some people to need to attend such a facility?

Panelist suggested in Session 127 that we shouldn't make them participate if they don't want to: If we force them, then they'll feel degraded and like prisoners. Rather, make it an attractive alternative in which they will want to participate.

Sleeping on a bench or in a park falls under the same heading as Answer 252: They can't block a public way or trespass on private property or physically accost anyone, but they can sleep if they're minding their own business. As for making the park a dangerous environment, maybe have a policeman patrol the area periodically, but otherwise let people be. [Reconsidered in the Third Pass.]

Question 254

Should the use of alcohol or other drugs be permitted within the orientation center?

No! Panelist noted that other people there are trying to recover from substance abuse, and that it is harmful to them to be in an environment where such substances are being freely used. Any resident can go elsewhere for access to legal substances.

Question 254.5

How shall we deal with the possibility of sex and unwanted pregnancies [at orientation centers]?

The last thing that destitute people need is children, but many destitute people all over the World have them anyway. We allow for people to have the kids if they are doing it willingly and with all the information which they need. So, we provide family planning, free birth control, and counseling on how to use the birth control. Beyond this, allow people to act like independent and competent adults.

Question 255

Should televisions, game rooms, and other 'creature comforts' be provided by these facilities?

Panel in Session 127 agreed Yes. Why the heck not? Well, we don't want to go overboard, and give them a motivation to stay indefinitely, because we want them to go out and find jobs and their own housing. Still, they can't fill out résumés all the time, and we want them to be minimally comfortable while they're there, and want to provide a little motivation for the vagrants to get out of the park and go there, so

do provide a little recreational facility. Probably show broadcast TV only, no cable! [Adjust this point over time to evolving technologies, to emphasize the cheap and basic options over the fancy and expensive.] OK to provide free laundry, even detergent, for otherwise they wouldn't have a motivation to wash their clothes!

Subsubsection I-D-1-i: Administration

Question 256

Many corporations have board-level departments of administration, to coordinate all internal activities within a single bureaucratic branch with maximum efficiency, to allow the department head to advise the board of the administrative costs and other requirements of conducting a certain operation, and to allow the same department head to communicate the board's wishes to his/her subordinates in administrative language: Should the Cabinet have such a position?

Panelist in Session 127 felt that maybe we don't need a separate Administration Department, notwithstanding what we had placed in our draft bureaucratic structure. For some functions such as Payroll, might be okay to have such a department, but Personnel and some other functions may need to be handled within the departments themselves, since they're more knowledgeable about what they need.

Moderator offered his experience at Transamerica, and suggested that one of the reasons (there are others!) for current extensive Government inefficiency is the absence of centralized Administration departments.

Panelist stated that he was okay with having a central Administration Department, but wanted to make sure that we have a solid process for removing any Department head who does not perform competently.

Question 124.73 (or 124.7C) (continued)

Who should approve a recall?

On the basis of panelist's statement offered during consideration of Question 256 in Session 127, that we should have a solid process for removing any Department head who does not perform competently, we agreed at that time to amend Answer 124.7 [specifically 124.73 per Third Pass] to confirm that the Legislature which gets to exercise oversight over the selection of Department heads and Bureau chiefs also gets to order their removal if the President or Vice-President is hesitant.

Question 256 (continued)

Many corporations have board-level departments of administration, to coordinate all internal activities within a single bureaucratic branch with maximum efficiency, to allow the department head to advise the board of the administrative costs and other requirements of conducting a certain operation, and to allow the same department head to communicate the board's wishes to his/her subordinates in administrative language: Should the Cabinet have such a position?

With this provision, panelist allowed us to have an Administration Department, but was not at the point where we should have one.

Question 257

What functions should be handled by the Department of Administration?

Moderator of Session 127 read the seven Bureaus indicated at that time in the draft structure. [Third Pass note: These seven Bureaus had been determined in Session 81. In both Sessions, the Department was still known as "Administrative Services". The seven Bureaus at that time were Accounting & Budget, Building & Floor Planning, Infrastructure Maintenance, Personnel, Procurement, Security, and Transportation Services.] Panelist was okay with these, except that he had expressed a misgiving in Question 256 about having a central Personnel Bureau handle the needs of the entire Government. He suggested at this time that we could go ahead and do this if we stationed some individuals in each of these other Departments to help them with their needs; they still would report to the Personnel Bureau (gotta have Unity of Command!), but would get input from the line Department as needed. Other than this, panel felt that we could go with the functions as indicated in the draft model.

There was a note in the 'black book' about possibly having an Inspector General to provide overall review of all operations in the Executive Branch, but we determined at this time that we don't need such a function if the Vice-President's role is expanded as recommended in Section I-B to be more of a Chief Operating Officer.

Question 258

Should those elements of the Secret Service which currently provide security for the President, Vice-President, and other dignitaries be moved into the Department of Administration?

Agreed in Session 127 that this element should not be in the Treasury Department, but panelist was not convinced that it should be in the Administration Department, and the Moderator "frankly" concurred that there was a bit of a logical leap in the 'black book', which read as follows:

There is no reason why the disparate functions of counterfeit control (which should remain within Treasury) and personal security should be handled by the same agency. Therefore, Office of Security to be established within Department of Administration, and all personal security needs to be handled through such office.

Panelist was concerned about the same Bureau covering both Secret-Service-type security and standing around at a park or museum. Moderator argued that we could have separate Sections, but panelist was concerned that someone could rise up from the Museum ranks to be over the Secret-Service-type Section, though Moderator countered that such selection as Bureau Chief would need to go through Legislative confirmation, which the panelist feared might not be good enough.

We discussed possibility of weekly security meetings involving the Vice-President, the Bureau Chief over Intelligence, the Bureau Chief over Investigation, and all other security-oriented managers to make sure that they are all sharing information and not allowing another 9/11-type problem. Definitely agreed that these meetings should be for communication purposes only, and that we should not try to force these disparate functions into the same Administration Department.

Panelist made good point that security for foreign dignitaries is better handled by the Diplomatic Relations Bureau of the Foreign Affairs Department, since it may involve specific knowledges and protocols with which ordinary security or administrative personnel might not be sufficiently familiar.

Moderator was reluctant, though, to place the remaining Secret-Service-type security in any other Department, since it is a Government-support function, which was what we had set up the Administration Department for.

Panelist suggested placing it outside of the nine Departments, and have it report directly to the Vice-President, but this offended the Moderator's delicate linear sensibilities, and also contradicted what we had stated in Answer 138 [to wit, "Other than the President and Vice-President, and their personal staff, there are no functions which we want discharged at the Federal level and which are not included in the nine Departments which we identified in Answer 135a."], though we didn't seem overly militant about that finding.

We settled on a compromise solution of placing the security function in the Marshal's Office of the Justice Department. Moderator bought the panelist's point that the rest of the Administration Department is basically administrative and clerical and peaceful in nature, and nowhere else would be carrying guns or getting close to policymakers or effectively making policy, so best for this operation not to be there. Marshal's Office does deal with physical enforcement, so much better.

Question 194 (continued)

Any other questions on any of these operations, or on the structure of the Department of Justice?

In accordance with our finding reached in Session 127 as to Question 258, A194 was amended such that the Marshal's Office shall include a unit for providing security services to domestic VIP's, to relieve that function from the current Secret Service.

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This concluded our review of Subsection I-D-1, after over three years, from October 2002 to January 2006.

The next three Subsections were treated on a free-form basis, with no specific Questions composed in advance. Rather, we simply reviewed the executive structure which we assembled in Answer 135, and addressed issues suggested by those agency names, and/or other issues which arose during previous deliberations.

Notes in this document are transcribed from the original panel sessions. Findings are summarized in the General Summary document in alpha order by the Department and Bureau names within each of the three sub-Federal levels.

Where there were no specifications listed in these Sections for a particular agency, we were generally allowing the applicable jurisdiction to establish and implement its own functionality preferences, though we reserved the option to add further recommendations later on as we thought of them.

Subsection I-D-2: Executive Branches of State Governments

Question 258.1 [Q numbers added in Third Pass to facilitate cross-reference]

What suggestions do we have for the State agencies listed in Answer 135?

Elections - We were okay in Session 128 (March 2006) with the note opposite Page 35 of the 'black book' of preliminary ideas, that the State Election Department shall have control over Apportionment line-drawing at all levels.

Insurance - From another note handwritten on Page 35, should insurance commissioners be elected or appointed? Resolution #2B (from Session 46) had that all subordinate Executive positions (interpreted in Session 46 as Department Head or below) should be filled by appointment of higher levels, and nominated/screened by peer panels as applicable. We now found this particularly applicable for Insurance Commissioners, where the candidate's technical expertise definitely should be subject to scrutiny, and not just to popularity contests or political deals.

Corporations - Also from note opposite Page 35, shall we continue to have non-profit corporations? If so, then shall we regulate them in the Bureau of Corporations under the Commerce Department, or do it elsewhere? Discussion initially suggested that non-profit's don't really conduct Commerce, and did not need to be incorporated, so any regulation could therefore be done elsewhere. Upon further consideration, though, we recognized that your larger Non-Profit Organizations (NPO's) will still need to be audited, and that many of them (religious organizations in particular) have full-time salaried staff, in addition to possibly having Liability issues which may make them want to be incorporated. They therefore should be regulated in the same way and by the same people as for-profit corporations. The cash flow means that they do engage in a form of Commerce, even if they have no tangible product which they are selling, in addition to the fact that Moderator preferred not to have different types of Corporations monitored in different Departments, so okay for them to be treated by the Corporations Bureau under the Commerce Department.

DMV-type issues - Smog certification will still be handled by the Vehicle Registration Bureau.

Car Safety - To be monitored by the federal Health & Safety Department.

Education - To be addressed in Section III-C.

Insurance

Should there be mandatory Auto coverage? Discussion morphed into redlining, Moderator taking position that it is reasonable to redline for Comprehensive, since some areas are more susceptible to Theft and Vandalism than others, and another panelist arguing that we should not make that distinction, since owners of valuable cars who live in poorer areas will be motivated to take that much better care of them. [Third Pass: What is the owner of a valuable car doing living in a poorer area?] Even if there is a significant difference in the likelihood of loss, panelist still wouldn't redline, as he felt that it is unfair and unnecessary: Base your premium on your loss experience for that type of vehicle, but do not penalize certain people for where they live, both because the loss data may be unreliable, and also because the loss amount is the same for the different insureds, and the premium necessities

therefore should be spread out evenly among all owners of that type of car. Also, easier for people to control the type of car that they drive than the area in which they live or the overall loss experience in that area. Moderator was not entirely sure that he agreed with this paradigm, but went along for the present.

For mandatory Liability coverage, non-author panelist supported it, for mitigating the loss of the general Populace: People should be able to recover from losses which are not their fault, so people who are at fault should be in a position to provide that coverage. Okay to self-insure, but one must have a fund which is significantly larger than what may be needed for a single low-level accident, and the funds must be held in a tightly-controlled escrow account until the accountholder deceases or otherwise stops driving. Shouldn't rely on the injured party being covered by the State, who would then be reimbursed by the at-fault party, for the State would in the meantime not have the funds available for Public Service which it otherwise would have.

Panelist made good suggestion that Drivers who maintain good driving records (*i.e.*, no traffic tickets or at-fault accidents) for long periods of time should be allowed to pay discounted rates for their coverage. [Fairly common practice as of Third Pass.]

We thought of nothing else on Insurance as of the beginning of Session 129 (April 2006), so we checked out generic topic suggestions printed in our 'black book'.

DMV - We were basically okay with this. They were doing Registration Renewal by mail, they were automating, speed of service appeared to be improving, they were doing that thing where you get to approve your picture before they print it on the license, so no major problems requiring our immediate attention.

Highways

Agreed that the highway signs pointing you to other highways should point directly to which lanes you need to be in (and not the ones that you're not supposed to be in!!!) in order to get where you want to go, so that we don't need to back up traffic with unnecessary last-minute lane changes. Non-author panelist suggested that it was not as big a problem elsewhere as it was at the time in Southern California; we sure hoped that he was right, because it sucked in SoCal.

Good to have lighted signs for traffic jams and Amber Alerts and stuff (panelist asserted that these actually had proven effective for catching kidnappers), but we should watch to make sure that we're not slowing traffic down further by giving people more to read.

Moderator wanted stricter enforcement of the law that one must signal when changing lanes. Panelist agreed that better enforcement would be helpful, but we were not taking a position in support of people honking horns or flashing headlights, for that might create more problems than it solves. However, strongly in favor of citizens being able to use dashboard-mounted video to catch offenders, and of their being able to submit it anonymously to police by e-mail.

Not agreeing to prohibit SUV's entirely, nor to restrict their use to certain zones, because people theoretically have the right to possess these vehicles, and may have a legitimate need to use them at least sometimes. However, we did agree that they present a safety hazard and inconvenience for people who drive conventional cars

and can't see through the larger vehicles, so agreed that the State could impose any desired surcharge on their registrations in order to compensate the Public.

Definitely good to have certain prisoners with light records out there cleaning the highways. Only reason not to have the hard-core people out there also is because you would need chains and armed guards and crap to keep them in place, and we really didn't want to go there; the first-timers are volunteers who probably need only an unarmed supervisor. When we do have anyone out there working the highways (prisoners or not), cone off the nearest lane, to give them a margin of safety in which to work, and therefore make sure not to do it during 'rush hour'. Generally, no construction during rush hour.

At about this time, non-author panelist suggested adding a rule that everyone driving on the freeway between 7-9am be required to carry at least one passenger in the vehicle. As receptive as we were generally trying to be with a lot of the ideas being presented here, and as civically responsible as this suggestion may have been, we were yet needing to refrain from consenting, as it just seemed too much like a Police State to require people to conform to such a model, when they might have a legitimate reason for needing to drive their vehicles during those hours without passengers (such as needing the vehicle later on). Moderator was generally opposed to Government intervention and control when it's not really needed, but that panelist was extolling the virtues of the various Transportation alternatives. We were all for having the alternatives available, and for public encouragement of their usage, but if a large segment of the Population is still refusing to use them, then compelling them to do so would (in our opinion) make for a far worse Quality of Life.

Hoping to do some other things with job matching and/or staggered hours and/or telecommuting, to ease rush-hour demands, so that the panelist's idea of forced carpooling would not prove necessary. Panelist was wondering about the desirability of some of these elements. (He liked being able to socialize with a given set of people at the workplace, but Moderator suggested that he could still interact with most of them if he were overlapping with two other shifts.) Some of these would need to be addressed at the County level. [This was pre-pandemic, pre-Zoom.]

Environment - As to the suggestion of increased environmental standards, we like the Environment! Beyond this, nothing really needed to be codified at this point.

CHP/Troopers - Agreed that all cops should be required to obey prevailing traffic laws when not in active pursuit, and (though this would really apply at the Local level, so we made a note at this time in the 'black book' under Subsection I-D-4) that Parking Enforcement people should obey local parking laws when not actually citing someone. But, how do we enforce this? We had seen increased propagation of video technology, and we envisioned that people with video cameras mounted on their dashboards could catch cops who change lanes without signaling, same as they do for other people. Panelist also suggested having a task force of people who are granted enough authority to report violations by testimony only. Agreed that these would definitely require some objective criteria for participation, such as a clean driving/criminal record, age limit, education requirement, and/or something else. May tend to create a Class environment, so we noted that we gotta watch that, but maybe. In any case, we hoped that the video thing works well, and imagined that even 20% of the people having videocameras would motivate cops to watch their own behavior.

This concluded our review of the topics suggested in the printed Outline. Next step was to go through the remaining agencies listed in our draft bureaucratic structure.

Highways (continued)

Where sets of lanes are preparing to split into different directions, it would be good per Session 130 (May 2006) to use the heavier-dotted lines to distinguish them all the way to the interchange, so that people don't need to remember.

Moderator had another idea about Highway construction: Where possible, don't have on-ramps merge into existing traffic lanes, since the merging driver needs to be extra-careful not to run into a guard rail, and since oncoming traffic needs to slow to let other people in, creating a domino effect of slow traffic. Better not to reduce the number of lanes at all until you get out to areas of lighter traffic. Another panelist noted that highways in Pennsylvania were much better designed, with the off-ramps always preceding the on-ramps, so that you never have that cross-traffic effect of people merging off and on in the same space at the same time. With this system, people have a good solid mile or so before they need to worry about being forced off the freeway, so it's easier and faster and safer for everyone.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

As we went in order during Session 130 through all State agencies listed in the bureaucratic outline, no comments or questions or suggestions or complaints came up about any of them until we got to State Police, where the Moderator wondered whether this might be better placed in the Transportation Department, or whether there were functions there not associated with Transportation. We looked back in our notes for Question 135, and saw nothing which indicated a specific preference one way or another. Upon further reflection at this time, we were okay with keeping it in the Law Enforcement Department, both because there may be some non-Transportation functions in which the State Police would need to be involved, and because it would sound pretty dang silly to have a Law Enforcement Department but have the Police Bureau report somewhere else.

Question 258.1 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the State agencies listed in Answer 135?

Prisons & Parole - There was this debate as of Session 130 about treating Prisoners humanely versus letting them suffer whatever punishments may be coming to them. Moderator concurred that we don't want to create a luxurious environment for these people, but felt that we do want to maintain some standards of minimal human decency. At the very least, we don't want Prisoners doing things to other Prisoners (rape, assault, extortion, etc.) which they wouldn't be allowed to do in real life. For, we're trying to break them of those behavioral patterns, so it doesn't do to allow those behaviors to continue in Prison. Panel agreed. Parole to be taken up in Q345.

Nothing else jumped out at us requiring specification, except as noted elsewhere in the Agenda, allowing States to set whatever procedures they will. [Amended later.]

Subsection I-D-3: Executive Branch of County Governments

Question 258.4

What suggestions do we have for the County agencies listed in Answer 135?

First note in the 'black book' was about Fire and Paramedics and Ambulance, and asked to what extent users should be required to pay for these services. Panelist in Session 130 expressed that he would prefer for there still to be municipal Fire Departments in addition to County; some extensive discussion on this. Moderator attempted to point out that the group had previously found County centralization to be more efficient both administratively and in terms of being responsive in an emergency, but panelist disagreed, noting that the types of fires which might happen in a City are different from those in the outlying areas, and that people living out in the Mountains and Forests may not want to pay for the fires which happen in the Cities. He also suggested that actual Firefighters would argue against County centralization, but Moderator preferred to hold off on accepting this assertion into evidence until we had a spoken or written presentation by a qualified professional. [Added in Third Pass: That individual would need to be pretty highly qualified, otherwise the opinion might be more personal and less reflective of the overall industry. We would accept a representative of the prevailing Union, but we still would need to balance that opinion against those of other stakeholders like Residents and Fiscal Planners.] Panelist was still unhappy with our finding, but we did not have consensus to undertake a formal Reconsideration, so we left it there.

However, we did go along with the panelist's suggestion that we should not require users to pay for Emergency Services, unless it can be satisfactorily proven that they actually caused the emergency, e.g., lit the fire deliberately. Innocent users already have enough else going on that we shouldn't dump this burden on them too.

Panel did not have a particular problem with some of the services being provided by private organizations, as long as the Government maintains the option to perform them directly if the private firms become too expensive or otherwise problematic.

Agreed with a new panelist in Session 131 (May 2006) that reduced administration in Health operations is always better. Feeling at the time was that the system was clogged up. [Weren't mistaken, were we?]

Make sure that Records databases satisfactorily network with other Counties and States. Maintain good security.

Actually, on closer inspection of our bureaucratic outline, there did not appear to be a whole lot of duplication between functions in Unincorporated Areas and those performed by Cities.

Fish & Game should be policed, to include making sure that nothing is over-hunted. Panelist also made good note, that -- while Counties can deal with local game and wilderness conditions -- they can/should also network with other Counties, since some herds are large and will cross County lines. Also, the Counties should communicate their local findings to the State level, so that we can get overall patterns as needed.

Agreed with the Wednesday group's idea [noted as "a rare exception to our normal procedure of separating the two groups", although we saw in the Third Pass that this apparently happened quite a few times] that the Job Placement Bureau can be maintaining a database for both job vacancies and filled jobs, based on where the employees live, so that job-matching and job-switching can be done to reduce commuting times and traffic volume. Participation should be voluntary on the part of affected employees.

Looked at other notes in the margins of our 'black book':

Agreed that the Animal Regulation Bureau should pick up and spay strays, instead of requiring people to bring them in.

Question 53 (continued)

Which of these [selection] methods is to be recommended for each type of office?

When we reviewed County admin operations during Session 131, we entertained a discussion on the general selection of County leadership!:

Federal and State and City governments have elected Executives and elected Legislatures: Why should Counties be any different? Position of non-author panelist was that Counties should have Managers appointed by the the elective Legislatures, because you need people who definitely have the qualifications to be responsive and agile on the important and sensitive issues (including Health) which the Counties are being given to do. We don't want someone who is just popular or good-looking or politically savvy.

Question 258.4 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the County agencies listed in Answer 135?

Commerce - Consumer Affairs: In looking at the suggestion to manage False Advertising, we found it best to manage this within the Consumer Affairs Bureau of the state Commerce Department. Panelist also mentioned at this time that local gas stations were technically capable of modifying calibration on gas pumps, since they needed to recalibrate them every three months or so anyhow. This agency can do spot-checks of volume amounts and gas proportions. [Reviewed in Second Pass.]

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

Panelist in Session 131 gave another good reason why Education is good for the County level, being that the County is also given Job-Placement responsibilities, so knowing the Educational output will allow them to do it more effectively.

Panelist suggested that placing Coroner at the County level would not work, unless we make sure to have a lot more Coroners hired, otherwise the overflow would be unbearable. OK to keep it there, though, if we jack up the staffing, which shouldn't be a problem since we will be cutting funding and staffing from other areas.

Couldn't find it in the 'blue book', but noted sometime in reference to our original decision from Session 45: Animal Regulation should be done at County level rather than City, because it is much more likely that a stray animal will cross a City boundary during its escapade than a County boundary, so better for a single agency to manage the situation without requiring interaction with other jurisdictions.

Question 258.4 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the County agencies listed in Answer 135?

Coroner's office does everything relating to the processing of dead bodies, including disposing of unclaimed assets. Can be at auction, money staying at County level.

If no one claims the remains after some given period of time, then okay and encouraged to cremate, but good to try to identify the deceased first, including by DNA technology as that becomes easier. Panelist also suggested possibility of injecting transponders into people to facilitate identification, but Moderator perceived this as a bit too Holocausty for his taste. Panelist preferred the previous 90-day claiming period to the more recent 30 days apparently necessitated by faculty and staffing shortages, but Counties should just do what they can.

Good for Counties to maintain a medical database, so that people can be treated effectively in emergency situations without needing to carry a bunch of files with them everywhere that they go, and to help keep track of infectious diseases. And, good for the database to be able to network with other Counties and higher levels, to track disease outbreaks on a wider scale. [Again, this was discussed in May 2006, long before the global medical shutdown resulting from the Corona Virus of 2019.] However, panelist warned that the database should include only information which is needed for those purposes, and nothing which might constitute an invasion of privacy, such as abortions or rape treatments.

According to the panelist, deaths occurring in hospitals generally were not referred to Coroners at that time, since it usually was done then only for investigation of questionable deaths, and hospitals generally liked to check this out themselves. However, we agreed that all deaths occurring in hospitals should be referred to the Coroner's office, both to investigate as needed and to make sure that all notifications and other procedures are performed.

Made last pass through our bureaucratic outline in Session 132 (June 2006). Previous panelist (we were rotating locations at that time for a 'road show') was pretty content with letting Counties create their own policies and procedures where we have not already provided recommendations, and not coming back to it later.

Moderator wanted to make a specification that Airports should not be flying over residential areas, only business. Panelist responded that some residential developments got created through re-zoning after the Airport was already built, and we agreed that it would be unreasonable to require Airports to reconfigure their runways in such circumstances. Individual property owners can build a house on land under a flight path, but developers should be constrained from building on a flight path, since it can affect residents more than they know at the time of move-in.

Otherwise okay with everything else.

Subsection I-D-4: Executive Branch of Municipal Governments

Question 258.7

What suggestions do we have for the City agencies listed in Answer 135?

Reviewed during Session 132 points printed in our 'black book' of preliminary ideas:

Police budget can be augmented by criminal money, but shouldn't be wholly dependent, both because we can't really depend on a certain size of criminal base, and also because only a portion of crimes can/should be treated by fines, while others (like murder) you wouldn't want people buying their ways out of. [Reason added in Third Pass that our theoretical goal is to reduce criminal activity to zero, but even in that ideal state we still would need a Police Department with some amount of overhead costs, so at least some of that expense must be covered from some other set of sources.] Good to use criminal fines in a fund to subsidize capital improvements and other special projects, and/or to increase staffing during high-crime periods, and/or to help families cover the costs of Police funerals. [Observed in the Third Pass that we had not carried over this note for ratification during Question 414, so we amended Answer 414 with it retroactively.]

To avoid padding (you can make Legislation, but who legislates the Legislators?), you fix fines at a given multiple (*e.g.*, 300%) of damage actually suffered, with a lower multiple (150% was suggested, but we were not locked in) for threatened damage (speeding, DUI, etc.). For totally victimless crimes, well, we figured as of Session 132 that we may not end up with so many of these in our model.

Again, Police should obey speed limits and other Traffic laws when not in active pursuit. Parking people should obey parking rules.

Looked at suggestion offered in Session 37 (over 7 years previous!), to allow Cities to bill foreign Nations for assisting their nationals traveling here. Didn't like it at this time, on account of the foreign government is not responsible for the fact that this person had decided to travel.

Parks - Agreed that Softball fields already built into Parks should be usable by the General Public without needing to go through a reservation or permit process, provided that the field is not already reserved by a paying entity. Okay to bump someone if you do have a paid reservation (with documentation), and to call the Police for enforcement if the other folks are causing trouble, but the field is otherwise open. Panelist agreed that what happened to the "Grant Park 8" was pretty goofy.

[Sidebar entered during Third Pass: As we described during the meeting but did not elaborate upon in the 'blue book', it was in or about 1999 that eight participants (including the author) were cited out of the larger general-public group which had been playing pickup softball games on Sundays at Grant Park in Pasadena for decades. Citations were issued by the 'white car' Park Patrol, not by the actual Police. Charges on the eight citations varied ridiculously; the author's citation read that he was "playing without a permit" (wow, how dare I?), and another read that the guy was loitering after 10pm even though it was 3 in the afternoon. We all showed up at the courthouse at the appointed date and hour, but it turned out that the City Clerk's office had never bothered to file the charges, so all were dismissed.]

Stiff fines should apply for people who litter Parks or other recreational facilities, on the order of double the normal Littering fine.

We liked the idea of public lending Libraries, including free Internet access. Agreed to have a No Censorship policy, such that Libraries may and should stock any book in their possession which they have room to shelve, provided only that it is an actual published work. They could still decide for self-published works.

Agreed that the Government examining records of which books I check out is an unnecessary invasion of privacy, and should be outlawed. Generally opposed to all provisions of the Patriot Act!

Question 258.4 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the County agencies listed in Answer 135?

Considered possibility in Session 133 (July 2006) of granting some Utilities for free, to be humanitarian to poor people. Agreed that we shouldn't provide all Utilities for free, on account of no motivation to avoid wastage. However, we did like the idea of giving a minimum allowance, so that poor people don't freeze or parch. But, the [County] may not be able to afford giving a free allowance to everyone, so should find some way to give to only those who need it. But, how do we determine that? Could rely on income statements, but we would rather avoid that in a hopeful Sales Tax environment. Could rely on companies reporting employee income, but they might be motivated to hire folks under the table. Agreed to require people to apply actively for this assistance, but should we give it to anyone who asks? Even the shame associated with asking apparently was not enough for our collective taste, but we also didn't want to make the application process too onerous in the interest of weeding out candidates who don't really need the help, because it creates a hardship for those who do. Rejected idea of performing inspections of premises, on account of Moderator wanted to make the process as easy and objective as possible. Settled on having them sign a statement certifying that they have some particular financial condition (income level, wealth held, size of property, whatever), with the provision that they need to pay Utilities and Penalties retroactively in full if we find out that they misrepresented themselves. [It seems that we treated this topic in the context of City government, even though we had assigned Water & Power to the County level. We therefore added the County number retroactively in the Third Pass, but the principles decided in the original meeting continued to be as applicable.]

Question 258.7 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the City agencies listed in Answer 135?

In the course of the preceding discussion on Utilities, we discussed in Session 133 the problem of overly-large Cities, which couldn't as easily afford to provide free Utilities on request [again, under our model at the time, Utilities would be managed by Counties, so we had gotten a bit confused], and which have other problems such as high Crime. One non-author panelist wanted to see us more spread out to a larger number of smaller towns, kinda like Oregon. Considered imposing specific constraints on Development, but hard to come up with a single rubric which would apply in all areas of the country: Besides, some people may like to congregate in larger Cities, so we may not be enhancing their quality of life by changing the present environment. Still, we adopted as a policy statement that City planners and

developers generally should try to spread Housing and Jobs out to a larger number of smaller towns (even though delivering Water and Electricity may become harder), in the interests of general improvement in quality of life through decentralization.

Speed Bumps - One non-author panelist liked them, but the Moderator and another panelist didn't. Moderator suggested that the same purpose could be accomplished through resurfacing the streets with that gravelly-type emergency-lane pavement which jiggles your car if you go beyond a certain speed. Panelist who liked Speed Bumps suggested that they are an inconvenience or hazard to your vehicle only if you drive so fast as to need to stop and start. But, would it be an actual problem to replace Speed Bumps with the gravelly surface? Maybe, if the paving would cost significantly more, or if the gravelly surface is harder to clean, or if there is a significant esthetic difference. People clearly have different preferences on this matter, and that's fine, so agreed that the Locals have a majority interest, but definitely not a sole interest, since other outside people use the rights of way too. Let there be a public hearing whenever this is brought up for consideration, and put up really big signs which anyone can read who drives anywhere near there. [Added in Third Pass that signs should be posted in such a way that you have room to maneuver off of a street if you turn before realizing that the street is bumped.]

Potholes - Agreed to have a Pothole Hotline, and that the City's prioritization can be based on a combination of the calls received, the amount of traffic on the affected streets, the degree of apparent danger, etc. If an outgoing message on the Hotline must be presented in multiple languages, then good to have an option to immediately bypass to the language of choice. Of course, you need to have enough staffing to get to everything on the list in a reasonable timeframe, because more Potholes are being created every day, to occupy more spots on the list. [Amended this finding in the Third Pass, suggesting that a website would now be much easier than a phone line for the Government to administer and for the People to use.]

Traffic Light Sensors - Moderator liked having sensors which will trip the traffic light at certain locations at certain times, but recommended that they shouldn't work (or at least should take longer) if a car has passed the Limit Line. Also, panel suggested that a motorcycle should be allowed to proceed after coming to a complete stop, since it is not heavy enough to trip the light. [Reconsidered in Second Pass.]

Street Signs - Moderator expressed that when sitting at a red light, he wants to look to his right and see what the address range is; to him, it didn't make sense for this sign to be on the forward side of the street, where he can't see it until he is driving again and can't safely look to the side long enough to read sign numbers. However, another panelist saw that it is easier to read on the driver's side on the opposite side of the street, so we guessed that we were not gonna have consensus on this.

Fire Hydrants - For whatever space near a Fire Hydrant you don't want people parking, just paint it off red, instead of making me measure or eyeball or need to justify my judgment in court. [Added in Third Pass that we cannot be expected to memorize all such distances required by the City, especially if (as expected) different Cities will enact different distances.]

Curbs - Limit heights of curbs, to prevent car doors from running into them, and to make it easier on handicapped people [as we referred to them in 2006, update as applicable] if there are no driveways or other ramps nearby.

Zoning - OK for Cities to split up into areas of use, because you don't want certain things next to each other.

Business Licensing - Agreed that it's useful for professionals to be able to display certification of their credentials, and for sellers of Alcohol and Tobacco and other potentially-harmful substances to require licensing, so that the license can be pulled if they violate applicable regulations. For certain other types of businesses, such as day-care centers, they may have certain other qualifications which they need to fulfill prior to their opening for business. For generic businesses, they may or may not warrant actual licensing (non-author panelist preferred it for general regulation, but Moderator preferred less regulation), but should have it for Sales Tax collection. Also okay to have it for Zoning purposes.

Parks - Should/could the use of Parks be limited to City residents? We generally preferred in Session 134 (August 2006) to have minimal regulation and maximum freedoms, but could see a community deciding that it wants to have certain regulations for certain facilities, or requiring reservations for facilities where there's a lot of competition, or issuing use permits (without requiring evidence of liability insurance) to generate fees, and possibly establishing different fees for residents and non-residents, on the premise that residents pay more in taxes. Generally, though, best to keep Parks wide open to everyone with no restriction.

Went down list of agencies. Possible duplication/overlap between Special Events and Permits/Licenses, since we wouldn't know where to go if we wanted to organize an event, since agreed that there are certain rules and protocols which we need to observe to ensure safety, cleanliness, etc. Considered changing the name of one or more agencies in our structure, such as by changing 'Special Events' to 'Special Civic Events', to somehow distinguish City-organized events from Public-organized events where the City's assistance/supervision is needed. But, rest of the group seemed to feel that the nomenclature was okay as it was, and was okay to let the Public be bounced around if necessary. Easier with the Internet. [Reviewed in Third Pass.]

Traffic Management

Panelist made a push for getting rid of buttons on traffic lights, for allegedly not being necessary, and causing undue delays for pedestrians. Moderator countered that the controls make it easier for vehicular traffic going in the other direction, since they can get the green light more quickly. Panelist claimed that a motorist doesn't need those extra 15 seconds, whereas a pedestrian in hot weather or rain will feel it, and that it impedes pedestrian traffic by making them wait if they get there after the light turns green but not quickly enough to hit the button. [Redone in Second Pass.]

Non-author panelist suggested that we eliminate turning right on a red light, but the group did not agree.

Agreed that traffic lights should be timed in such a way as to facilitate traffic flow going in a particular direction at a particular time of day, and then change for a different time of day.

Moderator didn't like any use of cell phones while driving, since it requires your brain to be somewhere else, but agreed to prohibit use of hand-held devices while driving.

Agreed that we should avoid making drivers sit at two red lights in a row, to the extent that we can practically manage it.

Triple the normal littering fine for throwing out a lit cigarette anywhere, but good luck catching it. This meant that we need to have Littering fines in the first place.

Considered establishing wide roads in front of entrances to businesses where people can't smoke Tobacco, but general feeling was that this would be too prohibitive, on account of there may not be enough room elsewhere.

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This concluded our First Pass review of Section I-D, after nearly 5 years!!!

[Not sure as of the Third Pass why we bothered, but this page of the 'blue book' showed a note that we had held 35 meetings in the 41.5 months from the time that the Moderator had relocated on 16-Mar-2003 from Pasadena to Studio City, for an average of 0.84 meetings per month, as compared with the average of 1.33 meetings per month over the course of his preceding Pasadena residence. The difference may have had much more to do with time than with location, so not really very conclusive of much. I guess that I just liked to count and average things.]

Question 143 (continued)

Shall each ambassador report directly to the Director of Foreign Affairs (that is, the former Secretary of State), or is it better to have intermediate bureau chiefs covering different geographic areas?

Noted in the first 'blue book' in September 2006 that we must have meant district directors reporting to the Bureau of Diplomatic Relations, which was reporting to the Department of Foreign Affairs according to the structure established in Answer 135. So, we should have only a few district directors (perhaps by continent) under her direct command, so that more local issues can be addressed at lower levels.

SECTION I-E: LEGISLATIVE OPERATIONS

Based on our findings in previous Sections, the national Legislature will have at least these functions assigned to it:

- To consider vetos of so-called 'judicial review' of previously-passed legislation;
- To decide (majority vote) whether an existing State is to be broken up;
- To approve and codify all applicable restrictions on individual and corporate behaviors, except where better to defer such judgments to lower jurisdictions;
- To authorize and/or prohibit actions of the Chief Executive, and to override (must be within 30 days) any unilateral action of the Chief Executive;
- To confirm or overrule the appointments of all department heads and bureau chiefs in the Executive Branch;
- To establish and maintain policies (through an applicably-designated committee) that provide harmonious balance among the needs of businesses, consumers, and the environment;
- To establish binding written standards for agricultural safety and livestock treatment;

- To receive notifications when the Bureau of Water & Power is intervening in the administration of local flood-control dams, and to override such decisions as appropriate;
- To ensure that information gathered by the Department of Justice on non-criminals is not overly invasive;
- To total and certify the results from States as to national elections.

In addition to whatever functions are managed and decisions made by the national Legislature, we had agreed that there definitely should be national propositions on national ballots, so that the public can directly override the Legislature on certain topics, one of these possibly being the designation of what should be the country's "official language".

Actual Questions in this Section were arranged in seven Subsections, to approximate the flow of legislation through the process. These seven Subsections were Basic Structure, Introduction of New Business, Committees, Amendments, Debate and Voting, Veto, and Miscellaneous.

Subsection I-E-1: Basic Structure

Question 259

Any possible objection that anyone could have on having an elected Legislature at all?

Moderator of Session 135 (September 2006) thought of one reason, and a new panelist thought of one. Moderator's reason was that people might want the increased efficiency of a benevolent dictator, and the panelist noted the inconsistency which can come from replacing legislators on a periodic basis. As to the first point, there are no guarantees (as shown through history) that a dictator will stay benevolent. As to the second point, inconsistency is actually good, since it allows people to override the wishes of an entrenched hegemony, who may not be willing to acknowledge that they made mistakes in their original decisions.

Our 'black book' of preliminary ideas had a note suggesting that we address the possibility of direct democracy. Non-author panelist found the process too time-consuming: People would need to take extra time out of their schedules to read proposed laws and related documents, whereas a paid elected Legislature could do it on a full-time basis. So, either it would take longer to get laws passed, with fewer laws resulting (or, is that a good thing? <g>), or else the results would be skewed toward those constituencies who had enough free time to keep up with the reading, while the poorer working classes would be effectively disenfranchised. Agreed!

Question 260

What are the advantages of a two-house legislature versus those of a one-house legislature?

[We found in the Third Pass that this phrasing stinks, not just because it assumes without evidence that there are "advantages" to be enumerated, but principally because it ignores the possibility we later considered of a three-house legislature.]

Non-author panelist in Session 135 noted that the requirement of parsing into two houses provides checks and balances. Moderator added that the effect is the same as having the Monday and Wednesday groups evaluate our Outline independently [as was the nominal intent at the time]; if the same results happen in both fora, then we can be more confident in the robustness of the outcome. [Amended in Third Pass.]

Question 261

What number of houses is recommended for the different levels of American government?

We had already decided upon three houses for the I.O.O., and we continued in Session 135 [and afterward] to like that paradigm, but we may not need that same level of analysis at the National level. We hoped that the I.O.O. would have fewer issues to look at than the National legislature, so they could afford to take the time to look at them in more depth, whereas the National legislature needs to be able to proceed on a given item of business more quickly, in order to be able to progress through its fuller agenda. In other words, we may need to strike a balance between decision quality and procedural efficiency. On the other hand, we wouldn't necessarily need to require all houses of the National legislature to review all legislation, just as the I.O.O. would have a Steering Committee to determine which houses would need to review a given agenda item. However, a non-author panelist noted that some large States with low population and high natural resources might need to have a specific extra voice on certain issues.

Panelist noted difference between the National legislature and the I.O.O., that the latter is specifically not a one-world government, though we didn't then know what that may translate to for the number of houses.

Agreed that lower jurisdictions generally don't need as many houses. Panelist liked two houses for State legislature, with representation for both People and Geographic Area. (She mentioned specific problems of Inyo County, with all their Water-related issues.) However, after some brief discussion, agreed that better to let States decide this for themselves, since some smaller States may not need that type of division. Agreed that Counties and Cities can do with one house.

For the National level, we couldn't think of any reason to have more than three houses. Panelist liked the idea of three houses, with one based on Geographic Area, same as for the I.O.O., since we had some areas (especially Alaska) which are rich in natural resources, but which were totally underrepresented at the National level, as a consequence of which we could and did create policies which effectively raped those areas to our collective long-term detriment. Moderator really had not been thinking in terms of adopting the I.O.O. model for the American national legislature, but we were persuaded by this reasoning, and it was a great and novel contribution by our first-timer panelist!

Question 261.1

What number of delegates should we have in each house of the National legislature?

We first thought that the Population house should have one representative for every N of population, but how much should N be? On further reflection, though, we

considered that we may want to keep the delegate count at a fixed level, in order to guard against population fluctuations. Then again, maybe we could have a mixed formula, with one representative per N of population up to a certain level of population, and then fixed after that. Agreed to reflect further and consider again.

We noted that we should view this Question in the context of the three-house Legislature which our non-author panelist had invented. Specifically, she now came up with the good point that the Population-based house should be variable in size, since that's the only house which could be under this paradigm.

Noted in Session 136 (November 2006) that the house based on the number of States could have a different number of delegates, though the number of States had not changed in almost half a century.

Introduced additional factors for consideration, as catalogued between Sessions:

First, didn't need the same number in the House of Representatives that we had then, because that was just the number which it happened to be at the time of fixation; better to have some number which can be easily fractionalized. Agreed.

Second, maybe we should have the same number of delegates in the per-State house as in the per-Area house, in order to balance between big States and little States, but may not need if requiring approval of all houses. We felt that we should consider this, since not every issue would necessarily require approval of all houses.

Third, we should consider making the Senate a vote of the States, and not of the Senators, in which case we could have three Senators from each State, the majority deciding what the State's vote is (like Delaware in "1776"), though it could make the minority Senator superfluous if the other two Senators always agree. Mixed feelings.

Agreed to have the same number of delegates in the per-State house as the per-Area house, and to re-norm the per-Area house as needed if the number of States changes. The per-Area house should assign a number of delegates to each State, and then each State should decide for itself whether to elect representation from specific geographic regions (in which case they would draw the district lines themselves), or by at-large election, or something else.

If we have the per-Area house pool each State's delegates into one vote covering the whole State, then they become a per-State house in effect, defeating the purpose of having a separate house. And, we were concerned about delegates in the per-State house effectively being disenfranchised, by pooling their votes together, so agreed that all houses should count delegate votes separately.

We did not have an atlas or reliable Internet at our meeting-place, so we assumed 3000x1500 miles for the 48 contiguous States. With 100 delegates in the per-Area house, that would come to 45,000 square miles per delegate, so each delegate would cover an area of 210x210 miles, meaning that some place like Rhode Island could have its own delegate and still be proportionate, without needing to do that thing which we had done with the I.O.O., with small countries combining to select a regional delegate. The size seemed big enough to be meaningful for national representation, but also small enough that a representative could manage to travel around it to assess public sentiment.

Agreed therefore that the number of delegates in each of the per-State house and per-Area house shall be the number of States times two.

[We later looked up in the 1993 *Rand-McNally World Atlas* that the actual area of the 48 contiguous States was 3,787,425 square miles, so we weren't too far off there. However, Rhode Island was only around 1,200 square miles in area (different sources gave numbers as low as 1,000 and as high as 1,500), so it would indeed need to combine with nearby States for a regional delegate under this model.]

For the per-Population house, if we make it based on each delegate representing N of population, then the total number of delegates would not be easily fractionalized. The number 300 was tempting, but then each representative would have even more power than at the time, and therefore would be that much more susceptible to corrupt influences. We also looked at 450, but we felt that 600 would make the districts small enough that gerrymandering becomes more difficult.

Question 261.2

To what extent should Territories (or different classes of Territories) be represented in the National legislature?

Read notes we had compiled in Session 44 as to Questions 44-45. We agreed with the Q44 finding that the Population-based house should cover Territories according to their actual proportions of population, but that it would present States with too much of a temptation to get de-classified if Territories had full representation in Congress: Good for Territories to have regular representation in the Population-based house, also to reflect the Q44 finding that individuals who happen to live in Territories should have the same rights as any other American national, but that Territories should not be represented in the per-State and per-Area houses.

Moderator of Session 136 didn't like what we had reasoned as to Question 45 (noting that some points seemed backwards!), and so was suspicious of the conclusion. However, to give DC representation in the per-State house would throw off those proportions, but we felt that DC didn't deserve the same low status as other Territories which couldn't/wouldn't hack the knack as States, so we compromised to give them one delegate in the per-Area house by definition (notwithstanding the effect on overall proportions in that house), so that States would get represented in three houses, DC in two, and other Territories in one.

One panelist (who had not attended for nearly five years) arrived at about this time, and suggested establishing one house based on Birthdays, such that a given representative's constituency would cover the entire country; not that well received.

Question 261.3

Should each house's delegates be elected at large, or by geographic district, or by some other arrangement?

In our discussions from earlier in Session 136, we had been leaning toward letting each State decide for itself. Did we want to modify that paradigm here? Leaned toward allowing States to decide for themselves, with the restrictions that the representatives must be popularly elected, and that any geographic district must conform to the rules which we had established in Answer 69.

Question 261.4

For what terms shall legislators in the different houses be elected?

One non-author panelist in Session 136 didn't like the fact that representatives with 2-year terms need to start running again as soon as they are elected. Moderator noted that we were generally aiming for a shorter campaign period in our model. We were not immediately sure of the extent to which this may be a mitigating factor.

That panelist did not attend Session 137 (February 2007), but another panelist from Session 136 did. Agreed that 2-year terms make it easier for stupider people [*sic*] to know when the elections happen, as opposed to needing to divide by 3. Reviewed our I-C-3 rules as to Campaigns, and found that we had no restrictions as to when people may begin to campaign, though the campaign spending limit (especially if it's pretty narrow) would motivate people to avoid starting their campaigns too early, so this shouldn't prevent us from having office terms as little as 2 years.

We generally liked the idea of having at least one house turn over every election, so that the electorate has the option to dump them all if they have sufficiently-severe problems with the incumbents. But, we also saw a value in forced continuity in at least one house, so that someone will always be there who has 'corporate memory' on issues which carry over from one term to the next.

In the interests of mitigating transitional activities, agreed to stick with 2-year terms for the Population-based house (so all seats are up for grabs every 2 years), and 6-year terms for the State-based house (approximately 1/3 up for grabs every 2 years). Splitting the difference with the Area-based house at 4 years, so 1/2 up for grabs every 2 years.

Question 261.5

What provisions shall we make in case of mid-term vacancy?

Note handwritten in our 'black book' mentioned our having discussed this concept in Session 73, but we did not find any actual notes on the point from that meeting when we looked for them in Session 137, except in regard to the President and Vice-President. Therefore, we were on our own as to Legislators.

Panelist didn't like mid-term appointments for their being too political, especially if the person doing the appointing is of a different political philosophy from the previous incumbent. Special elections are a pain in the butt, so we settled on the provision where the next-higher-ranking candidate from the previous election shall automatically take over, unless he/she fails to accept within a certain period (we suggested 10 calendar days), in which case going to the next-higher, until we run out of candidates, in which case go to a special election.

Considered cutting off the above provision when you get to candidates with negative margins, but remembered that we originally allowed winners with negative margins because we didn't want to go through runoff elections, but we also noted that the slate for a mid-term election could be significantly different from the original. Also, the fact that all candidates need to have gotten a certain minimum number of signatures on a petition means that at least that many people must have found them

to be at least minimally qualified, and the chances are pretty slim that you would get all the way down to the last-place candidate anyhow.

Therefore, we designated that mid-term vacancies in legislative positions shall be filled by the highest-ranking candidates in previous elections who accept within 10 calendar days of declared eligibility. [Revisited later.]

Question 261.6

Can we change representation amounts more frequently than the period of Census?

We said No in Session 137, on account of no basis for changing the representation amount in the absence of reliable Census information, and also a difficult time redrawing districts without a reliable update of Census data.

Question 261.8

Given future technology, any continued need for a house Chair?

Initial inclination of non-author panelist in Session 137 was that such a position would not be needed, but then considered that it is needed for calling meetings to order, recognizing members in debate, ruling on parliamentary disputes, etc.

Question 262

How shall the house Chair be chosen?

There were no Political Parties in our model as of Session 137, so decision by the 'majority party' was out the window. [Good riddance.]

Definitely agreed that the Chair should be elected by members of the House at large: Shouldn't be elected by the general Population, since they don't know the specific qualifications for chairing a legislative session. Also shouldn't be assigned on a rotational basis, since people who are deemed qualified to sit as legislative representatives would not necessarily have the qualifications to run a meeting. (Panelist brought up example of Libya being rotated into chairmanship of the U.N. Human Rights Commission.) Only question is what happens if everyone votes for him/herself (which still was a theoretical possibility, since we didn't like the idea of sequestering them like the College of Cardinals), and for that we allowed an open first ballot, and then limited subsequent ballots only if there's a total tie across the board, such limitation going to those members who have previous experience in that House, except if all members have experience or don't have experience, in which case limitation on subsequent ballots would go to the half of the membership who enjoyed the largest margins of victory over their opponents in their most recent elections. [This approach looked quite elegant in the Third Pass.]

These votes shall also happen by the #YesNoAbstain voting method.

When we reviewed this finding in Session 138 (March 2007), we found it to be a "peach", and "truly a Mensa solution": Whatever one may say about the quality of that decision, it's *prima facie* evident that a lot of thought went into it, maybe not the right/best thought, but we clearly did not construct the sentence casually.

Question 263

Who shall preside over the house in the absence of the elected Chair?

If it is an actual vacancy, then as of Session 138 the position would be filled by a new election. If absence is temporary, then the existing Chair can designate a temporary replacement if capable of doing so. If the Chair is unable to designate a replacement, for having gotten knocked for a coma, but is expected to be fine by next week, then the house can elect a Chair *pro tem*. We didn't like the idea of going to the highest-ranking candidate from the previous election.

Election of a Chair *pro tem* is conducted by the same individual as should open each legislative session and conduct the election for Chair. This is the newly-designated 'Custodian of (the) Congress', which did not appear to be listed in the Wednesday group's Table 25-13, but which we here designated as being the position to whom all non-elected employees of Congress (including the Librarian of Congress) report.

Subsection I-E-2: Introduction of New Business

Question 263.3

Any problems with introduction of legislation, and other business prior to committee referral?

We stated "No" in Session 138. [But, we thought of some points later.]

Subsection I-E-3: Committees

Question 264

Agreed that good for legislative houses to establish special and standing committees to evaluate proposed legislation in detail, and report back to full house?

Leading the witness here! Panelist in Session 138 yet said 'Yes', and asserted not having been influenced by the flagrant phrasing of the Question.

We introduced a suggestion offered by a panelist of our Wednesday general-public group [again, maybe too much bleeding, certainly more than originally planned], to establish a fourth Branch of government to perform any such research, and provide an impartial report to Congress, but it did not carry.

Question 265

In a pluralistic environment, who shall determine what committees shall exist in a given house?

As of Session 138, function should not devolve to a solitary individual or a "Committees Committee" (which sounded too much like a satire for a non-author panelist's taste), but instead should be decided by the full house.

When starting a new house, people can nominate Committees for inclusion on a big list, and then delegates can vote to approve or disapprove each Committee, with those getting created which achieve majority support. After that, creating or disbanding a Committee is a motion/bill like any other.

Exception: Agreed that any Presidential veto power which we may introduce later should not apply here, for this would be a purely internal proposal which would not warrant Executive oversight. Same goes for any other purely internal motions, such as for the establishment of Rules of Order.

Question 266

In a pluralistic format, how shall it be determined who shall serve in which committees?

We've got two basic problems here, dealing with the folks saying I wanna I wanna I wanna serve on this Committee, and those saying I don't wanna, I don't wanna, I don't wanna serve.

Panelist in Session 138 initially expressed dislike toward the concept of floating membership levels, but couldn't think of a good reason why, so she went with the Moderator's suggestion of allowing each delegate to be on any Committees that she likes, with the limitation that there shall be a maximum number of Committees for each delegate. We liked 3 as the maximum, since actual experience suggested that Congresspeople couldn't handle much more than that and still do an effective job.

If no one signs up for a given Committee, then it is automatically disbanded, with the records getting turned over to the Custodian of Congress for disposition. The likelihood of this possibility can be mitigated somewhat by self-policing: Some people will want to be the big fish in the little pond, and get visibility through managing an area where they have a lot of influence.

People could get on Committees just for show, but we should make sure that all Committee proceedings are public, so that we can document during elections how often a particular delegate attended or voted in Committee meetings.

Question 267

Might not some committees then be left with few or no members?

Addressed in Answer 266.

Question 268

Shall any legislator who wishes to serve on a given committee, then, be permitted to serve on such a committee, regardless of his/her qualifications or experience?

Panelist in Session 138 initially thought No, but changed her mind. Pre-existing expertise is nice, but we can't rely on that always existing, so we need to settle for people having enough knowledge about a topic to have developed an interest in it, any additional technical information being supplied by expert witnesses as needed.

Question 269

Under what circumstances -- if any -- may a member of a committee be expelled?

Conflict of interest, disruptive behavior, corruption. In any case, many of these charges could/would be brought before the full chamber, with any such general result affecting all of a delegate's Committee memberships. However, disqualification from a Committee (such as for simple and specific conflict of interest) would not necessarily disqualify one from general legislative membership.

Question 283.2

Under what circumstances -- if any -- may a member of a legislative assembly be expelled?

Looked at the expulsion topic more generally in Session 138 in the course of considering Question 269, which discussion included how one might get expelled from Congress entirely. [Packaged in the Third Pass as a separate Question with a number found handwritten in the 'black book' for inclusion in the 'miscellaneous' Subsection I-E-7, but we will resequence everything later.]

Hesitant to allow even the full house to decide this by super-majority, since a cabal of delegates (even a large one) could get together and get rid of someone whom they just don't like, thus usurping the expressed will of the popular Electorate.

Question 269 (continued)

Under what circumstances -- if any -- may a member of a committee be expelled?

In the case of conflict of interest for a specific Committee, the delegate probably would first be asked informally to recuse, and usually will. If not, then the Motion to Disqualify can be brought before the full Committee, but would be a non-binding request only. If the delegate still doesn't resign, then the motion can be brought to the full house, which can issue a binding disqualification with a 2/3 majority.

Question 283.2 (continued)

Under what circumstances -- if any -- may a member of a legislative assembly be expelled?

For general disqualification as a Congressperson, conviction should require impartial adjudication by an outside body, in order to mitigate cabalism. House can vote by simple majority to request/direct the Supreme Court (or better yet just a tribunal thereof, the justices determining which three would serve) to conduct a trial.

Question 269.5

How shall the leadership of committees be selected?

Did we want to activate the Custodian of Congress again? It's a lot of work to open each Committee, and conduct an election for Committee Chair, but then the Custodian probably would have some kind of deputies to whom this task could be

delegated. From that point, can open floor to all nominations, and then the officers can be selected by #YesNoAbstain.

Question 270

Should votes taken by a committee be based on a percentage of votes cast, or of total membership?

Agreed in Session 138 that people voting in any capacity should always have the option to Abstain, if they don't know/care enough about a particular issue, or for any other reason. Basing vote on the total membership removes this option, so we should go with percentage of votes cast.

=====

New panelist in Session 139 (June 2007) preferred not to discuss Legislative Operations. We had interesting discussion on other topics, with no official changes to any of our previous Answers.

It was more than three years before we again had quorum [which had been 2 since the beginning of the Project], largely because the Moderator resided in New Orleans from June 2007 to October 2008, and because following Hurricane Katrina there was practically zero interest there on the part of the few remaining local residents (not even within Mensa) in debates of political topics at the national level or higher.

Question 271

Standing committees having been designated for a given house, who shall determine what standing committee(s) shall evaluate a given piece of proposed legislation, or whether a special committee shall be formed?

Agreed in Session 140 (October 2010, the 19th appearance for a certain panelist who had not been with us since June 2003, when she was single and going under a different surname) that Committees generally should not have full veto ability, but rather should just report their findings to the house for full final vote, unless all assigned Committees reject it.

Authors of legislation should be required to designate at least one Committee to review the legislation. While we considered that they would be motivated to nominate a minimum number of Committees, in order to mitigate the likelihood of blockage, in our designated environment legislators actually are motivated to nominate more than one, in order to come up with at least one Committee which can authorize referral back to the full assembly for vote.

Non-authors also should have opportunity to designate additional Committees to evaluate a particular piece of legislation: But, should this be by the full assembly, or by a 'Steering Committee'?

We noted two problems here: On one hand, we didn't want to have to bog down the full assembly with all these piddly details. On the other, we didn't want to vest too much power in any small cabal. Compromise solution was to allow the Steering Committee to review the legislation before it goes to the full assembly. Then, when it finally does get read before the full assembly, the reading can include which

Committees already have been designated to review it. If any legislator then feels that it should be reviewed by some additional standing or special Committee, then said referral can be put up to a vote for an ordinary referral motion. Otherwise, it goes to the designated Committees for review until subsequent reporting to the full assembly, again unless all assigned Committees reject it.

Question 272

What should be the scope of the Rules Committee, the Ways & Means Committee, and certain other Committees in Congress?

Generally, we did want to allow assemblies to define their own Committees, but in Session 140 we also designated a general policy statement that the titles of such Committees should clearly and unambiguously identify what those committees actually do. We provided a couple of specific examples of what not to do, including that any so-called 'Rules Committee' should be concerned with only internal measures of general parliamentary procedure, and that there should be no such thing as a 'Ways & Means Committee', because that name is too ambiguous.

Question 272.1

Do we care to make any designations as to which house any particular committee should be in?

Not as of Session 140.

Question 272.6

What additional committees should exist?

We read aloud in Session 141 (October 2010) all our notes from Sessions 100-101 as to Question 165, on what functions should be handled by the federal agency in charge of the Environment. We now wanted indeed, as suggested during those meetings, to make sure that we had a Committee somewhere which would set overall policy to balance the needs of Businesses, Consumers, and the Environment.

At the very least, the Area-based house of the national Legislature should have this kind of Committee (since they usually will be the most severely impacted by any decision affecting large portions of our national Environment), and possibly one or both of the other houses as well.

For the Area-based house, we settled on 'Economic & Environmental Affairs Committee' as the name which is both most succinct and most descriptive. We placed 'Economic' before 'Environmental' to show that Environment is important but not necessarily the most important element of the triad.

[This approach looked highly suspect as of the Third Pass, for to suggest that the Economy is more important than the Environment suggests that if necessary we should sacrifice the second in order to maintain the first, but behold that would be highly problematic, because our longer-term Economic needs will suffer if we fail to sustain a proper Environmental system. We will consider further in Fourth Pass.]

Question of what names Committees should have in any other house(s) depends on whether the other house(s) will be expected to evaluate all bills at all, or whether certain houses can 'specialize' on certain topics. We had discussed latter possibility in the course of considering Q261, but had not addressed it as a formal Question.

Question 261.7

Should all houses of Congress be required to approve any general piece of legislation as a condition of its being enacted, or shall we allow houses to 'specialize' on different areas of legislative business?

Could be faster if we allow houses to specialize, but per Session 141 you may lose the benefit of multiple independent reviews, and you would need a macro Steering Committee, same as at the Global level, to decide which bills go where, which could be both dilatory and unduly influenceable by political motivations.

It's a judgment call, but non-author panelist felt that we should continue to require all houses to evaluate all bills, provided that we do certain things to the Amendment process (to be decided in the next Subsection) to streamline the process.

Question 272.6 (continued)

What additional committees should exist?

As a result of our finding as to what we are now calling Question 261.7, each house should have a Committee which looks at the same issues which are evaluated by the 'Economic & Environmental Affairs Committee' of the Area-based house.

Recommending for clarity that the 'E&EA Committee' should have the same name in each other house.

Question 180 (continued)

What functions or issues should be managed by the Bureau of Water & Power?

While we were preparing to consider Question 272.4, we read in Session 141 the notes compiled in Session 107 as to Question 180. Where those notes mention notifying the applicable Congressional Committee if the Executive Branch intervenes directly on any State/Local matter, we now intended that they should notify all three Economic & Environmental Affairs Committees.

Question 272.4

Should there be a committee to perform oversight of Localities as may be needed?

Good for there be a process whereby the national Legislature considers whether any State allegedly not making it should be converted back into a Territory, but this hopefully will be so infrequent an occurrence that there probably should not be a standing Committee for it in any house, for each delegate may serve on a maximum of three Committees, and each such Committee should have a fairly full Calendar.

Therefore, don't have a separate standing Committee for State/Locality Oversight, but instead convene special Committees as needed within each house.

Question 272.3

Should there be a committee to perform oversight of the Executive Branch as may be needed?

We had established in Answer 133 that Congress should have authority to confirm or overrule the appointment of any Department head or Bureau chief in the Executive Branch. We also established previously (and referred to it in Answer 133 according to the main 'blue book' notes, but corrected in the meeting summary to Answer 132) that Congress should have authority to override within 30 days any action taken by the President. We had also decided in what we are now calling Answer 160.1 certain parameters on allowable responses against aggressions by Terrorist organizations or any other entities not purporting to represent sovereign Nations.

As also stated in the Q133 discussion, one reason for requiring the extra level of confirmation is the same reason why we require multiple levels of approval before hiring anyone in the corporate sector. Therefore, the appointee doesn't actually take office until Congressional approval is obtained, which may or may not happen within 30 days, although we want the process to happen in a timely fashion.

Question 271 (continued)

Standing committees having been designated for a given house, who shall determine what standing committee(s) shall evaluate a given piece of proposed legislation, or whether a special committee shall be formed?

We stated in Session 141 (in the context of Question 272.3) that the Steering Committee of each house generally should decide the sequence in which items reported back from Committees are to be taken up by the full Legislature, to try to get more time-sensitive items dispatched first. [Reconsidered in the Third Pass.]

Question 272.3 (continued)

Should there be a committee to perform oversight of the Executive Branch as may be needed?

Given the intervening amendment to Answer 271, it would be possible that we would want to impose a fixed time constraint on the Congress, but we were leaning away from it: Even though we generally want these matters decided expeditiously, yet some other issues may actually deserve faster attention by Congress, and we wouldn't want a maniac getting appointed because Congress genuinely had more important things to do than consider the appointment.

Therefore agreed in Session 141 not to impose any such fixed time constraint.

Agreed to call it the 'Executive Oversight' Committee, which both evaluates general actions of the Executive Branch and also considers high-level appointments.

Agreed that any appointment passes if approved by the Committee. If rejected by the Committee, then it gets referred to the full assembly in order to reduce the likelihood that it gets overturned merely for political or personal reasons.

Considered requiring a 2/3 vote of the Committee to recommend against the appointment and report it back to the full house for further evaluation, but we felt that a simple majority of negative analysis should be sufficient for such action. However, we did require a 2/3 majority of the full house for actual override.

But, again, which house(s) should look at these issues, or should we establish some sort of joint Committee, or should they be evaluated by all three full assemblies combined? Different approaches have their pros and cons, and it was something of a judgment call, but we felt best at that time about assigning it to only one house, principally for the sake of expediency. In particular, we now started to think of the house with the fewest delegates as being the 'upper' house, since each delegate would need to have been elected by a larger constituency. That being the case, successful electees probably will have needed additional experience and exposure to Federal issues above and beyond those of the freshman delegates in larger houses, so should be in a better position to evaluate Executive actions and appointments. Therefore, the 'XO' Committee should exist only in the per-State house.

Question 32.1 (continued)

Do we want to discuss specific potential policies, and/or specific remedies that the I.O.O. would allow?

Expanded previous discussion on counter-terrorism in Session 142 (October 2010, which was one panelist's first in nearly 13 years), by confirming (as recorded in the 'blue book' summary but not in the main notes) that the I.O.O. may incur into a country to suppress an imminent and serious threat by a 'terrorist' or other organization known to be operating within that country, provided that there is sufficiently compelling evidence of such threat coming from there, and also provided that the host country is not acting swiftly enough to suppress the threat itself.

Question 147.3 (continued)

How shall we define 'crossing a border with military force'?

As we compiled the summary of Session 142, noted that the amended A32.1 meant that we had to drop the definition which we had adopted in Session 95, of 'crossing a border with military force' as necessarily being in one country's name, for the attack threatened may be coming from an independent organization in their own name.

Question 272.7

What votes shall be required to overturn an ordinary Executive action?

Panelist noted in Session 142 that we probably shouldn't involve multiple houses in the process of overturning Executive actions, since we wanted the process completed within 30 days. Saw no reason for a different procedure from that of overturning Executive appointments: XO Committee would review actions and initiate any possible overturn by simple majority, after which the question would go to the full per-State house, where a 2/3 majority would be required to complete the overturn.

Subsection I-E-4: Amendments

Question 273

Do we like the current rules for offering amendments to bills, whereby an amendment may be attached which has nothing to do with the original bill?

No.

Question 274

To prevent such abuse, can we establish a rule that the subject of an amendment must relate to the subject of the bill?

Second panelist (the one returning for first time in 13 years) asserted in Session 142 that Congressmembers were then allowed to enter the Office of Congressional Recordkeeping and handwrite in proceedings which Congress had never actually conducted, and any riders that they wanted.

Moderator now came up with idea to increase motivation to introduce a non-germane item as a separate bill, by requiring any amendment to pass by a 3/5 majority.

Question 275

Should we impose an additional restriction, to allow for the possibility that the Chair may not be sufficiently motivated to throw out a non-germane amendment?

First panelist preferred as of Session 142 to have a standard reminder in the language when actually calling for a vote on the amendment, to remind everyone that the vote is also on whether the amendment is germane to the main motion. Moderator felt that good politicians would already know this, and that bad politicians wouldn't care about it, and that it would therefore be just a waste of time, but the panelist felt that there would be a cumulative psychological impact.

Question 275.5

If the rules of the Legislature are such that a given piece of legislation must be approved by more than one house, then what should/shall happen if a bill gets amended by the second house into a form which is different from how it got approved in the first house?

Two basic possible approaches here: Either try to prevent the occurrence from occurring in the first place, or else allow it and figure out a way to deal with it.

One way to prevent it is to prevent the second house from making any amendments at all, either pass it or reject it as is. However, we would like to have some amount of negotiation in order to get good amendments approved, and good legislation enacted, so probably better to allow amendments to happen in other houses, but just streamline the process, and obviate a joint 'Conference Committee'.

There are various additional possible approaches, including whether to send legislation to the other two houses simultaneously or sequentially, and whether to refer any amended bill back to the first house directly or to the third house.

Two non-author panelists in Session 142 worked out the following procedure: Bill which has been amended as applicable and approved within a 1st house goes to a 2nd house only. The 2nd house adds its amendments, and the bill goes back to the 1st house. If the 1st house approves all amendments, then they get locked into the bill, and the entire bill goes to the 3rd house. If the 1st house rejects any amendments offered by the 2nd house, then the bill goes to the 3rd house with both agreed versions and any 'pending amendments' [this was neat!] offered by the 2nd house. Whether the 3rd house receives the bill as one document or as a document-plus-pending-amendments, they have the option to add further amendments on their own. If the 3rd house is getting the bill as one document and passes no amendments, then they can pass the bill. Any amendments go to both other houses for consideration. Basically, each house gets to offer amendments, and any amendments are considered by both other houses, and attached to the bill if approved by 2 out of the 3 houses. Any amendment offered by any house shall require 3/5 approval, same as in the initial house.

Sequence of houses doesn't really matter a whole lot, but we needed some fixed procedure, so we arbitrarily designated that the path should go up according to the numbers of representatives: If starting in the 100-delegate house, then it goes to the 200-delegate house and then to the 600. If starting in the 200, then to 600 and 100. If starting in 600, then to 100 and 200. [We later set a different number of delegates in the 'middle house', but procedure would be the same; changed later.]

Subsection I-E-5: Debate and Voting

Question 275.6

Any questions on debate rules, including time limits?

We initially had no suggestions in Session 142 on how any house should structure its own debate rules (which, by A265, should not be subject to veto by the jurisdiction's chief executive), except that we did want to require televised proceedings, but a couple of further points occurred to us later as we considered other Questions.

Question 276

Is it acceptable to set a time limit for voting on a particular bill?

Yes.

Question 277

If so, then is it acceptable to allow anyone to vote after time has expired?

Tempted in Session 142 to allow excuses for sudden illness, stuck elevator, abduction, or other severe and unforeseen problem, but any such mechanism would be subject to abuse for political purposes, and any vote to allow/reject such excuse would likely mirror the sentiment on the bill being voted on, so would be useless.

Best and cleanest to require physical presence in order to vote, no proxies, no excuses. We imagined that a re-vote would be taken if something really bad happens, but we felt that we couldn't practically require it. [Revisited in Third Pass.]

Question 277.1

Under what conditions (if any) shall we allow remote voting?

Tempted in Session 142 to require everyone voting remotely to at least have been present for the debate, but people don't always pay attention when they are there, and people do need to go to the bathroom.

Agreed to allow remote voting if-and-only-if they've been clocked in for at least 75% of the debate time (*i.e.*, enough to allow a fairly balanced view of all sides of the argument, but still allowing for bathroom breaks or other urgent business), including via teleconference.

Question 275.6 (continued)

Any questions on debate rules, including time limits?

The intervening Answer 277.1 meant that one debate rule should be that the time of the debate and the attendance during debate of each delegate must be clocked, so that remote voting may be allowed by a delegate who has been personally or electronically present for at least 75% of the debate, but not by other delegates.

As to quorum, we generally wanted to allow houses to set their own rules as of Session 142, and we also didn't want delegates voting who don't care enough to show up for the debates, so may be good to allow business to occur even with few delegates present. However, we didn't want to allow three delegates to convene in the chamber at 3:30am to convene a session and then change a bunch of rules on their own. Therefore, requiring a set proportion of delegates to call a session to order, after which attendance can do whatever it wants until adjournment.

Question 271 (continued)

Standing committees having been designated for a given house, who shall determine what standing committee(s) shall evaluate a given piece of proposed legislation, or whether a special committee shall be formed?

At the beginning of Session 143 (October 2010), as ideated between Sessions, we changed the current name of 'Steering Committee' to 'Bill Assignment Committee', as being more clearly descriptive of what the group actually does.

Question 275.5 (continued)

If the rules of the Legislature are such that a given piece of legislation must be approved by more than one house, then what should/shall happen if a bill gets amended by the second house into a form which is different from how it got approved in the first house?

We had ideated between Sessions that we might want to sequence houses such that bills go first to the houses with the most delegates. But, we observed in Session 143

that we had previously stated that the per-Area house should have the same number of delegates as the per-State house, in order to balance their respective influences.

Question 261.1 (continued)

What number of delegates should we have in each house of the National legislature?

In order to accommodate the possibility that we might want to have unequal numbers of delegates among the houses, so that we would have the option to navigate new bills through the houses on that basis, panel in Session 143 formally reconsidered the number of delegates to be assigned to the per-Area house:

- We had originally stated that we wanted to 'balance the respective influences' of the per-State and per-Area houses, by giving them the same numbers of delegates. Moderator was now no longer sure that he even understood what that meant, let alone agreed with it.
- Moderator now wanted there to be 200 delegates in the per-Area house, as we had recently thought, both to give delegates an opportunity to graduate through houses with fewer delegates, since representing larger constituencies, and also so that bills could be concentrated in houses with fewer delegates.
- Another reason for having more delegates in the per-Area house is to have districts which are small enough to be jigsawed within State boundaries more easily.
- Don't want to have geographic districts which are too small, lest those delegates tend to focus on local issues instead of the bigger picture intended for the per-Area house.
- New panelist suggested allowing districts to cross State boundaries, and that we set certain rules for placing a fixed grid over the country, to prevent Gerrymandering. This would help to alleviate our concern about Gerrymandering at the national scale, which would be even worse than at the State level.
- Moderator's other concern about this idea is the election process if you cross State boundaries. Makes it harder on both candidates and voters if someone doesn't know easily which district they belong to.
- However, another panelist noted that grouping all delegates within a given State tends to re-introduce State-based politics, and the previous panelist would rather that they represent an Area and not just part of a State, so better to cross State boundaries as needed.
- Looked at map of the USA, to get a feel for how big each Area district should be.
- Considered setting districts in boxes of Longitude and Latitude, even though they get slightly bigger toward southern Latitudes, but we had a concern of some coastal 'orphans' which would not constitute the entire area of a district.

With the map at hand, which had a 1:3,769,000 scale, it appeared to us empirically that a good district size coincidentally coincided with a certain cookie which we happened to have on the table, which turned out to be 2.875 inches in diameter.

Question 275.5 (continued)

If the rules of the Legislature are such that a given piece of legislation must be approved by more than one house, then what should/shall happen if a bill gets amended by the second house into a form which is different from how it got approved in the first house?

If we accept a number of delegates for the per-Area house which is somewhere between the per-State and per-Population houses, then [as a change from original idea] how were we on the idea of routing new bills to the house with the highest delegate count which hasn't seen it yet? No problem as of Session 143, for reasons expressed in our reconsideration of Question 261.1 from the same meeting.

Question 132 (continued)

Should the President (or Governor, or other Chief Executive of a jurisdiction) have unilateral authority to establish, adjust, or eliminate Departments in the Executive Branch, or should the Legislature have complete authority, or some kind of hybrid?

Panel in Session 143 ratified notes ideated between Sessions: In order to allow the Legislature to observe and evaluate all Executive actions, all units in the Executive Branch are to routinely inform the Executive Oversight Committee of the per-State house of all important actions, and copy them on all correspondence, under penalty of removal from office of the individuals responsible for the non-disclosure.

Question 272.7 (continued)

What votes shall be required to overturn an ordinary Executive action?

Panel in Session 143 ratified additional notes ideated between Sessions: If the Executive Oversight Committee learns of a significant action being taken by the Executive without prompt notification to the Legislative, then the Committee may recommend disciplinary actions (including termination) against the individuals responsible, any such actions requiring ratification by the full per-State house.

Question 32.1 (continued)

Do we want to discuss specific potential policies, and/or specific remedies that the I.O.O. would allow?

Panel in Session 143 ratified notes ideated between Sessions: Any country may unilaterally act against a terrorist threat in another country, with their permission, and maybe even without it, but they had better be correct about the imminent and serious threat, or else be on the hook for crossing a border with military force, with sanctions which can include arrest and trial of the Head of State and other leaders.

Question 261.1 (continued)

What number of delegates should we have in each house of the National legislature?

Moderator presented some maps in Session 144 (November 2010) which he had produced, and argued for the 'middle model', and against using ZIP codes.

Moderator presented additional argument ideated between Sessions, on having the per-Area house come between per-State and per-Population: If it was as important as -- or more important than -- the per-State house, then people will ask why it was not included in the original Constitutional model. If less important than the per-Population house (or as unimportant as), then people will ask why we need it at all. We want this third house as an additional counter-balance between the previous two houses, so good to have a delegate level somewhere between.

One more argument for treating the per-Area house as the 'middle house' was that we had defined 4-year terms for delegates.

We read notes from Session 136 on why we originally had per-Area equal per-State, and now presented new argument that we did not want to need to re-norm the per-Area house if the number of States changes within the same Area.

Panel now agreed to change our minds on the previous model, and to have each district in the per-Area house be based on actual Area of the Nation, rather than some fraction of the State, because good for those delegates to be representing Areas of the country in the national legislature, and not be overly beholden to State influences, besides which it would be good to have a consistent model for determining districts across the country.

"Final" decision [not really] on per-Area house: Agreed that number of districts in the per-Area house will be somewhere between 100 and 600, so will be the 'middle house'. Also agreed that the method for determining district boundaries shall apply across the whole country, without being tied to State boundaries.

We considered whether to shape the boundaries of ordinary per-Area districts according to smooth lines of latitude and longitude, or according to ZIP-code boundaries. It had been argued that people might be able to identify their own districts more easily if they were based on ZIP code, but Moderator now argued that such a system would just complicate things to no great advantage, and nobody else really wanted to push it. Besides, the whole idea of the per-Area house was to allow the needs of certain geographic areas to be voiced, and it seemed to defeat this purpose if we allow a district to contain a 'peninsula' surrounded by another district.

Only remaining issue was the number of districts. Introduced the 'cookie' evidence: Looked more closely at the map models prepared between Sessions of how the districts might appear depending on their ordinary dimensions. One model used districts of $2^\circ \times 2^\circ$ bounded by even meridians, resulting in 198 districts in the lower 48 States. Second model used districts of $2^\circ \times 2^\circ$ bounded by odd meridians, resulting in 196 districts in the lower 48 States, plus 39 for Alaska and 1 for Hawaii, for a total of 234. Third model used districts of 3° in east-west width and 2° in north-south height, resulting in 134 districts in the lower 48 States, plus 27 for Alaska and 1 for Hawaii, for a total of 162. All models used odd-numbered parallels, because our major straight-line northern border rests on the 49th Parallel, and because the famous "Four Corners" spot (an easy reference point) rests on the 37th.

Using districts from the $2^\circ \times 2^\circ$ odd-meridian model would produce districts of about 125 miles per side, which would be about 5/6 of the length from the cookie model, which we felt was close enough. Also, districts in the Southeast U.S. looked cleaner with the odd-meridian model than with even meridians.

Therefore agreed on the 2°x2° odd-meridian model, except that one panelist wanted to tweak some districts, such that there may not be exactly 234 delegates. We saw what she meant as to Florida, so we settled on 240 districts, fudging with Alaska as needed, so that it is easily divisible by 3, 4, and 5.

Question 275.6 (continued)

Any questions on debate rules, including time limits?

Agreed in Session 144 that 50% quorum is a good level to be both necessary and sufficient to call a session to order. Having less makes it too easy for minority groups to override previous decisions, and having more could make it difficult to get business done when needed, even with remote access. Resuming regular order:

Question 277.2

Is there any other business which should require other than a simple majority?

OK as of Session 144 to leave budget approval at 50%, recalling California's history of difficulty when it required a higher level. However, any expenditure beyond budget should require a higher level.

Reversing or modifying any previous legislative action shall require simple majority if the original action took place more than 24 months earlier, but a higher level if less time has passed. Considered that the intervening election should be sufficient to show that we have a new national sentiment and can therefore change stuff right away if desired, but a non-author panelist made good point that we don't want to be changing things back and forth too quickly whenever the majority sentiment in a polarized environment changes slightly: If you've got good enough reason to change something right away, then you should be able to demonstrate that to a higher majority. Otherwise, wait at least 24 months, give the original action a chance to work, assess any problems, and then change by simple majority if desired.

We also wanted a higher-level requirement for terminating any multi-year project, including in Sciences or Infrastructure.

Decided on 2/3 requirement for all three of these items: Idea of requiring more than simple majority on legislative reversals within 24 months was to make it harder to accomplish, but 3/5 is too close to 50%, so not really achieving desired purpose. However, you don't want to make the requirement so high that you can't get stuff done when you really want to, so 2/3 is best. Seemed to be a reasonable level for extra-budgetary appropriations and termination of multi-year projects as well.

Clarified previous statement in Session 145 (November 2010) to include that legislatures may not change a multi-year project without a 2/3 majority.

Question 261.1 (continued)

What number of delegates should we have in each house of the National legislature?

Confirmed preference in Session 145 for 2°x2° districts with even meridians.

Subsection I-E-6: Veto

Question 278

Do we agree in general that it is constructive for the President (or Chief Executive of a lower jurisdiction) to be able to veto any passed bill which she feels is not constructive, subject to a 2/3 override?

We broke up the Question into constituent elements in Session 145. Main element was whether we wanted to have any Chief Executive to be able to veto legislation at all. One non-author panelist said Yes, and gave very good reason that we had installed significant checking power into the Legislature against the Executive, so there should be some balance of power, where the Executive gets to check the Legislative. [We effectively deferred the override element to Question 280.]

Considered a phrase added to the Q by the Wednesday group [was this scientifically proper or not??], that maybe the veto power should be invested in some other individual or group, but we didn't like that concept, because we specifically wanted a balance of checking power between the Executive and Legislative Branches.

Question 279

Should such authority be said to include the ability to veto only a portion of a passed bill?

This is the 'Line-Item Veto' Question. Non-author panelist in Session 145 leaned to Yes, provided that the Legislature gets a chance to override the partial veto, in case any changes demanded by the Executive cause the bill not to make sense anymore.

We particularly liked the Line-Item Veto to remove amendments and other provisions which should not have been added in the first place.

Only reasons which we could speculate as to why we shouldn't have the Line-Item Veto, or why we hadn't had it before that time, were that some people may have felt that it gave too much checking power to the Executive, and that the Legislatures always refused to pass any procedural modification limiting their own authority.

Question 280

If allowing a full or partial veto, then what rules should govern such procedure?

As of Session 145, we wanted the bill going back to the Legislature whether the veto is full or partial, because we didn't want the Chief Executive to have too much power over the elected Legislature, and because we didn't want too much power vested in any solitary individual, particularly one who had limited or zero involvement with the development of the proposed legislation in question.

Executive Oversight Committee would not have authority to override an Executive veto, because that's a review of a Legislative action, not an Executive action.

Partly-vetoed bill goes back to Legislature, which has 30 days to block enactment of the bill in its partly-approved state, or else it is enacted in its partly-approved state.

Looking at the full veto, we didn't want a bill to need to be approved again by all three houses, for it would just take too long and could make it impossible. Better to have it go to only the upper house, since we were burdening the lower houses more with new legislation, and since any controversy between the Branches would be 'big-picture' enough of an issue to merit the upper house's attention. The three houses would be unified by this point as to their vision of the bill, so the upper house should be able to represent them by a 2/3 vote.

No timeframe for overturning a full veto: If they want it to go through, then they will want to do so as fast as they can. No problem if it takes longer.

Actually changed our minds about full veto: Bill should still go to only one house, but it should be the house in which the bill originated, not necessarily the upper house, because the original authors are in the best position to address the bill again, and speak passionately in favor of re-passage.

For a partial veto, bill would also go back to the house of origination.

Question 278 (continued)

Do we agree in general that it is constructive for the President (or Chief Executive of a lower jurisdiction) to be able to veto any passed bill which she feels is not constructive, subject to a 2/3 override?

Considered in the context of Question 280 whether the bill need to go to the President if it has already passed all houses by a 2/3 (or other high) majority. One panelist suggested that everyone's decided by that point, and that a second vote would be redundant, but we countered that some people might change their votes if they realize that they are going against the President.

Question 280 (continued)

If allowing a full or partial veto, then what rules should govern such procedure?

Vote by the house of origination on a partly-vetoed bill (we liked "partly vetoed" better than "line-item vetoed" because we found it to be more inclusive of the different things which can happen), as to whether the bill should be blocked from enactment in its partly-vetoed state, should require only a simple majority, since they're just saying that the process should be held while they do other stuff with it, though no time limits after that. [To clarify, if the house fails to achieve a simple majority on a blockage motion, or if it takes no action at all, then the bill is enacted in its partly-vetoed state.]

Partly-vetoed bill has now gone back to the originating house, and they have voted within 30 days by a simple majority to block enactment of the bill in its partly-vetoed state. At that point, they can pass the original version by a 2/3 majority without involving other houses, or they can take no action (in which case nothing happens with the bill), or else they can make some additional amendments to the bill to try to get it approved.

We are hoping that the main bill is a good bill, so we want to make it easy to get it into approvable shape. Therefore, any amendments at this stage can be passed by

simple majority of the originating house. Amended bill then goes to the other houses, which can approve it by simple majority, but which would require a 3/5 majority if they are going to be adding any new amendments.

Once the amended bill passes all three houses, it goes back to the Executive as a new bill, and re-starts the veto process.

Sequence of going through additional houses is the same as the original procedure. In fact, once it leaves the first house after amendment, the entire process is normal from that point.

Under what conditions or circumstances would Legislatures need to start the entire process again from scratch, versus under what conditions or circumstances could they pick up the bill in the middle of the process? We wouldn't want to allow the bill to stay open indefinitely, because if it stays open until major changes have been made to Executive and Legislative personnel, then they shouldn't be able to take advantage of shortcuts later which they weren't able to take advantage of earlier. If something was so contentious that they couldn't have consensus before, then better make sure that you have consensus later. However, we also didn't want a time limit as soon as the expiration of the current Congressional term, because the President could then very easily play politics, and hold all vetoes until the end of the term. (This is mitigated by the President's 30-day rule, but we still didn't want to penalize good pieces of legislation which are introduced at the end of a term.) Therefore, we settled on a 24-month timeframe for allowing the overturn of a Presidential veto.

Considered time limit for Executive action. You don't want to allow the bill to be stayed indefinitely while the Executive sits on it, and so you want it going through if the President fails within a certain time period to indicate a strenuous objection. However, you also want to allow the President to execute the bill immediately, both to create the public perception of affirmative action and also to get the bill enacted that much more quickly. However, if the President fails to act, current practice was to consider it a 'pocket veto', and the bill would die, but we wanted the bill to go through if it has gone through all that process, and if the President fails to indicate a strenuous objection. We felt that a period of 10 days is too narrow of a timeframe, because you want the President to have some realistic opportunity to fit the item in with her other schedule. Period of 30 days is satisfactory, and consistent with the Executive Oversight Committee's window of overturning Executive action.

Subsection I-E-7: Miscellaneous

Question 281

Should procedures allowing for referenda and initiatives in California be instituted at the Federal level, as well?

Non-author panelist in Session 146 (November 2010) actually didn't like the extent of propositions which California then had: We'd been inundated by a lot of important measures which really should have gotten decided by the Legislators who were originally elected for that purpose, because the Voters get unduly influenced by slick marketing, and therefore approve some bad measures, or disapprove good ones.

Moderator liked propositions, and wanted to see more at both levels.

Suggestion was offered to allow ordinary people to place a measure directly on the Legislative calendar, to be treated as an ordinary bill from that point, if they're having trouble getting a delegate to sponsor it. But, why bother? If no one is willing to sponsor it, then they probably won't vote for it, either.

Moderator thought it good to have a way to work around the Legislature, especially for certain types of measures which the Legislature will tend to block, such as cutting Legislative salaries, changing District boundaries, changing Terms, or restricting Campaign options. Legislators will sometimes deny measures which are in the public interest but not in their own, and this will continue to be the case even when they are replaced by new Legislators, so the problem never goes away, and so we need some kind of way to work around the Legislature when we need to.

Possible compromise solution is to still allow the Initiative process (at both the State and Federal levels), but require a higher signature count, so that we don't get as many measures. But then, this would mean that the measures being voted on would be even more important on average, so that would contradict the panelist's position that the General Public should not be voting directly on the important issues.

Panelist believed that there might be some benefit to forcing a measure onto the Legislative calendar by collecting a certain number of signatures, because some delegates might actually change their votes once they have an actual measure placed on the calendar by the Public. Moderator didn't see this as very likely, but had no objection to adding the process.

But, we still wanted some way to work around the Legislature, didn't we? Maybe if we arranged for fewer propositions, so that people could focus on them more easily.

Or, could we arrange for only certain types of measures to be initiabile by the Public?

Moderator also liked the option to refer a bill to popular vote, regardless of why the Legislature does it.

Panelist saw why Legislators might legitimately want to refer a measure to popular vote, if they can't get it through the Legislature, but they also might refer items because they serve special interests which the General Public might not notice.

Another possibility is to create a list of topics which may be initiated or referred to general ballots, where the Legislature has a conflict of interest, such that we can't rely on them to vote objectively. But, you still would need some entity making a subjective judgment as to whether a particular measure classifies under that list.

Saw note in our 'black book' that a certain other panelist had tentatively agreed in Session 121 to have national propositions on national ballots, but we hadn't given any reasons, so the finding was subject to overrule.

Question 112 (continued)

By what means can we maximize willing voter participation?

While discussing Q281 in Session 146, and after suggesting that important issues generally should be decided by Legislatures rather than by the General Public, a panelist clarified that she was not saying that members of the G.P. are too stupid to

vote on anything, but rather that they have a tendency to lose focus on details of proposals because they are inundated so frequently. If we restrict elections to once every two years*, then it becomes much more of a special event, and more people will be more likely to pay closer attention to all races and propositions. This will also make things more economical, both in campaigning and in election materials.

[*This apparently was the first time that this concept was introduced in the panels, but -- even without a specific Question to initiate discussion of the matter -- it has yet become one of our core concepts, influencing numerous other positions. Elucidated later that if elections are held any more frequently (including through the use of 'primaries'), they tend to lose their 'special' nature, and many otherwise-willing voters will sometimes/often stay away from the polls, or else (even worse) they vote with little or no advance research on the issues and candidates. Keeping it at a biennial election cycle will help to maximize willing and informed voter participation, as well as make the process more economical.]

Question 281 (continued)

Should procedures allowing for referenda and initiatives in California be instituted at the Federal level, as well?

Second non-author panelist noted that military forces can always overtake a peaceful governmental system. Moderator suggested that some people resort to violent methods because they feel too powerless to get anything accomplished through their current leaders and representatives, and that having a process for national propositions on national ballots might make people feel more like participants, and make them more motivated to continue to participate peacefully.

First non-author panelist came up with compromise solution which we felt might make everything okay: Allow referendum/initiative if-and-only-if the measure has been addressed and rejected by the Legislature. That way, everyone would already know that the measure was found wanting by the Legislature, and hopefully would know the reasons why, but they still would have the opportunity to override if it's a conflict-of-interest situation. Can operate similar to the Executive and Legislative Branches checking each other, and it ends up being a "Popular Reverse Veto". This way, you no longer have a Legislature referring something to the Public just to avoid being bad guys; they need to make a commitment first.

One good thing about the proposal is that it obviates us making a list of acceptable topics and an independent entity making a subjective determination of whether a particular measure qualifies for popular vote.

If people have already placed a measure on the Legislative calendar, and if the Legislature rejects it, then it is automatically referred for popular double-check. (We didn't want people to need to go through a signature process a second time. Could require a higher vote count the first time for automatic referral, but we felt that the initial effort should be deemed good enough.) If the measure was already initiated within the Legislature, and then gets rejected, then we could have processes for referral to popular double-check, either by a certain vote of the Legislature or by collecting some number of signatures.

Yes, we can do this at both the State and National levels.

Looking now to details of implementation:

What percentage of popular vote should be required to authorize an overturn? We felt that 2/3 is unreasonably high, since it seems so hard to get 2/3 to vote Yes or No on anything. However, we want it to be a little harder to override a Legislative vote, so we want to require more than a simple majority. Therefore settled on 3/5.

For time limits, we allowed people a full 24 months to collect signatures to get a measure originating within the Legislature on the next ballot, but a 1/3 vote of the Legislature (because 1/4 is too easy, and 2/5 is too hard) will be sufficient to refer it if done within 30 days.

Question 281.6

Which of the above rules should be in the Constitution, and which should be up to the Legislature to modify as and when they see fit?

It would not have bothered the Moderator of Session 147 (December 2010) too much to have all provisions of Sec. I-E in the Constitution. [Third Pass: It figures.]

Other provisions which could be left up to Congressional judgment include call-to-order times, and time limits for various types of motions.

Specific committees which we had identified (Bill Assignment, Executive Oversight) should be in the Constitution, with the provision that Houses can establish additional committees as they see fit, using established procedure.

All other provisions in Section I-E should be in the final Constitution, so that they are not left up to Congressional caprice. [Third Pass: Another panelist was present, and no objection was stated, so it wasn't just the Moderator slamming it through alone.]

Question 281.8

What adjustments -- if any -- shall be made to the Constitutional amendment process?

Process should involve more than just the national legislature, because an assembly can't bind a future assembly.

Process should not involve the Chief Executive, on account of that would mess up our checks and balances, and give one Branch too much power over how the other Branches operate.

Non-author panelist of Session 147 suggested a direct national popular vote, and Moderator tentatively agreed. But, could we convince the doubters out there? After all, people who support the Electoral College might hold that State legislatures should have some/total involvement in the process.

We considered for a moment that our 3-house structure for the national legislature implies that States should not have total sway over the Constitutional amendment process, but then that would also imply that the Populace shouldn't have complete sway, either.

However, non-author panelist noted that one of our big reasons for dumping the Electoral College was that it creates an inequity of influence, and the same reasoning applies here.

Therefore, since it's the People who are being affected by our Constitutional structure, wherever they live, it is they who should have approval authority over any amendments.

We liked a 75% approval margin for the popular vote, because we want it to be difficult (lest we get too many changes back and forth) but still achievable, and also because it might be an easier sell if the percentage is similar to the current process, which requires approval by either the legislatures or special conventions of 3/4 of the States. [Still seemed high as of the Third Pass, because we had just gotten through stating in A281 that even 2/3 is too high of a requirement for popular overturn of a legislative action, so we probably can be talked down from 75% if that is a necessary compromise for getting the rest of our Agenda enacted, otherwise sticking for now.]

Question 282

Is it appropriate to have certain agencies report to Congress?

Agreed in Session 147 that it is generally good to have some agencies and some personnel reporting directly to the Legislative Branch instead of the Executive, since it helps with the overall checks and balances.

Question 283

If so, then should there be a single authority running such operations?

Non-author panelist in Session 147 felt that we needed research on the way that it was then set up, including the reasons why, before we could address this Question.

We conducted the following research between Sessions:

- We had previously identified in Subsection I-E-1 that the 'Custodian of Congress' would be the official who conducts elections for the Chair of Congressional houses, and who manages all staff (clerical, legal, logistical, janitorial, etc.) who work for Congress as a whole. We had also identified this official in Subsection I-E-3 as the recipient of records for any Legislative committee which is disbanded, including automatically when committee membership drops to zero. Also identified that official in Subsection I-E-3 as being able to open sessions of Federal committees, "either personally or more likely through a duly-designated deputy", and also to conduct elections for committee chairs.

- USA.gov listed all 11 agencies reporting to Congress:
 - Architect of the Capitol
 - Congressional Budget Office (CBO)
 - Congressional Research Service
 - Copyright Office [which we had placed in the Executive Branch]
 - Government Accountability Office [previously known as the 'General Accounting Office']
 - Government Printing Office
 - Library of Congress

- Medicare Payment Advisory Commission
- Open World Leadership Center
- Stennis Center for Public Service
- U.S. Botanic Garden

- Head of the GAO was then known as the Comptroller-General of the United States, and was appointed to a 15-year term by the President from a slate of candidates proposed by Congress, or actually by a commission comprising 10 certain Legislators of both Houses. Presidential nomination was followed by Senate confirmation.

- Director of the CBO was appointed to a 4-year term, with no term limits. Budget Committees of the two Houses proposed candidates, with the selection made by the Speaker of the House and the President *Pro Tem* of the Senate. Either house could remove the Director by resolution.

- Librarian of Congress was appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. Current was the 13th since 1800.

- Generally no showing that there was any 'Chief of Legislative Staff' between agencies and Legislators.

We presented in Session 148 (December 2010) the above research results on the reporting relationships of Congressional agencies.

Agreed that it would be good to have all the thousands of administrative staff reporting to a solitary official, not only for the functions previously associated with the Custodian position, but also to oversee budget and expense control of various agencies, and to report issues and results to Congress as applicable, as well as overseeing agency operations for compliance with Congressional mandates.

Question 283.2

Under what conditions may a member of Congress be recalled or expelled?

Already addressed in Answer 124.7 in Subsection I-C-5. [Added provisions later.]

Question 283.4

Who gets to say that this is "National XYZ Week" or "National XYZ Month", and who doesn't?

Panel agreed in Session 148 that there should be some kind of way to distinguish official National Weeks from unofficial, but we didn't necessarily want to go too crazy prosecuting people who use official designations for unofficial purposes, unless there is specific and clear showing of their fraudulently using an unauthorized designation for inappropriate personal gain.

Non-author panelist felt that it would be too difficult at this point to limit the use of the term 'National' to only those purposes officially designated by Congress, so better to allow people to use 'National' on their own, and find some more limiting expression to designate the periods authorized by Congress. Besides, it may not be bad to allow grass-roots organizations to do this if Congress is unwilling.

Considered using "Official U.S.", but that left the Question open as to who gets to say so. Could say just "Official", but that carries the additional problem of not telling what level or branch of government said it.

Maybe just use 'Congressional' if it's Congress doing it, and 'Presidential' if it's the Prez. Would prefer Congress to Prez, though, since the Prez is so much more image-conscious and would therefore be too susceptible to political motivation.

So, that's what we decided to do, pending further meditation: Anyone gets to say 'National', but only Congress can say 'Congressional'.

Question 283.6

Anything on lobbyists?

Non-author panelist in Session 148 found a useful purpose for Lobbyists, in that they provide education to Legislators who don't have time to go to all factories by themselves, but we don't want them to have undue influence.

Noted what we had said during Question 41, that Subsidiarity helps with Lobbyism, by distributing functions to lower levels, and making it harder for Lobbyists to cover the entire map to influence those functions. [Added in Third Pass the corresponding downside, that lower-level corruption is harder to see and easier to hide.]

Another panelist found online that there were 15,000 lobbyists in Brussels, trying to take advantage of increased centralization in the European Union.

Any watchdogging which we might perform on money received by a Legislator would need to be continued after the Legislator leaves office, since some agreements could provide payments afterward. And, if you do once find out about such a retroactive payment, then will you go back and invalidate the previous legislation?

Benefits can be provided in a bunch of different ways, including direct payments to individuals or their families or colleges or favorite charities, and offers of future employment or 'consulting', call girls, tickets to the Big Game, etc.

We felt that we should prosecute any organization or Legislator who participates in a lobbying deal, without a Statute of Limitations, and to remove any such organization from further participation in government contracts. [Revisited in the Third Pass.]

Independent judges can help with watchdogging and prosecution, but Lobbyists could buy them off as easily as they can do Legislators.

Would-be replacements will have an easier time getting elected if the incumbent is exposed to nefarious dealings, so that will help, but it doesn't help for those Legislators who have already left office.

We had lots of watchdogging entities at the time, and a general desire to reduce or eliminate the influence of Lobbyists, so then why did we still have so many in our major governments? Were we just powerless to stop them, or did we just lack the will, or what? We decided to do some further research on this point: "Why do we still have so many Lobbyists?" [We found no such contemporary research.]

Panel found that it's okay to influence Legislators by argument or opinion or promise of electoral support, but that bribing is bad, in all its forms.

Moderator opened Session 149 (December 2010) for a new panelist with notes from the previous discussion, that (1) not all Lobbyists are Bribers, and that (2) those who are Bribers are allowed to do their thing because Legislators are unmotivated to pass and enforce laws to restrict them. We therefore need some form of plebiscite to pass such laws, and a Judicial Branch which will be motivated to enforce them.

Question 281 (continued)

Should procedures allowing for referenda and initiatives in California be instituted at the Federal level, as well?

We reviewed in Session 149 our previous findings on Initiatives: Must first be addressed and defeated by the Legislature, then must achieve a 3/5 popular vote.

Question 283.6 (continued)

Anything on lobbyists?

We hope that at least some Judges will be motivated to nail corrupt Legislators, especially if those Judges are elected and can use such prosecutions to enhance their electoral profiles.

Considered additional possibility of disqualifying some number of generations of descendants of guilty Legislators from ever serving as Legislators themselves, but the group didn't really like it: It may not be very effective, since corrupt Legislators might be so narcissistic that they don't care what happens to their families. Also not really fair to descendants who are not the same people as their parents. To the contrary, we want a society where people are encouraged to be Individuals.

We should encourage citizen-watchdog groups to identify corruption and bring it out for prosecution, or at least to campaign against the guilty party's re-election, although the latter element applies only if Legislators are still in office.

Final step is to eliminate the official position of 'registered lobbyist', since we don't want to perpetuate the perception that it's good to be able to influence Legislators in any way other than education and expressing the preference of a particular group.

This will still allow some bribery to happen underground, but we hoped and presumed that our other measures would be sufficient to surround the problem, particularly if we bump up the number of sting operations which we attempt.

New panelist noted the "Milgram Experiment" as showing that some 60% of the population will tend to commit harmful acts upon people if told to do so by someone passing as an experimental instructor.* In similar fashion, Legislators will tend to commit harmful acts under the psychological influence of a Lobbyist, so we have a good chance of catching a lot of them through such sting operations as Abscam.

[*According to simplepsychology.org/milgram.html, the experiments were conducted at Yale University from 1961-63, with 65% of participants showing a willingness to give the maximum strength of electric shocks on demand to confederates who were only pretending to be receiving shocks.]

We should be careful not to allow guilty parties to escape prosecution through entrapment, but there are ways to get this done properly, as illustrated by an article in *USA Today* from 18-Dec-2010, about nailing a 1940 bombing suspect by persuading him to push an actual button.

We wanted to make sure that people with legitimate cause have mechanisms to express their positions to Legislators, including by giving testimony at Committee hearings. Good to have a 'speakers bureau' available for experts to explain various specific topics, and we strongly encourage Legislators to rely on such testimony during the Committee process. In addition, if a group of concerned Citizens has a position to express, then they should find a receptive Legislator who will invite them to speak in Committee, much easier if the speaker can produce a petition or other conditional showing that their view represents some number of voters.

SECTION I-F: JUDICIAL REFORM

Subsection I-F-1: Basic Functions of a Judiciary

Question 284

Do we need any kind of judiciary at all?

Yes. Panel in Session 150 (January 2011) agreed with notes in our 'black book': We can't realistically expect an environment where no one's rights are ever violated, and we want to live in an environment where such actions are routinely redressed, so that we can have hope of redress when it happens to us. We feel better living in a cooperative society where we work together to protect each other's rights.

Question 285

Is there any way that we can realistically expect all members of a civil society to refrain from deliberately impinging upon other people's rights?

Already addressed in Answer 284.

Question 286

Is there any way that we can realistically expect all potential questions as to rights boundaries to be fairly and amicably resolved, without the necessity for third-party referees?

Already addressed in Answer 284. Moderator agreed with panelist's suggestion in Session 150 that these Questions should come before Question 284, so that Answer 284 becomes a 'therefore' statement. [Third Pass: Or, we could just dump them.]

Question 287

If anyone's rights are found to have been violated, is it appropriate for society to take some punitive action against the perpetrator?

Panel in Session 150 found that there was a lot of subjectivity in the preliminary reasoning presented in the 'black book', which read as follows:

Since each of us would like to be “made whole” after rights violation (whenever practical), we can (and do) agree as a society to watch over one another, and see to it that anyone who is violated is made whole. Also, if we want to live in a civil society, we would like to be free from fear of having our rights violated, and so we would want to discourage people from taking actions that will violate the rights of others; therefore, if such action is found to be deliberate, with knowledge that it would harm one or more persons, it is appropriate and desirable for punitive action to be taken against the perpetrator, to discourage him (or others) from doing it again.

In particular, it’s not a lock that a regimen of taking punitive action against perpetrators will have the effect of totally alleviating everybody’s Freedom From Fear (including because Deterrence is not 100% effective), partly perhaps, but not completely. Because of this, and because there may be non-punitive alternatives which accomplish the same objective, we felt that we do need some kind of Judiciary in place to assess the most appropriate approach in a particular case.

In other words, the Answer here was “Yes, maybe, sometimes.”

Question 288

Who is actually to say whether a particular action constitutes a violation of someone’s rights, and/or whether some measure of punitive action is appropriate in each specific case, and the degree of such specific punitive action?

Basically already established in Answer 287 that we need to have such a thing as a ‘judiciary’, so we found in Session 150 that this Question may be redundant.

=====

This completed Subsection I-F-1 as originally configured. At this time, a non-author panelist in Session 150 suggested that we should break from the original Outline, and establish a philosophical basis for our Justice system, before we discussed Structure or Bad Acts or Trials or anything else. Therefore, inserted new Q288.5:

Question 288.5

What philosophical parameters/guidelines (if any) do we want to establish to govern our system of justice?

One point which we needed to address as of Session 150 was whether there can be such a thing as ‘absolute justice’, or whether it’s all relative and interpretive, and whether it might be appropriately managed in different ways within different cultures and communities and neighborhoods.

Non-author panelist in Session 151 (January 2011) introduced points which we had already decided as to Rights:

- 1) There are two basic kinds of rights, being ‘natural’ and ‘civil’.
- 2) There are no actual natural rights, since any right (as far as we know) can be legitimately abridged by civil authority. [We later changed our minds here.]

- 3) Any right carries with it the right to waive that right.
- 4) Rights carry responsibilities to respect the rights of others.
- 5) Every individual has complete control over his/her own life, and over what means he/she will use to survive (if making that choice) and to maximize his/her quality of life, except when interfering with the rights of others.
- 6) Resolution #1, which we had characterized as a "conditional natural right": "Every individual ought to be able to do anything that he/she wants, provided that such action causes no injury (or immediate threat of injury) to others", where 'injury' is defined as 'compromising a person's ability to do what they [sic] would otherwise be physically and legally able to do'.

From these principles, non-author panelist now derived the following:

- 7) The purpose of justice is to achieve balance among different people's rights, a never-ending process of seeking equilibrium.
- 8) There is always some element of subjectivity in the attempted redress of any bad act: Even theft/embezzlement is not completely redressed by the return of the stolen property and the covering of court costs. Instead, people would need to be compensated for their lost time and increased stress, and this must necessarily be a subjective case-by-case evaluation.
- 9) There therefore may not be any such thing as 'absolute justice'.

May need to work backwards in defining Justice, by first identifying anything which is Injustice, since it may be easier to agree on what's wrong than on what's right.

Justice is the 'act of balancing everybody's rights'.

Previous findings on Rights imply that murder is wrong.

Purpose of a Justice system is to find the best possible ways to rectify a situation.

>>> In order to protect people's Rights, we need to be clear on what those Rights are, and we now found that our previous language was contradictory: We stated in the same paragraph that there are no Natural Rights and that yes there is one. These can't both be true, so we needed to settle that point before continuing.

Question 7 (continued)

What rights (if any) are inherent in all human beings, regardless of where or how they choose to live, and which rights are only optionally agreed to by members of a civil society?

For debating purposes in Session 151, the Moderator assumed the original posture, that there is no Natural Right, because anything could theoretically be abridged for sufficient cause. Could I be argued away from this position?

Panelist: In order to achieve balance between people's Rights, it may be necessary to abridge some people's Rights, such as taking away their Liberty to prevent them from stealing any more. So, yes, at least some Rights can be abridged.

But, can all of them be abridged? Moderator recalled original discussion that we couldn't agree on whether such a line exists between Natural and Civil Rights, and

that the entire World throughout history hadn't been able to settle on the issue either, and that there therefore must be no Natural Rights.

Panelist responded that maybe there are some, but we simply hadn't yet found the argument which would totally persuade all open-minded and rational people in the World on the point. Moderator acknowledged that this may be true, but noted that other people in the World could make the same statement about their own preferred social values, and that there's nothing to prove any of us as being Right or Wrong, so it must therefore all be subjective and a matter of civil preference.

Further discussion.

Panelist's position (actual, not just for debate) was that there are Natural Rights -- including the Right to Life -- which can be waived as a result of committing certain acts. [In the Third Pass, this appeared to be the most robust argument!]

Moderator acknowledged that maybe certain Rights can be waived not as a result of a specific and direct verbal statement, but rather as a result of an action. However, that point by itself is insufficient to show that there are Natural Rights, since Civil Rights can also be waived. Additional points offered for consideration:

(1) Panelist claimed that any person with a Sense of Self will feel a sense of Injustice at their Sense of Self being taken away from them against their will. [Noted that this statement talked about just Life, and would need to be generalized.]

(2) Possible generalization: If it feels unnatural for something to be taken away, then maybe it was natural to have it in the first place.

(3) Panelist also claimed that there are certain restrictive actions which everyone in the World is going to feel victimized by, so those natural reactions imply natural initial possession of certain Rights.

Do we agree with all these points? If not, then why not? If so, then what can we deduce from them as to what Rights (if any) are Natural?

Panelist also questioned the rationale that the ability to legitimately abridge any of anyone's Rights implies that all Rights are civilly granted.

We discussed the three numbered sentences above at the beginning of Session 152 (January 2011), to see if we could agree on them.

First sentence specifically excluded cases like the guy crucified next to Jesus, who knew that his punishment was just even though it was not his will to be crucified. Therefore added disclaimer phrase, and also changed out the questionable term 'Injustice'. Thus: "Any person with a Sense of Self will feel victimized at their Sense of Self being taken away against their will and without any provocative action on their part."

Moderator was okay with second sentence, since it said "maybe".

Third sentence contained two questionable elements: First was the premise that everyone in the World would feel victimized by certain restrictive actions, but the first sentence established at least one specific case of this, so we were okay there.

Second questionable element of third sentence required that we look again at the second sentence, and see whether we could drop the term "maybe".

Second sentence depended on two things happening, one that you could get Universal Consensus as to a certain sociological reaction, and the other that this particular Universal Consensus would imply the natural ownership of certain Rights or other possessions, or -- in other words -- that the Universal Consensus is correct. The first element was shown by the specific case discussed in the first sentence, so we conceded that that it is possible for there to be such a Universal Consensus.

On the second element of the second sentence, we noted that the entirety of Global society has been sociologically wrong before, including as to Slavery and Gender Rights and other areas, so we couldn't accept that everybody feeling something necessarily means that they are Right. However, if there is some nature within people which will always cause a certain reaction to take place, and if that reaction is therefore universally predictable, then we should acknowledge that universal natural reaction. In other words, just because everybody in the World currently feels or thinks a certain way, doesn't necessarily mean that they're Right, and they've been Wrong before; but, if a particular reaction is universally predictable within all generations, then we may consider it a natural reaction.

Now agreed on a generalized form of the second proposition: If there is some nature within all sentient humans in all generations that it is unnatural for a certain Right to be taken away against their will and without any provocative action on their part, then that satisfies our definition of a Natural Right.

*** Also agreed that there is at least the one Natural Right of ownership over one's own Life. Next step was to see whether the third proposition could be expanded to include any other Rights. That is, we needed to reconsider Question 7!!! [Observed in the Third Pass that we already had been doing this for a couple of pages.]

And, of course, once we refinished Question 7, we needed to go through the entire subsequent Agenda to check for anything which needed to be altered as a result.

Reviewed our previous notes on Question 7. Key reasoning happened in Session 19: Did we now agree with the proposition that every possible Natural Right has been abridged justifiably in history, and -- if so -- that this fact would imply that they were not Natural Rights to begin with? Actually, we found that we could ignore this, for it turned out later in Session 19 that we had rejected the proposition, finding that it is appropriate in some cases for a Natural Right to be abridged by civil authority.

Now agreed again with the revised proposition from Session 19: Any right at all is finally subject to adjudication by civil authority.

We had reconsidered Question 7 in Sessions 51-53. To open Session 153 (January 2011), we read our notes from these Sessions. We also read notes from our Question 6.3 reconsideration which had happened more or less congruently. Current panelist was curious as to why this Question had been added at all. We explained that the Monday group had decided against the existence of Natural Rights because it couldn't robustly identify a Source for them. Panelist responded that the Universe exists [see Answer 3] even though we can't robustly identify a Source for it, so this is not a solid rationale for disproving Natural Rights.

Interesting note at the end of the 6.3/7 section in Session 53 stated that we were continuing to go along with the result of no Natural Rights until someone (the current panelist!!) came along to contradict it.

For the most part, though, the notes from Sessions 51-53 didn't really add a whole lot to the conversation: Just a lot of stuff and nonsense.

At this point, then, we looked again at Question 7: We found it a safe assumption in Session 152 that everyone in the World in all generations will feel victimized when their Sense of Self (which covers both Life and Identity) is taken away against their will and without any provocative action on their part. Could we now make this same assumption about anything else??

Question arose of whether our rationale of Life and Sense of Self could also be extended to Art or any other property which you create. However, there appeared to be too many counterexamples in history, including societies giving over property to the State or to the King, and millennia of Women giving all their work product over to their husbands. Really hard in this case to project a universal feeling of victimization on this point.

However, we did seem to be satisfied that any forced abuse of one's physical body (such as the foot-binding which the panelist cited as having happened to girls in China) will also pretty universally tend to make people feel victimized.

Right to Property Personally Created was an assertion which had been made by the Monday group early on, but again we had rejected it because we had felt that Natural Rights couldn't be legitimately abridged by civil authority, whereas all actual Rights could be legitimately abridged, so there must be no Natural Rights, although we ended up stating later in the same Session 19 that Natural Rights could be appropriately abridged by civil authority, so maybe the rationale was empty anyway.

But, if any Right (whether Natural or Civil) can be legitimately abridged by civil authority, then what difference is there between Natural and Civil Rights, and why would we want to bother making any distinction between them at all? Panelist's response was that Natural Rights may require more reasons or more procedures to abridge than a Civil Right would (such as a 2/3 versus simple majority), so there still can be a meaningful hierarchy of Rights.

This confirmed that ability to abridge does not imply total absence of Natural Rights.

Panelist went on to explain that the rationale as applied to Property may apply to only certain types of Property: Agreed with Moderator's point that a lot of people as part of our jobs or other responsibilities produce a lot which belongs to other people, including Inventions and works of Art. However, those things which we create voluntarily represent an exercise of our Sense of Self, which is defined by our existence and our thoughts and our voluntary actions. If the fruit of such voluntary labor is taken away against our will, then it is an attack on our Sense of Self, and therefore a violation of our Natural Rights.

We therefore accepted a modified version of what the group had come up with earlier, being that Natural Rights extend to one's Life and Body and Property Voluntarily Created.

We asked in Session 154 (February 2011) whether any other Natural Rights exist.

We noted to make sure that we include intellectual property without physical form.

Moderator brought up 'Shogun' [a mini-series based on the book by James Clavell] as an example of different cultures with different attitudes on Life ownership. Female panelist suggested that it comes down to a question of will, and that wives and subordinate *samurai* had voluntarily agreed to give over their lives to their husbands and superiors. Even though there may have been an element of duress involved, and even though it may not have been a case of 'free' will, it was still will.

What about kids? Argument could be made that a mother who gestates and delivers a child has the Natural Right of parental ownership until the child reaches majority (however a given civil society may define that contingency), and we see possible examples of this in Nature, such as the mother bear who will assert her Natural Rights very vigorously if any of us once comes along and tries to take her cub away. But, is she actually asserting her own Natural Right, or rather protecting the Natural Rights of her cub?

Another question comes up about the alleged Natural Right of parental ownership: If the mother is the owner of the minor child, then what if the minor child stands up and asserts a Natural Right of personal independence, to go off to Hogwarts or whatever? Panelist suggested that maybe some different Natural Rights attain to both the parent and the child simultaneously, in which case the mother could still assert that no one may merely take away or otherwise abuse her child against her will, but the minor child could still be considered as being Naturally protected (whatever that means) from physical or other abuse being inflicted by the parent.

Perhaps the Answer here is that parents have no Natural Right over their children at all, and that a mother's protest over the appropriation of her child by the Spartan Army or the modern Department of Social Services is not really an assertion of her own Natural Rights as much as an attempted protection of her child's Natural Rights.

Panelist noted that some animals actually destroy their own young under certain conditions, so the mother bear's protest may not be an example of simply protecting the cub's Natural Rights. She also noted that our Resolution #1 included a limitation of non-interference with other people's Rights, so maybe both the mother and the child have certain Natural Rights which may conflict in certain circumstances, in which case some level of Civil adjudication may be necessary to determine which Natural Rights override which others.

Moderator proposed that any Natural Right would need to attain to all animal species as well as to all humans in all cultures and all generations, since otherwise these Natural Rights would suddenly spring into existence upon the appearance of human beings at 11:59 on the geological clock, and Moderator had a hard time imagining that, for that would more likely be an example of human beings creating Civil Rights for themselves. If such Natural Rights do attain to all creatures, then that would include minor children, so we could derive a Natural Right of protection against child abuse by parents or anyone else, while still allowing parents a Natural Right of protection against appropriation of their children by external entities.

But, can we project Natural Rights to all animal species? Moderator claimed Yes, that all animals of all ages will feel this universal sense of victimization which we had identified as an essential ingredient of Natural Rights, and that this approach would also allow us to establish Natural Rights against animal abuse. However, panelist was not sure whether we could legitimately project Sense of Victimization, Sense of Self, or Will to all animal species. She was prepared to go along with the attainment of Natural Rights to any animal creature who does have those three attributes, so we were agreed on that.

Question 10 (continued)

Which rights require that the individual accept certain responsibilities, as well?

While reconsidering Question 7 in Session 154, we asked ourselves what happens when one human/animal is allegedly abusing the Natural Rights of another human/animal? Rolled it out in the Third Pass into an amendment of Question 10.

Moderator claimed that the existence of Natural Rights does not imply responsibility on the part of all observers to intervene during alleged violation; protection against violation of Natural Rights is something which creatures can perform voluntarily, either out of simple compassion and/or in hopes that our own Rights will continually be recognized and protected, but we don't necessarily hafta; panel agreed.

But, what if the panelist's cat has kittens, and she wants/needs to give the kittens away, and what if the cat wants to go with the kittens, but the panelist is judging that the cat needs to stay at her house? Probably morally okay, provided that this decision -- or any decision which could be perceived as an abridgement of the cat's Natural Rights -- is sincerely undertaken in the cat's best interests, but probably not if it is only in the panelist's selfish interests. In this case, the panelist does not have an implied responsibility to take care of any of her cat's kittens, and it is not practical to expect that she can find a single home for all of them, so it therefore will be impractical to keep the entire family together. If the panelist is judging with her superior intellect that the next-safest practical course is to keep her cat inside the house (notwithstanding the cat's voiced protestations at the apparent usurpation of her offspring), then that should be deemed morally okay, and a legitimate abridgement (that is, not a usurpation) of her Natural Rights, if in fact she has any.

What about taking her to the vet, notwithstanding her expressed protestations? Again, if the act is in her best interests, as adjudged by the panelist-caretaker with her superior intellect, then that's okay.

Does the cat or anyone else have a Natural Right to have the offspring in the first place? This will need to be a separate item for us to consider.

Question 7 (continued)

What rights (if any) are inherent in all human beings, regardless of where or how they choose to live, and which rights are only optionally agreed to by members of a civil society?

While considering between Sessions whether we have a Natural Right to reproduce, we reconsidered a possible circular reasoning for Natural Rights in general: We had been saying for any Natural Right that everyone in the World, in all cultures and all

generations, will feel the same universal sense of victimization at its usurpation, except for those who do not, and that these 'exceptions' have merely waived such Natural Rights of their own will. But, couldn't the same statement be made about anything? I could claim that I have a Natural Right to park in front of a red curb, or utter so-called 'profanity' on TV, or dance naked on the corner of Burbank and Sepulveda, because everyone in the World will feel a sense of victimization at the usurpation of such Rights except for those who do not. Am I correct? If not, then what really distinguishes actual Natural Rights from fake Natural Rights?

We asked to open Session 155 (February 2011) whether there are any Natural Rights belonging to any parent other than the bio-mother? Moderator suggested that any Natural Rights may belong to the mother uniquely, because she was the one who went through the heavy processes of gestation and delivery. Female panelist proposed that bio-fathers also often have extensive emotional investment in the upbringing and well-being of their children, as do many adoptive parents. Moderator suggested that adoption is a Civil process, so any Rights attaining to adoptive parents must be Civil Rights; no objection from panel.

We then started to consider what proportion (if any) of Natural Rights belongs to the bio-father, but then another new panelist showed up, and we had a brief orientation. Moderator then proposed to read the notes written between Sessions, so that we could address with a new person the general Question of whether there are any Natural Rights at all, as well as the specific Question of whether we had applied circular reasoning in our original definition.

First panelist asked for a definition of 'victimization': Second panelist suggested 'condition imposed against one's will'. Upon objection from first panelist, expanded to append 'or by means of deception'.

The fact that we willingly give up certain Rights which may be Natural doesn't necessarily mean that they were not Natural, for sometimes people were socially programmed over time to believe a certain way. But, what reactions would kids have Naturally who haven't been beaten or coerced or otherwise programmed?

In other words, "We are asserting that the Natural human impulse is to feel victimized when -- without consent or provocative action on one's part -- one's Life or Sense of Self is threatened, or one's freedom of Non-Injurious Self-Determination is restricted, or one's Property Voluntarily Created is appropriated, or any other similar Right is violated. Such impulse can be overwritten through physical coercion or psychological manipulation or social conditioning or other means, but it is the Natural pre-programmed Sense of Victimization which we are holding as the basis for all Natural Rights."

We recapped at the beginning of Session 156 (March 2011) that Natural Rights identified so far included Sense of Self, Property Voluntarily Created, Non-Injurious Self-Determination, Physical Non-Abuse, and Non-Appropriation of Mother's Children. Items under consideration included Parental Rights beyond those of the mother, and the Right to Reproduce.

On the first pending point, we agreed that anyone who either contributes genetic material and/or participates to any extent in the gestation of the child has some corresponding share (TBD) in whatever Natural Rights extend to natural parents.

Looking at what these corresponding shares might be, we looked first at contributors of male genetic material. Moderator asserted that any share of Natural Parental Rights must necessarily be less than 50% for males. His reasoning was that we had established that gestators have some non-zero portion of Natural Parental Rights, so the share attending to genetic contributors must be less than 100%; if the male has 50% of that share, then it must be less than 50% of the overall. This conclusion could have an impact on monetary distribution of wrongful-death damages, and perhaps more importantly on who gets to 'win' any conflict in parental decision-making. Female panelist disputed the assertion, acknowledging that it's possible to divvy up certain Parental Rights, but unconvinced that it's necessarily a good thing. If this is so non-obvious, though, even among people like the panelists, who had not (we didn't think) been socially programmed one way or another, then maybe it doesn't fulfill our requirements for a Natural Right.

What share did the panelist therefore think applies to a contributor of male genetic material? Her response was that the 'share' concept really shouldn't apply at all. To the contrary, she claimed that it's possible for two or more people to each have complete Parental Rights, even if they conflict with one another. Moderator countered with the proposition that it is logically invalid for two or more people to have a total Natural Right over the same benefit: Not all Parental Rights are going to be apportionable, but some are, two examples having been given above. And, while we didn't necessarily need to determine those exact percentages at this time, we might yet like to establish certain general parameters which might be applicable to more detailed scenarios later on, such as whether a Natural Right of parental authority (if such a thing exists) needs to reside with whichever parent has more than a 50% share of the creation process.

We therefore basically had a situation where one of us claimed that a 50-50 relationship between the genetic contributors is Natural, and the other claimed that a 60-40 share might be more Naturally appropriate. If these really are Natural Rights that we are talking about, then we can't say that both these materially-contradictory propositions are Naturally obvious and intuitive enough to satisfy the requirement of a Natural Right, so they probably are Civil Rights.

Discussion then focused on the role of the gestators in the process of creating Life. Moderator's original thinking in constructing the sentence in the "On the first pending point" paragraph above was to include all the elements which are mission-critical to the creation of Life. But, provision of food and water and other fundamental needs after birth are also mission-critical, so any post-natal caregivers would need to be included in the Parental model if we really want to go there, but there is going to be so much variety in such caregiving actions among different places and times that Civil adjudication will be a standard expectation in case of any dispute, so they probably are not Natural Rights. Further requiring gestation as a mission-critical element of Life creation would mean that it's not Life without gestation, and we were not prepared to make or imply that statement at this time.

We therefore needed to go back to the "On the first pending point" statement, and tweak it somehow. Panelist's next suggestion was: "Anyone who contributes genetic material has some Natural Rights as a parent, specifics to be determined." However, she also suggested that contribution of genetic material may not be as compelling as an emotional bond and commitment to support and nurture the child.

It is also arguable (as noted in the meeting summary, though not in the main meeting notes) that the Life has already been created at the point of conception, and that gestation is merely an act of nurturing the Life and helping it to grow, which is a process that continues for many years after birth, with participation in varying degrees by many people, not all of whom are going to be deemed worthy of some share of Natural Parental Rights as a result.

Next step, then (as also noted in the meeting summary, but not in the main notes), was to consider whether Natural Parental Rights extend only to genetic contributors, although we were then also looking at whether non-relations who form an emotional bond with -- and a commitment to support -- the child in question have a greater claim of Natural Parental Rights than a genetic contributor who has no such bond or commitment.

However, at the beginning of Session 157 (March 2011), we asked a more basic Question: How do we know whether something is a Natural Right or not? How can we test it? If two people disagree on whether XYZ is a Natural Right, because they disagree on whether all non-programmed people in the World will react the same way at its usurpation, then how can we determine which of them is Right, and which of them has been socially programmed in a Wrong manner?

Panelist noted that the emotional reactions which we feel when certain Rights are violated are much more universal than the conclusions which we arrive at when attempting to utilize logical deduction.

We all need to interact with other people [so, Q14 must come before Q7], or else (as a panelist claimed had been shown by experiment) we suffer major brain dysfunctionality, such as the inability to speak. Given this necessity of interaction, we all are influenced to a greater or lesser extent by all the various people and places that we've interacted with throughout our lives, such that there may be considerable variation in how we think through certain kinds of problems. However, as long as nobody takes the additional step of deliberately trying to manipulate people's minds to believe certain things, panelist continued to maintain that we will all feel the same way when certain perceived Rights are violated.

But, we still needed to know how to assess the 'Natural Righthood' of a particular quantity when it is not as trivially obvious as the items which we had settled up to date. When any two people disagree on whether XYZ is a Natural Right, how can we tell which of them is Right, and which of them is a victim of deliberate social programming?

We had not yet been able to derive an '*a priori*' method for determining Natural Rights, but we were hoping that we could see what works when we try it out: So, looking at the specific previous example, what Natural Rights of parenthood (if any) extend to non-biological caregivers, as opposed to genetic contributors who have not committed to the care of the child in question? Panelist suggested that parenthood may be more of a contract between caregiver and child, having as its basis the welfare of the child in question, and that this contractual relationship may be more compelling than a merely biological link. We noted that many biological mothers will feel a Sense of Victimization when their children are taken away, even when they have been negligent in their care, but that many others will not care. This reaction is not universal, therefore, and so it fails to meet our standard for being the basis of a Natural Right. Further, the Moderator suggested that certain Responsibilities may

imply certain Rights, just as certain Rights carry certain Responsibilities [which means that Q10 needs to come before Q7], and that this may mean that those who agree to take on the Responsibility for bringing up a child may have certain Parental Rights whether they are biologically connected to the child or not, for anyone who invests that much time and energy into that process will definitely feel victimized if the product of the effort is taken away against their will.

But, what if an aunt or uncle helps out with occasional babysitting or other forms of child support? If the amount of such support is clearly very small relative to that provided by a primary caregiver, then the primary caregiver still gets whatever Natural Rights are coming to parents. If, however, there is not one clearly-identifiable primary caregiver (such as when the child lives with one parent while another parent provides extensive financial support from a distance), and if those multiple caregivers disagree on a particular issue affecting the child, then who gets to make the call? This will need to be determined by Civil adjudication, based principally on what appears to be best for the child. Since this is necessarily a Civil process, the Rights in question would need to be thought of as Civil Rights if they exist at all.

Panelist raised another good Question: What if you have multiple main caregivers who actually do agree on a major decision affecting the child? Are they still exercising the Natural Right of parental decision-making, or has it degenerated into the area of Civil Rights simply because more than one caregiver is involved? Moderator claimed that he could construct an argument either way which could be bullshitty enough to convince at least some people, if not everybody. On one side, it could be argued that the process is still Natural if everybody is agreeing, because there is no difference in results between that condition and that of a solitary caregiver exercising the clear Natural Right of parental decision-making; it becomes a matter of Civil adjudication (and therefore Civil Rights) only when they disagree, not because they waived any Natural Rights (for, they will in many cases be asserting their Natural Rights very actively), but rather because it is simply impossible to tell from a universal standpoint where the Natural Right actually lies. On the other side, we could argue that it's a complete Natural Right all the way through the process, and that an instance where two certain conditions exist -- (1) that the caregivers not only disagree but are unable to reach a decision and (2) that the inability to decide (unlike the color to be used in painting the dining room) materially impacts the child's welfare -- is going to be so exceptional that it falls within our previous perception of Natural Rights which remain Natural Rights even when they must occasionally be referred to Civil authority for adjudication. Panel unanimously felt that the latter approach made more logical sense.

Comparing this with the previous paragraph, we noted that this is not necessarily a Civil process, and so we could still be staying within the realm of Natural Rights.

Question 10 (continued)

Which rights require that the individual accept certain responsibilities, as well?

In response to a suggestion made outside the group, we found at the beginning of Session 158 (March 2011) that the person exercising a certain Right is not required to pay back to society everything that he has taken out. For, if exercise of a Right is completely reciprocal, then there is no net benefit, so there can't be a Right.

Question 7 (continued)

What rights (if any) are inherent in all human beings, regardless of where or how they choose to live, and which rights are only optionally agreed to by members of a civil society?

We considered the Right to Reproduce in Session 158, as part of the set of Natural Rights involving parenthood. Moderator claimed that yes we generally do have a Natural Right to Reproduce, on account of Nature having provided us with the means to do so very easily. However, he also claimed that Nature presents us with restrictions on this Right, by not allowing any given population to get too high. Those who oppose contraception or forced sterilization or other population-control measures therefore need to remember that Nature sometimes encourages us (either actively or implicitly) to take such steps to control our population before Nature does the job for us in a way that we will like even less.

Perhaps all Natural Rights identified so far likewise have Natural restrictions? Apparently so. Perhaps all Natural Rights generally do? Yes, it appeared to be the case (although we allowed that we might come up with a counter-example later) that Nature presents us with restrictions on all Natural Rights. For, if there were no restriction as to a given Natural Right, then we would be able to exercise it whenever we want, forever. But, Nature always kills us on an individual basis sooner or later [unless Men do it first, of course], and also controls the size of our populations, so there is no permanent individual exercise of any Natural Right. Therefore, there is a Natural restriction on any Natural Right.

Moderator now questioned whether we have a Natural Right to kill lower animals for food or other biological necessity. We agreed, yes we do, for Nature has provided us with the teeth and digestive mechanisms to be able to consume meat, and we're seeing this happen in Nature all over the planet. For any individual or any species to kill for any other reason would fall outside the area of Natural Rights.

We did not immediately think of any other possible Natural Rights, but that didn't necessarily mean that others don't exist. Reserved the option to think of more later.

We asked in Session 159 (March 2011), Can species or populations have Natural Rights as well as individuals?

Moderator had always wondered during debates about Endangered Species how we can personify a species to the extent of claiming that we have a Responsibility to protect it. And, do we have a Responsibility to protect every single dink little microbial species concentrated on some remote island in the South Pacific, when Nature has been creating and extinguishing species for millions of years, and will doubtless continue to do so whether we like it or not? We suspected probably not.

Panelist suggested -- and Moderator accepted -- that it is logically meaningful to speak of Rights and Restrictions applying to a species, since Nature commits both beneficial and harmful acts to entire species and populations (such as the example of requiring certain parents to die as soon as they give birth, for the good of the species) as well as to individuals, and since species can interact with other species just as we all interact with other individuals.

Therefore, what Natural Rights do species or populations have? Probably not the Right to Exist, any more than any individual has a Natural Right to Exist, which was not asserted in our then-current model. However, they may have a Natural Right to a Sense of Self, same as individuals, but at least one required condition for such a Right is that species must be able to have a collective Sense of Self in the first place. Can they? Maybe, because we do observe that flocks and schools and colonies and other large animal groups (including humans) appear to operate as collectives more than as multiple independent individuals.

But, if we did have such a thing as Natural Rights attending to entire species or populations, then how would we know it? How would it be manifested or exercised? We noted that we can appeal individual cases of alleged Rights violations (either Natural or Civil) to terrestrial judges or magistrates for adjudication and appropriate remedies, but we don't have a corresponding way to appeal alleged violations of species-wide Natural Rights, do we?

Panelist made good point that Sense of Victimization is a required element of Natural Rights, and that this is something which we can't really apply to entire species, even to those who appear to have a collective consciousness. Not even modern humans are likely to feel victimized as a group when Nature does something bad to them. [This assertion looked suspect in the Third Pass, because we routinely speak of 'hurricane victims' and 'tornado victims' and 'earthquake victims' all the time.] However, other species may exist out in space now, and/or may evolve here later, which do have such a Sense of Victimization, so yes it's possible that such Natural Rights do or will apply to them.

Any such alleged violations affecting an entire species (such as if an alien race is trying to take over the Earth) could be appealed to some intragalactic body such as the United Federation of Planets.

Any such Natural Rights probably include corresponding analogs of all our individual Natural Rights, and possibly also any additional Natural Rights which we [may] discover in the future.

To sum: It is theoretically possible for some species or populations to have as a group most/all of the same natural rights which apply to individuals, provided that they possess the same requirements of Sense of Self, Freedom of Will, and universal Sense of Victimization when the rights are violated. However, our observation is that all terrestrial species fail to satisfy all three conditions, with the possible exception of modern humans. Other species may be said to have a collective consciousness which drives both their common perceptions and their common reactions, but we don't see quite enough group awareness on the part of other species to conclude that any of them would feel a collective Sense of Victimization when any of their alleged Natural Rights are allegedly threatened, either by Nature or by some other species. Human beings may be able to do that now, with our advanced intelligence and electronic social media, but against whom would we ever assert a violation of Natural Rights, and to whom would we offer such an appeal? We may or may not universally feel that an epidemic disease or oncoming asteroid or other foreseeable Natural disaster as being an unfair act on Nature's part *per se*, but we still would be moved to attempt to counteract such effects out of simple self-preservation. However, sometime in the future, we might conceivably have some cause of action against an alien species, which case would then need to be referred to an intragalactic body such as the United Federation of Planets.

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To begin Session 160 (April 2011), we began to review the entire General Summary [*i.e.*, that document which eventually became this Final Report] on our respective computers, looking generally for any inconsistency, with emphasis on any inconsistency arising from our revised Answer 7.

Question 7 (continued)

What rights (if any) are inherent in all human beings, regardless of where or how they choose to live, and which rights are only optionally agreed to by members of a civil society?

Last paragraph of "NR#3" needed to come out [referring to our summary rationales of the six Natural Rights which we had listed] as of Session 160, because we had identified that killing animals for meat is a Natural Right.

Panelist suggested that the paragraph just before our listing of Natural Rights had a problem. Since we were trying to be careful to list as a Natural Right only the main basics on which everyone can agree, we also needed to remember that we were coming up with items on which certain previous generations did not agree, so it's impossible to achieve "a truly universal perception". That language had to go, but we still must somehow send the intended message that our generation could be wrong, too. Panelist suggested focusing on individual perceptions over societal paradigms, and logical persuasion over gut feelings. [Added later that week: But, it was the gut feelings on which we were basing Natural Rights.]

No other problems in the unit on Rights.

Question 18.5 (continued)

If a government is set up, and passes a law which an individual thinks is unfair, excessive, or otherwise inappropriate, then should she be allowed to disobey it?

We were to fix the third paragraph of the Government passage as of Session 160, to show that if someone is trying or threatening to violate your Natural Rights (such as by trashing an entire village in order to prevent the spread of an infectious disease), then the act of trying to protect your Natural Rights is a Natural reaction common to most humans and animals, and therefore does not constitute an act of corruption.

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Panelist's general suggestion was that ordinary readers will want clear references to the original Questions which got referenced in the text, either at the moment in which they were first referenced, or perhaps in a short list of Questions preceding each chunk of summary language. [Third Pass note: This comment referred to the fact that earlier versions of this present document contained only narrative summaries of our major rationales and conclusions, often without detail points and nearly always without quoting the number and text of the Question being addressed. It was largely in response to this suggestion that we reconstructed this entire document as a chronicle of all our Sessions, stating/repeating each Question directly before each passage of relevant text. We also now observe that non-"ordinary"

readers (whatever that means) should find this approach easier as well.] Also should have a pointer/reminder of Resolution #1 when introducing Resolution #1A.

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Question 32.3 (continued)

Should the I.O.O. get involved in a nation's alleged violation of human rights?

For the I.O.O. chunk, panelist asked in Session 160 [following recent reconsideration of Question 7] what would happen if we're airlifting people, and a child doesn't want to leave because he's been programmed into the Hitler Youth. Answer was that young kids don't have the knowledge and education needed to make those kinds of decisions intelligently, and so we temporarily entrust that responsibility to some parent or other guardian. That parent/guardian therefore gets to make those decisions affecting the child, so the wishes of the parent/guardian must prevail, and the I.O.O. therefore must generally allow the child to escape if the parent/guardian wishes. We therefore needed to fix the penultimate sentence of the fifth I.O.O. paragraph, to include kids whose parents wish for them to be evacuated. Maybe non-biological guardians get to make that call, too, but the I.O.O. shouldn't be getting down to the level of detail of examining adoption papers and other civil documents, especially when they're in the middle of an airlift. Also, some kids will not know the whereabouts of their parents, but want some immediate protection and assistance anyway. To cover both these situations, we were hoping that the I.O.O. could set up some central lost-and-found for kids, to help identify the ones who are actually to be permanently evacuated, but we also noted that this may not always be a practical option during conditions of emergency airlift. When it is not a practical option, we found at this time that the child's Sense of Self outweighs the guardian's Right of Parenthood, and also that a parent who is still alive but not attending the child may easily have abandoned the parental contract, so we will play safe and take the unattached child into temporary protective custody when we can.

Question 7 (continued)

What rights (if any) are inherent in all human beings, regardless of where or how they choose to live, and which rights are only optionally agreed to by members of a civil society?

Panelist made good suggestion to re-sequence Natural Rights as to allow for the extended discussion of Question 32.3 in Session 160, and any situation where some Natural Right outweighs some other Natural Right, and to make it clear in the intro to that segment that we're doing that. [They are so listed in what we are now calling the 'General Summary' (the former 'Executive Summary') of the Third Pass.]

Question 32.3 (continued)

Should the I.O.O. get involved in a nation's alleged violation of human rights?

I.O.O. will help with the first three Natural Rights in our prioritized list all the time, but with any lower/lesser Natural Rights only when practical. For example, we might let you take along your crocheted scarf, but the helicopter probably will not have room for your '57 Chevy.

While pet ownership is not a Natural Right (and we confirmed at this time that we do not want it to be, principally because we don't see voluntary pet ownership (as distinct from essential parasitic/symbiotic relationships) in Nature, so it must fall outside the area of Natural Rights), we yet would like for the I.O.O. to be able to include pets in the airlift if at all possible (way too many pets got left to die following Katrina), because they're sentient beings and adopted family members whom certain people care about almost as much as they care about their human kids.

No other problems found in the I.O.O. chunk of the earlier version of this document.

Added in Session 161 (April 2011) that unattended children should get higher priority than parents. [Added later that preference should generally be given to rescuing children over rescuing pets. Noted early in Third Pass that bringing pets shall be subject to disallowance by the transporting authority in case of allergies possessed by your fellow passengers. Last point disputed later in Third Pass, because when comparing the alternatives of one passenger experiencing itchy eyes or runny nose for a couple of hours, and needing to leave a pet behind to die, the pet should win.]

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Moderator then announced that he had finished reviewing the General Summary document that afternoon, had made one further amendment (in I-E-3 to reflect finding reached in I-D-1-g), but had found nothing else needing fixing prior to resuming Section I-F. Read aloud at this time what we already had in Section I-F.

Question 288.5 (continued)

What philosophical parameters/guidelines (if any) do we want to establish to govern our system of justice?

We saw in Session 161 that we needed to change Basic Principle #2, which had previously specified no Natural Rights, to allow for multiple Natural Rights. Took out language about 'conditional natural right' (CNR), and the final paragraph about our then-current step of resolving inconsistency on the CNR issue. We were not immediately thinking of any other Basic Principles which needed to be itemized at this time. Therefore, resumed regular order.

Subsection I-F-2: Judiciary Structure

Question 289

Given that multiple levels of government have been established, from international to municipal, should each level have its own judiciary, or should there be some separate organization to handle cases at all levels?

We felt as of Session 161 that only the occurrence of Natural Rights being violated would move the I.O.O. to get involved with airlifting. Civil Rights were initiated by that Nation internally in the first place, so it would be up to them.

Generally liked what we had said in the 'black book', that we can't expect the I.O.O. or any separate Global judiciary to be sufficiently familiar with the laws of the tens of thousands of Cities and Towns all over the World, so it would be more effective for each jurisdiction to have its own judiciary. Agreed by group.

Questions 290-294

In general, what kinds of "bad acts" should be overseen by [different governmental levels]?

We felt in Session 161 that it would be better to deal with all jurisdictional levels in one set, but we itemized them later as originally intended.

Question 310

What happens if a particular act violates laws on multiple governmental levels?

Preliminary discussion in Session 161 because two visitors might not come back.

Question 289.5

If each governmental jurisdiction is to have its own judiciary, then do we want them all to be handling their own respective cases independently and without any overlap or appeal, or do we want to allow for the possibility of some interaction among levels in certain types of cases?

Panelist in Session 162 (May 2011) asked: Why would we not want to allow some interaction in certain cases?

Moderator responded: Because we had established in Answer 289 that these different jurisdictions are not sufficiently knowledgeable of our laws to be qualified to adjudicate them effectively. That was why we had required each jurisdiction to have its own judiciary in the first place.

However, panelist found that there may be certain types of situations, such as when someone commits a 'bad act' which affects people in multiple States simultaneously, or when someone commits bad acts in multiple jurisdictions, where we might want to involve some higher level, but we may not necessarily wish to exclude the lower jurisdictions from participating in the prosecution as they normally would.

So, we allowed the possibility of interaction for the present, to look later at various specific scenarios. Therefore inserted 'initially' in Questions 290-294.

Question 290

In general, what kinds of "bad acts" should be initially overseen by the I.O.O.?

Following elements listed in Session 162:

- 1) Crossing borders with military force
- 2) Environmental disasters caused by either willful intent or negligence, affecting either international territory or more than one country simultaneously
- 3) Crossing an international border with a known infectious disease
- 4) Alleged violation of international treaties - only upon complaint from one or more of the other parties, otherwise no policing - if a particular national government is

deliberately refraining from addressing a particular alleged violation to the per-Nation house of the I.O.O., because they've been bought off or whatever, then victims and independent observers will now have the option to address the problem via one of the other two houses

No others immediately screamed out. Again, we didn't want to give the global judiciary too much to do, lest they become more of a one-world government.

Panelist noted that the I.O.O. as then constructed really was in effect a one-world government, albeit with limited legislative power, and that at some point we may want to adjust our previous statements accordingly. [We did so later that month.]

Question 291

In general, what kinds of "bad acts" should be initially overseen by the Federal judiciary?

Following elements listed in Session 162:

- 1) Environmental disasters confined within the Nation, but affecting more than one State
- 2) Alleged violation of interstate covenants
- 3) Crossing a State border with a known infectious disease, if (and this applies generally to all levels) there is some documentation that the patient was officially notified by an attending physician or public health agency of competent jurisdiction that he/she was being quarantined and served with a specific travel restriction which in this case required staying within the State
- 4) Crossing a State border while under a State-imposed restriction to stay within the State border for some fixed duration, such as a parole restriction following a conviction of sexual predation - noting here that the Federal prosecution in such a case would be limited to the actual border crossing, and neither treat the original criminal conviction nor consider at this time whether the subject's presence in the other State either causes an actual problem or presents an actual threat of a problem - the State had found (presumably through a due process, although we conceded that such proceedings do not always produce perfect results, as we planned to discuss later) that this subject is presumed to be a threat until some time period has passed and/or some other condition is fulfilled, only after which we will trust him again to travel freely, and We The Fed will generally respect that judgment by the State, and immediately place in Federal custody anyone who violates a legitimate State-imposed restriction against traveling out of the State, and limit our original prosecutory efforts to that particular 'bad act' - criminal conviction is not required for such a restriction to apply, and an arrest warrant or bail ruling may be sufficient, but (as with infectious diseases) the subject must have known about the restriction before he can be prosecuted for an alleged violation of it - a warrant issued but not served is insufficient for such a prosecution to be validly applicable
- 5) Crossing a national border without going through all internal requirements - covers both entering and exiting - of course, we have a concern if someone appears within our borders without authorization, may be a threat of some kind, but also concerned about anyone who leaves surreptitiously, without going through all our checkpoints or without producing all required documents or whatever - such an individual may be carrying State documents or State secrets or some other property which he's not supposed to have, or may be threatening some other kind of harm to us from outside - but, we could simply say that he just doesn't get to return, don't

need a 'bad act' prosecution - yes we do, because the subject may not be intending to return, but may yet be presenting a serious threat - but, what if the subject's intentions are peaceful and honorable, but he simply feels (and maybe he's right) that the Nation's exit restrictions are too severe, making them a hostile government for the purposes of our previous finding of situations which may trigger I.O.O. involvement - in such case, subject would have the option to go to any of the multiple inland presences which the I.O.O. presumably will have within each Nation (we liked the concept that each of the three houses could/should have its own network of offices, again so that people have multiple avenues for attracting the I.O.O.'s attention), and then the local I.O.O. office could adjudicate whether the Nation's exit restrictions actually are too restrictive and hostile, in which case they could assist with the subject's escape as previously established, but not otherwise - if a particular subject leaves the Nation on his own, anyway, without going through the Nation's exit procedures, and without a finding from the I.O.O. that such restrictions are unduly oppressive, then the Nation of origin has a legitimate concern which should merit other jurisdictions' attentions as applicable - this could qualify such instances for original I.O.O. action, but panelist felt (and Moderator didn't necessarily disagree) that this might result in the I.O.O. getting overly inundated with such cases - best for each Nation to pursue such cases at its own level, hopefully with the reciprocal cooperation of neighboring Nations, just as with ordinary extradition, and then notify the I.O.O. only when it appears that a particular case is serious enough to either definitely or possibly require their attention

Question 292

In general, what kinds of "bad acts" should be initially overseen by State judiciaries?

Moderator of Session 163 (May 2011) disliked note in the 'black book', viz.:

Those not handled at higher levels, and any involving interactions among counties, or among cities in different counties, and any where all counties/people can agree that are bad acts [*sic*], and where all can agree on appropriate penalties.

It's not just the absence of being handled at higher levels, because maybe some things are actively better for lower levels. Did like interactions among Counties, or among Cities in multiple Counties. Didn't like last part: Even if all Counties/People in the State agree that something is a bad act, and even if we all agree on the appropriate penalty, and even if the State Legislature passes a law to that effect, yet we prefer for initial adjudication to happen at a more local level, for two main reasons: 1) We already have an administrative structure in place at the lower level to try cases for other types of individual bad acts, so no need to create a separate bureaucracy at the State level for that type of case. 2) Trying it at a local level makes it easier to perform local investigations, jury visits, etc.

Question 293

In general, what kinds of "bad acts" should be initially overseen by County judiciaries?

Following elements listed in Session 163:

- 1) Any other bad act which takes place in an unincorporated spot within a given County
- 2) Anything involving multiple Cities within the same County
- 3) Everything else, other than items listed in Answer 294 which are City-specific

Question 294

In general, what kinds of "bad acts" should be initially overseen by Municipal judiciaries?

Following elements listed in Session 163:

- 1) Zoning violations
- 2) Violation of any other law/ordinance passed specifically by that Municipality

Question 295

Is it better to have one judiciary structure to cover both alleged violations of passed laws and alleged rights infringement, or is it better to have two separate structures?

Disagreed with 'black book' again, which suggested as follows:

Better to have criminal structure, with judges expert on reading and interpreting language of passed legislation, and separate civil structure, with judges better suited to reaching decisions solely on features of each case.

True that some judges/lawyers who are good at Criminal cases would not be good at Civil, and *vice versa*, yet a lot will be good at both. It therefore does not make good logistical sense to prohibit them administratively from applying their skills to whichever cases need the most urgent attention.

Therefore best to have one single structure, and assign cases to the right individual judges and lawyers.

Question 296

If a particular "bad act" is tried in a lower jurisdiction, and judicial misconduct or procedural error is suspected by either party, then may they appeal to a higher jurisdiction?

Yes, allow appeal to higher level.

Considered having the first level be final, as they had done in Baseball for many years. But, we were observing as of Session 163 a greater popular demand in many sports for appeals through 'instant replay' [as subsequently introduced to the pro level of both Baseball and Football], and more generally we were concerned with the possibility of increased corruption when there is no opportunity for appeal at all.

Also considered possibility of lateral appeal to a neighboring jurisdiction who at least would have a first-hand familiarity with handling those types of cases on a primary basis, so they might be in a better position to assess whether there has been "judicial misconduct or procedural error". However, panelist made good points that a

neighboring County might not have a whole lot of motivation to handle our crappy cases as well as those originating there, and that it's part of the mission of the inclusive higher jurisdiction to make sure that things are running smoothly within all their subordinate jurisdictions, which we found reasonably includes treating certain local cases on an appellate basis, and that a neighboring County arriving at a conflicting assessment would not have the standing or authority to supplant the original judgment as much as the higher level would.

Question 297

Shall such a procedure be applied only when the defendant has been found guilty/liable, or in all cases?

One possibility is to appeal all cases automatically (as suggested in the 5th season of 'L.A. Law', and as was the 'real life' with capital convictions as of Session 163), in the hopes of saving the time involved in initiating an appeal. However, panelist found a number of reasons against it, namely: (1) The time and resources saved probably would not completely offset the time and resources spent in those retrials not specifically requested by either party. (2) No other advantage was seen which would offset the imbalance of time and resources. (3) Cases are stressful and arduous enough for the principals and witnesses without having them always go through the entire trial process twice. (4) If it's too complicated or time-consuming to initiate appeals, then we can fix that problem more easily than by trying all cases twice.

Another possibility is to allow appeals only when initiated by either party, but to accept the appeals automatically. Rehnqvist thought that this approach would clog up the system, and impose too much more of a financial and logistical burden.

Third possibility is to allow appeals upon initiation by either party, but to accept an appeal request only upon satisfactory showing of corruption or honest procedural error. Panelist ended up preferring this one.

Fourth possibility is what we were doing at that time in the U.S.A., namely to require a compelling statement as to why the appeal is being requested, but to entertain such requests only from a losing defendant.

Argument in favor of last choice is that an individual criminal defendant is going up against the D.A.'s office and the Police department and the rest of the Government, with all their money and staffing and crime labs and other resources. To create a more balanced and just playing field, we usually like to give the underdog defendant the benefit of the doubt wherever we can, and grant offsetting strategic advantages to the defendant, including by giving all appeal rights to the defendant only.

This argument is not as prevalent in civil cases, where it's an individual plaintiff going up against an individual defendant/respondent, so we could maybe envision a system where losing plaintiffs get to appeal, but losing prosecutors do not.

As it was, however, panelist noted that there often are victims on both sides of a criminal case as well, and that the needs of the victims for justice are just as important as the defendant's right to fair treatment. If corruption or some other major problem unduly influences a criminal proceeding, then justice still demands that the case be handled properly, even if that means the allowance of what we have come to call 'double jeopardy'.

In order to minimize time and stress for actually-innocent defendants, we wanted to make extra-sure that prosecutors have a really solid basis for claiming corruption or procedural error, and to establish short timeframes for filing such appeal requests.

Question 290 (continued)

In general, what kinds of "bad acts" should be initially overseen by the I.O.O.?

Following elements added at beginning of Session 164 (June 2011):

- 5) Institutionalized slavery
- 6) Genocide

Our pro&con arguments apply to both the above. While we were generally trying to respect the SIG's previous finding that we should not have a one-world government (or not too much of one, anyway...), and that we should have multiple sovereign Nations with maximum flexibility to decide their own laws and criminal procedures (since we generally didn't want the I.O.O. taking sides when there is sufficient division among the Global population as to what does and does not constitute a bad act, lest it then become too much of a one-world government), and while we recognized in particular that Slavery and Genocide had both been accepted policies within certain societies in human history, yet we felt as of Session 164 that we were on good ground in acknowledging and institutionalizing a more recent trend among Global society of non-tolerance of such practices. We don't necessarily want the I.O.O. to adjudicate individual cases of alleged Slavery or alleged Murder, because we want to leave them focusing on only the big cases, but we can use our Global resources to go after government officials and private 'ringleaders' who commit these atrocities on a large-enough scale as to warrant international intervention.

In addition to recognition of the human race's historical trend toward zero-tolerance of Slavery and Genocide, there also were two practical reasons why we decided to include Genocide and institutionalized Slavery in our list of bad acts to be initially adjudicated by the I.O.O. One reason was that remaining consistent with our general policy of helping refugees to escape a hostile government requires in the case of Slavery that we do more than just hold the door open for people to escape. We would need to actually go onto people's private properties to take the victims out by force, and to do that should require a specific finding that these are bad acts which should receive remedial treatment beyond the normal policy of simply helping refugees to escape. The other reason was that we waste a lot of human life and material resources if we require ourselves to go into a given country several times in order to help victims and potential victims to escape that country's pro-Slavery and/or pro-Genocide policies. At some point, it becomes a practical necessity to remove the offending leaders from being in a position from which they can order and facilitate such policies. We therefore should take actual adjudicative action at some point, possibly to include removal from power, incarceration, criminal trial, and maybe even execution, so we agreed to specify in this listing that these bad acts will be adjudicated more actively than most ordinary alleged violations of human rights.

- 7) Widespread physical mutilation

It was harder to add this to the list, because it's harder to adjudicate on either an individual level (a government doctor can always testify (maybe truthfully, maybe

not) that the mutilation was intended to stop some big epidemic disease or something) or a national level (since it may be harder sometimes to identify any commonality among a large number of alleged individual abuses). Because of this, we wanted to add a couple of checks to the adjudication process. Basically, the I.O.O. can determine (either through a particularly high vote count (80%?), and/or through approval by multiple houses, and/or through various other mechanisms) that a particular case of alleged widespread abuse is so egregiously obvious that it warrants immediate remedial action. But, it can also decide (either by specific resolution, and/or if it receives a lesser but still-high vote count (65%?), or through some other mechanism) that it appears that something bad may be happening, but for some reason (insufficient evidence? geopolitical scope too narrow? lack of consensus as to relative badness? recent elections?) we don't want to get too directly involved just yet, but the I.O.O. would yet be resolving a recommendation that the Nation in question look more closely at whatever is allegedly going on. That way, we give ourselves the option of immediate action when it's really needed, but we also restrict the I.O.O. from acting impulsively when global opinion is more divided.

Question 298

Should each jurisdiction have a single judicial structure to try new cases and consider appeals, or should there be separate structures, or should each jurisdiction decide?

In some regions, appellate courts also treated original cases as of Session 165 (July 2011). In some others, they did not.

At the structural level, we were not overly concerned that a given Judge who specializes in appellate proceedings for a long time is going to forget what it was like to try cases on an original basis. If we see a problem with an individual appellate Judge, or with someone under consideration for being hired to that position, then we can consider it on an individual basis.

We saw two conflicting factors in Question 298. On one hand, it might be better to allow/encourage Judges to specialize in either original or appellate trials, both to establish more of a path of career advancement, and also to relieve Judges from the mental burden of needing to stay current on two levels of bad acts. On the other hand, we didn't want to overbureaucratize the system -- and slow down the trial process -- by adding too many levels and divisions.

Upon further consideration, group felt that it's not that big of a deal to expect a Judge to be familiar enough with both her own level and all subordinate jurisdictions to be able to render effective judgments at both levels, especially with the research which their Law Clerks would provide. Without a clear reason to require separation, we felt it better to streamline the process by having a single judicial structure.

Question 298.5

Any other procedural specifications as to filing and processing appeals?

Good to require a relatively short timeframe during which the appeal case must be initiated before we will entertain it, so that the courts and the winning principal and other interested parties know that they can get on with their lives if the appeal hasn't been filed by a certain date. However, we didn't want the timeframe to be too

short, since the losing party may need time to select and engage and familiarize a new attorney. We thought as of Session 165 that a 30-day timeframe satisfactorily balances both these needs.

We also wanted to have a timeframe by which the Government is expected to issue an initial response to the Appellant, that either we'll entertain your appeal formally, or else we're rejecting it immediately. Given the other cases which all the Judges will already have in front of them, we thought that a 45-day guideline is reasonable for this step. If there are not enough Judges on staff to allow this to happen, then install more Judges.

Allow multiple appeals with similar timeframes for filing and responding, if the appellate case also loses.

We might like also to establish a target for when the appellate proceeding would start, but this will be largely dependent upon the Judges' existing dockets of original and/or appellate cases, which probably will be too difficult to predict reliably. However, we could establish a general target for how long we're prepared to wait until any case comes to trial, and adjust our judicial staffing levels accordingly.

In any case, even if we fail to respond to the Appellant on time, or if we establish a target for when the appellate trial is expected to begin or end and we end up being late with that, then the case still stays alive without penalty to the Appellant.

We generally should have targets for when original cases and appeals are formally held, since as of Session 165 we often needed to wait for years for a case to start, which is a problem when people die or forget things, physical evidence gets lost or compromised, and people's lives continue to get disrupted.

Did we also want to allow an appeal to be brought two levels up if it is rejected by the next higher level? Yes, but only if the Appellant produces a second brief showing why the initial appellate rejection was morally corrupt or otherwise should be ignored, so the second brief will need to include some affirmative evidence other than the simple fact that the other Judge disagreed with the Appellant.

Question 298 (continued)

Should each jurisdiction have a single judicial structure to try new cases and consider appeals, or should there be separate structures, or should each jurisdiction decide?

We checked at the beginning of Session 166 (July 2011) whether our proposed unitary structure for original cases and appeals contradicted our reasons for requiring each jurisdiction to have its own judiciary, as summarized in the following text which had been entered in what was then our General Summary as to Question 289:

Each governmental jurisdiction from international to municipal should have its own judiciary to adjudicate and enforce the laws of that jurisdiction. For, since each level is setting its own laws, legal minds at each level are most familiar with how those laws were intended to be applied, and so are in the best position to determine whether a particular action or behavior constitutes a violation of either criminal law or civil procedure. Therefore, best to have separate judiciaries, each concentrating on alleged violations of laws and civil

procedures passed by the government of that jurisdiction, rather than have either the I.O.O. or any separate global body try to manage the task of justice unitarily for the entire world.

Text structure appeared to be okay, since the higher level doesn't necessarily need to know all the laws and civil procedures of the lower jurisdictions. Rather, they're looking only at specific alleged problems (which could be researched as needed) or at general allegations of corruption.

Question 295.5

How long should people be expected to wait before their new cases come to trial, without our needing to hire additional judges?

This point came up during our consideration of Question 298.5 in Session 166, and was packaged as a separate Question in the Third Pass.

We felt that six months is reasonable, and that we shouldn't need to wait longer.

Question 298.5 (continued)

Any other procedural specifications as to filing and processing appeals?

If the appellate court upholds an appeal, then the case should be re-tried at the lower level, but with a new Judge. Otherwise, as we reasoned in Session 166, the higher-level Judges would need to know everything about all subordinate jurisdictions' laws, civil procedures, and judicial precedents.

If the appeal is based on an allegation of corruption, then initiate investigation immediately but independently of the appeal process.

On timeframes, we were pretty happy with the same paradigm as for original cases: If we're able to get cases heard consistently within 3 months, then maybe we have too many Judges, and maybe we have a savings opportunity. [Amended in Third Pass.] Conversely, if we consistently need to wait more than 6 months, then we probably need to hire more Judges. Considered possibility of streamlined timeframes through specialization, but we did not bother to upset our paradigm at this time.

However, okay for the appellate court to hear a re-trial on a 'de novo' basis under special circumstances, such as if the original jurisdiction has only one Judge in it.

How many levels of appeal should we allow before we tell the Appellant 'no more'? We don't want the Supreme Court or the I.O.O. to be burdened with frivolous and untenable appeals, but neither do we want to stop Justice from being done. Good therefore to allow appeals as high as they need to go, but require a filing/processing fee to accompany each appeal, to be forfeited if the appeal is denied.

Question 302

How shall the judiciaries of the several jurisdictional levels be funded?

Agreed while discussing Question 298.5 (so therefore Q302 should come before Q298.5) in Session 166 that jurisdictional systems generally shall be funded by a mix

of civic support (so that government can still provide oversight and mitigate costs) and fees supplied by the losing parties (to provide them with some disincentive against frivolous prosecution). Prevailing parties shall not be required to cover any legal fees or court costs on their own.

Question 298.5 (continued)

Any other procedural specifications as to filing and processing appeals?

General policy in Answer 302 shall also apply to appeals, meaning that the prevailing parties will ultimately be held to be costless, but that the losing parties shall not be required to cover the entire costs of processing appeals.

We did like the idea in Session 166 that the Appellant should be expected to front a filing fee as a deposit, to be held in escrow and returned if the appeal is upheld, but forfeited to the appellate court if not. If the appeal is upheld, then a corresponding amount of court costs shall be levied against the losing party as a fine, so that they're not required to provide escrow funding before we know that they're actually going to be losing.

Question 302 (continued)

How shall the judiciaries of the several jurisdictional levels be funded?

What if an individual who can afford only one cheap attorney goes up against a big corporation who can hire a whole bunch of good ones? We didn't want the individual to need to pay a blank check for all the corporation's lawyers even if the individual loses the case, nor did we want the big corporation to use their legal resources as a scare tactic to discourage a legitimate prosecution. We could try to institute a 'usual-and-customary' procedure as they did with Medicare billing, but we hesitated to do so, for there was still too much waste and fraud in the healthcare industry for us to feel very comfortable with that approach. Better to set a general cap for what the losing party needs to pay in opponent's legal fees, that cap being the amount of legal fees which the losing party expended. If the big corporation or other prevailing party uses up more legal fees than that, then that's their corporate decision which they should financially absorb. Also noted that the Judge may find a specific reason to modify this principle in the actual damage computation, such as if the prevailing party was found to have legitimately required a particular legal expense which the losing party did not undertake. If the Judge's corruption unduly influenced this damage computation, then that is an element which could be considered in appeal.

Further discussion on funding model in Session 167 (August 2011). One panelist was now no longer happy with limiting the losing party's general obligation for the prevailing party's legal fees to the lesser of what the two parties paid. She cited a specific example of known acquaintances who had accumulated a lot of legal fees against a nasty defendant who was putting very little into his legal defense.

We still did want the prevailing party to be made whole, and not need to be penalized by needing to pay any legal fees, but we also had concerns about possible extortion and possible padding, so we still wanted some kind of upper limit on what the losing party should be expected to pay in legal fees.

We theoretically could authorize Judges to make these determinations unilaterally on a case-by-case basis, assisted by staff auditors insofar as a given jurisdiction's resources permit, but -- as we had discussed in the previous Session -- we had little reason to suspect that the waste and fraud which then happened with Medicare billing (which had also sought to apply the 'usual-and-customary' approach to billing rates) would not also bleed into the legal/judicial world.

Panelist found a paper online which discussed different theories at length as to how best to calculate what generally is a "reasonable" amount to be charged to the losing parties for legal costs. We agreed to review this in further depth during the week, and re-address it in the next Session as applicable. [However, the panel ended up getting sidetracked on other elements, and came back to this in Session 172.]

Question 283.7

What should we do about the problem of antiquated laws being allowed to remain on the books too long?

Following notes were compiled in Session 168 (August 2011), without reference to a particular Question, and while we were already in the midst of Section I-F. Rolled into separate Question for Section I-E in the Third Pass.

One panelist noted that it was still against the law in New Orleans to tie an alligator to a fire hydrant. Another noted that minors in Glendale CA not on their own property were required to be within arm's-length of a 21+-year-old adult after 10pm.

We agreed in principle that laws passed by any governmental jurisdiction should automatically expire after a certain point, unless affirmatively renewed by the Legislature. We now set about to determine what time period would be appropriate.

Legislative systems can print out automated lists of expiring laws. Graduating law-school students can be assigned the task of evaluating such laws, as an apprenticeship process.

Moderator thought that 50 years is too short, that 100 years is too long, and that 75 years is just right. Second panelist thought that 30 years is better, so that every generation is compelled to evaluate. We thought that 50 years might be too short because some individual legislators might prefer for their laws to last at least for the remainder of their lives. Second panelist made good counter-argument to this, that it's unreasonable for a legislator to expect that his law will necessarily stay on the books for his lifetime without reevaluation. Further, she suggested that keeping a bad law on the book is bad, regardless of how long ago it was passed, so we may therefore want to require a shorter timeframe for automatic expiration. But, we can always strike a bad law. On the other hand, there's an argument in favor of continuity and stability in society, which was then compromised by the ability of the Supreme Court to make decisions which they would overturn in 30 years when the personal and political climates of the panel had changed. Also, first panelist argued that the 75-year standard for copyrights was not just to protect the copyright owner for his/her lifetime, but also to protect the financial interests of the copyright owner's kids; likewise, a politician passing a certain law is often concerned not only with improving conditions for his/her own lifetime, but also with affecting a world for his/her kids, and argued in favor of keeping laws on the books for a longer period.

Whatever timeframe we set, we should always be aware that many laws form the basis for other laws and/or judicial decisions, and that these will lose their validity if the underlying law expires or gets revoked in advance of the stated expiration date. All such subsequent decisions would likewise expire with the underlying law, including any criminal convictions, meaning that anyone doing prison time for violating a now-invalid law shall no longer be required to do time for it, although we would continue to leave the conviction on the historical record, since we would not be saying that the law always was invalid, only that it is no longer applicable.

Jefferson apparently argued for a Constitutional review every 19 years, based on then-current life expectancies, since the average generation was 19 years.

Another reason offered for shorter timeframes was that you might actually want the instigating legislator to still be alive to help inform the renewal debate.

Jefferson's argument, expressed in a letter written to Madison on 6-Sep-1789 (titled "The Earth Belongs to the Living") went into why he felt that all constitutions and other laws naturally expire after 19 years. Moderator had three big problems with his presentation, and a lot of little problems which we opted not to enumerate at the time. First big problem, Jefferson claimed that the principle applying to a specific hypothetical example -- of a generation where everybody gets born and dies at the same time -- applies to the actual general case, because there would be no principle in the specific case to apply generally, since the hypothetical generation could not hold any collective net debt; however, we agreed that heirs shouldn't be held responsible for any debt of deceased ancestors [we added this provision to Answer 485 in the Third Pass], so we agreed with TJ's conclusion, if not with the way that he got to it. Second big problem, he said that there's no moral right for a borrower to devolve his debt upon his heirs, but that the moneylender might have a reasonable expectation of getting repaid at some point. Third big problem, we observed questionable math in his derivation of 19 years from recent mortality tables. We liked the counter-argument from two of the panelists, that kids didn't ask to be born, and didn't sign a paper agreeing to financial obligation, so they can't be held liable, such forced liability constituting a form of Slavery, and maybe a breach of their Natural Right of 'Sense of Self'; moneylender has reasonable expectation of at least partial repayment from the decedent's available assets, but the obligation ceases after that, and this risk is part of the moneylender's cost of doing business, which is why they get to charge interest in the general case. However, Madison's reply contained a level of skepticism about Jefferson's model, and suggested that it is reasonable for a later generation to bear some responsibility for the debts of earlier generations, since they were in a position to benefit from them. We wanted to think about this point further, and then consider the extent (if any) to which the same principle of debt management could be applied to legislative expirations.

Continued to discuss in Session 169 (August 2011) the ideal timeframe for general laws remaining on the books before automatic expiration.

Looked again at Jefferson's model, which included all laws and contracts and debts expiring every 19 years.

We now read through the entire notes from the previous meeting, and entertained any ideas or observations or questions which anybody had in response, as follows:

- 1) Jefferson's position ignores our argument in favor of continuity and stability. Madison may have called this to his attention in his response.
- 2) One panelist suggested that maybe different government levels should have different timeframes.
- 3) Current copyright law was 75 years from date of death, not from date of creation.
- 4) Maybe we shouldn't be so concerned about originating legislators still being alive for the renewal debate, for we hopefully will have their original reasons preserved in the records of the original debate.
- 5) Jefferson apparently wanted to discourage borrowing.
- 6) Madison pointed out that the heirs of people who borrowed to wage war benefitted if the war was won, and so they should cover any remaining national debt arising from that borrowing.
- 7) Short timeframe places too much pressure on legislative calendars.
- 8) As with elections, a too-frequent review of all laws would make the exercise lose much/all public meaning.

As to (1), current average generation appeared as of Session 169 to be 20-25 years, according to multiple online sources. Per ancestry.com, the average generation used to be closer to 20 years, when people mated earlier and life expectancies were shorter; now closer to 25 years. Moderator argued that looking at Everything every generation -- or even every 30-35 years -- would create too much instability for his personal taste. Panelist suggested that maybe we want different timeframes for different types of transactions, with shorter timeframes for government contracts and longer for normal legislations. Whatever timeframe we set for any transaction type at any government level, legislators may have the option to shorten that timeframe for particular transactions if they have the motivation (which Moderator didn't expect would happen very often), but they don't get to lengthen them.

All agreed with panelist's suggestion that we should produce at least two numbers in our Answer here, including a shorter time for government contracts which may be benefitting a certain corporation but having a bad ecological impact, especially those contracts of which the victims of ecological damage might not be aware.

But, Jefferson's letter sought to apply to all transactions, and we agreed that applying his principle to constitutions and ordinary legislations would create too much instability: Why would we want to borrow all this money to wage all these wars, and send all these hundreds of thousands of our people to their deaths, just to create/maintain a system which is going to expire in 19 years anyway?

Second panelist also reminded us that we had decided to refrain from holding elections any more frequently than every two years, because they are then not so special, and people stop caring about the outcomes, and about participating at all. Likewise, both voters and legislators will stop caring about the results of each new Constitutional Convention if we have them as frequently as every 30 years.

We now generally agreed that some timeframe longer than 30 years is best for ordinary transactions, but some lesser frame for government contracts.

As to (2), first panelist offered example of corruption in Wisconsin which affected Pensions, which we don't want to mess with, just plain unfair to not honor employment contracts promising certain Pension benefits under certain conditions.

Downside of making different expiration timeframes for different government levels is that it makes things harder for everybody to remember. Is there any reason or set of reasons in favor of differentiation which outweighs the complexity downside?

One further reason offered in Session 170 (September 2011) for designating a shorter maximum term for government contracts with corporations is that we can force ourselves to go through a new bidding process, and thus possibly save money and/or improve quality. Possible other reasons besides.

As to (3), panelist made good note that this practice highlighted society's previous recognition that people create things such as music and legislation in order to affect their heirs' benefits in addition to their own, so okay to have a general timeframe longer than the life expectancy of the originating legislator if we want to. This would be a good thing, furthermore, because we want legislators thinking in terms of the effects of their actions beyond their own lifetimes.

As to (4), we agreed with this point. Maybe there were some other reasons for wanting a shorter timeframe, but this didn't need to be one of them.

As to (5), per panelist's read, Jefferson felt that most of the evils of the World came from long-term loans. Moderator counter-suggested that most of the evils of the World come from crossing borders with military force. However, upon additional read, it appeared that maybe Jefferson's focus was on national debts more than individual debts. In any case, he overlooked a couple of other points: (1) If a society has a legitimate option to establish the civil possibility of Inheritance, then it also has the option to create constitutions and other long-term transactions affecting future generations. (2a) Constitutions are not really binding on future generations, since they still have the parliamentary option to modify or scrap them. (2b) Constitutions are not the binding restrictions on the future that Jefferson made them out to be; rather, they are one generation's gift to the future, by providing them with a default political structure which obviates the necessity for each new generation to reinvent itself if it doesn't want to, same as a house which we build for the use of both ourselves and future generations, but which those future generations always have the option to modify or scrap if they wish. Jefferson may have had a good point as to limitation on the national debt, however, so we made a note to look at it more closely during our evaluation of Question 409 in Part II.

As to (6), we agreed to apply the same argument to Madison's point upon which we had settled for individual financial transactions: Heirs can't be held liable for any portion of debt incurred by decedent ancestors, even though they are in a position to benefit from the assets if the estate remains solvent after payment of all debts. Likewise, even though a future generation can benefit from the successful waging of a war funded upon borrowing by a previous generation, that future generation yet has no obligation to pay for any portion of that debt (regardless of whether the war was won or lost), if that debt outlasts the liquidation of all that Nation's assets. We therefore agreed with Jefferson's point that the total National Debt should never be more than what can be repaid within the current generation, for otherwise we are penalizing a future generation for a decision in which they never participated.

As to (7), we agreed on the point, and for that reason we agreed to make the general timeframe at least 50 years, and we still would be okay with 75.

As to (8), we agreed with the general point, and agreed that a timeframe of 50 years is long enough to avoid this problem.

Now looking at the other end of the spectrum, we now felt that a timeframe of 75 years would be too long, because it would mean that we couldn't have had the forced reevaluation of New Deal policies until 2008, whereas a more expedited review might have saved us a lot of major economic problems that we were facing early in the 21st century. A timeframe of 50-60 years would be better.

In choosing between 50 and 60 years, we noted that 50 years equals two generations of 25 years each, and that a number not evenly divisible by 25 would need some special justification which we could not come up with at the time, and that 50 years is closer to the middle of the suggested range of 19-75 years and thus should be a more acceptable compromise to those who advocated for a shorter timeframe. 50 years it was!!

Now decided on a shorter timeframe for government contracts with private corporations. A nice singularity is 25 years, being 1/2 of our standard timeframe. Also, we could see that some projects in Infrastructure or Space Exploration or something else could legitimately need more than 20 years for completion, but we didn't want any single project or project phase to last more than 25 years, so we settled upon 25 years as the maximum term for any government contract, after which the contract must be re-opened to new bidding if activity is still ongoing.

Covered two items of Unfinished Business on this subject in Session 171 (September 2011). First of these was the voting requirement for renewing an expiring law.

Agreed with panelist's suggestion that renewing should be easier than the original passing, since we want the actions to be distinct. Also, the Moderator observed that it would be good to grant a presumption in favor of the judgment of the original Legislators, such that it would require a higher vote to overturn it.

Moderator considered establishing a maintenance timeline with initial passage, but the logic didn't work out: Per our then-current model (ref. Session 144), we needed a 2/3 majority in order to reverse an action within 24 months, and we needed only a simple majority to overturn it between 2-50 years after passage, so shouldn't we require less than 50% in order to overturn it at the 50-year mark? No, on account of that would mean requiring more than 50% in order to renew it, but that contradicted our finding that renewal should be easier than original passage (since all ordinary laws lasting 50 years must have been passed by simple majority), in deference to the judgment of the originating Legislators.

Now settled on a 40% affirmative vote being sufficient to renew any law scheduled for expiration.

Second item of Unfinished Business was defining what constitutes being "scheduled for expiration", and whether the renewal period starts from the original expiration date or the date of renewal. There were three things to consider here:

- A) How soon can the renewal motion be taken up?
- B) When does the renewal period start?
- C) How long does the renewal period last?

As to (A), renewal motion shouldn't happen more than 24 months before the expiration date. If it did, then a faction of between 40-50% could force renewal of a law which is actively opposed by 50-60%. But, this assumes that only 50% is required to rescind after 2 years, which may not have been clearly established in our then-existing Summaries, and which may not have been consistent with the 10th edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, which the Moderator noted as needing to be obtained and consulted at that time, even though we were not required to follow it.

As to (B), it was less important once we had said that the renewal motion is not even in order until within 24 months of the original expiration date, but we still wanted to distinguish between the renewal date or the original expiration date or some third thing as the beginning of the renewal period.

Panelist suggested that the renewal date is best, because the 24-month rule would still apply, where the action can be reversed by a 2/3 majority within 24 months, but that argument didn't hold up, because the Motion to Overturn could still apply within 24 months of renewal.

However, there were two other reasons which we liked for making the renewal period begin with the date of passage of the renewal motion: Moderator's reason was that laws generally should have immediate effective date unless it would cause too much of a disruption in private society (such as if we changed tax or overtime laws), but renewing an existing law would cause no such disruption, so we may as well make it immediate. Panelist's reason was that a legislature could renew a given law at the beginning of the 24-month renewal period, and therefore cause the law to remain in effect for another 52 years instead of 50, if we had the renewal period start with the original expiration date.

As to (C), no reason was seen to make it anything other than 50 years, except the possibility that laws may start to get antiquated more easily after the first renewal, so maybe we should consider doing it more frequently. But, no, that would again place additional pressures on legislative calendars, and a law which has survived for 500 years shouldn't need to be renewed every 25, and again they can always overturn a law which is causing a specific problem.

Question 302 (continued)

How shall the judiciaries of the several jurisdictional levels be funded?

Third and final item of Unfinished Business before resuming the Regular Order was taken up in Session 172 (September 2011), relating to how much the loser in a court case should pay to offset the winner's legal fees.

We reviewed our summary notes from Session 166 and 167, along with the notes from our mid-week review of the paper published by the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research (ref. http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cjr_11.htm) [no, not 'html'], recommending that the loser should pay to the winner the lesser of (actual fees) or (30% of the difference between the final judgment and the last written offer of settlement tendered within 60 days of the initial complaint). We explained why their proposal appeared to lack satisfactory logical foundation, primarily from its introduction of arbitrary figures for winning probability and attorney fees, and specifically in its non-explanation of the proposed 30% rate. The conclusion might have been correct, but another rationale would be needed in order to get to it.

In the meantime, we appeared to agree that we didn't want to go with the lesser of the two attorney charges, because the prevailing party might have needed to incur legitimate charges in addition, and shouldn't need to eat those. We also had a problem going with the higher of the two attorney charges, because that would be a blank check which would allow all kinds of padding, including through the creation of tons of relevant-looking paperwork. We therefore felt that we might be looking at some figure in between those extremes.

Considered the singularity of a penalty amount equal to the average of the two attorneys' fees, so that the prevailing party gets a higher award if the case is really tough and required both lawyers to put in a lot of hours legitimately, and so that both parties have a motivation to limit their legal costs in case they lose. However, the problem there -- as with any other figure less than the prevailing party's legitimate legal costs -- was that the prevailing party still is not made financially whole, let alone compensated for his/her time and trouble.

Therefore, no formula based on actual attorney charges is valid, because all such figures are unreliable.

Maybe assess a flat fee to the loser, to cover a 'reasonable' amount of attorney fees and inconvenience on the part of the winner, but again cases vary so widely in complexity that such an amount would be totally random, and in most cases either too high or too low.

Instead, the Answer to Everything is to look at how much time the Court is needing to spend on all aspects of the case, because the Court actually has a motivation to limit the time spent on the case, because they want to be able to move on to the next thing, or get some golf in, or whatever. The amount of the Court's time gives us a much more reliable indicator of how complex the case really was, and therefore how many attorney hours were reasonably required to service it.

We probably have some data somewhere on how many Court hours were required on certain cases, and how many Attorney hours were billed on the winning and losing sides of those cases. Once we collect that data, we should be able to create a graph of winning and losing Attorney hours as a function of Court hours, and to come up with a formula telling us how many Attorney hours are reasonable for the prevailing party to have incurred for a case requiring that many hours of Court time, with the presumption that any hours billed beyond that level are potentially bogus. Once we produce that basic formula, perhaps we deduct a small factor for the possibility that most/all of the sample Attorney bills were padded in the first place, or maybe not. In any case, the Judge in each particular case always has the option to modify the default computation, in order to determine the just amount of actual compensation.

Question 302.5

What additional deterrents -- if any -- do we want to implement in order to better ensure that ethical practices are followed by lawyers?

Question was introduced by a non-author panelist in Session 172. We found that this Question was partly financial and partly non-financial.

As to the financial aspect, it was still possible even with our new Answer 302 rule that an Attorney on either side might overbill the Client. What happens when this either actually happens or is suspected to have happened?

Moderator's solution was to make it standard practice for all Attorney bills to be submitted to the Court, rather than to the Client. If the number of hours billed is significantly more than what comes out of the formula constructed under the Answer 302 rule, then the billing Attorney must submit an explanation to the Court for the excess billing, which the Court may consider as appropriate. In any case, the Court will decide how much of the bill is actually to be paid by either a winning or losing Client. Court can even assess a penalty (jail time, fine, suspension, etc.) to any Attorney who appears to be trying deliberately to overbill.

We realized that these measures would mean a partial 'deprivatization' of the legal industry, which may run counter to the American ideal, and constitute an exception to the free-market principles which we had identified during Question 38, but we felt that it was warranted in this instance, because an Attorney once engaged effectively becomes a monopoly which gets to charge whatever it wants. However, they're not a monopoly if the Client has good and reliable information about the performance and billing practices of all Lawyers before one is selected. [Added later: Our suggestions therefore actually promote fair competition and truly free enterprise.]

This was why we also recommended that some public or private watchdog agency (could be a Legislative committee, the FBI, or the BBB -- we didn't need to decide that here, and maybe more than one watchdog is better anyhow) maintain a public website which lists all practicing Lawyers, and showing both their win/loss ratio and their average hours billed as a function of Court hours required. That way, Clients shopping for Lawyers get to consider not only their hourly rates, but also their relative competence and efficiency.

Judges are therefore to routinely report to the watchdog agency(ies) the numbers of hours billed by all Attorneys on all cases, along with corresponding data on case outcome and number of Court hours required. Don't need the actual fees decided by the Court, but rather what was claimed by the Attorneys, so that the Attorneys who wish to remain competitive in the public eye have a motivation not to pad their bills.

Question 302.3

Is there any way that we can do without lawyers?

We decided after Session 172 to introduce this more fundamental Question before the others in the Outline which discuss what to do with Lawyers. We took it up in Session 173, conducted in December 2012, another break of more than a year!

New panelist suggested that the Question assumes that Lawyers are undesirable. But, the idea of doing without Lawyers has been suggested -- if somewhat sarcastically -- in numerous works of fiction, including in Shakespeare.

Panelist suggested that we should define 'lawyer': We suggested "Someone who represents a second party in a legal proceeding, and who charges somebody for such services".

What would a 'yes' Answer look like? For one thing, if we had no Lawyers, then we would have no District Attorneys ("DA's") or Public Defenders ("PD's"): How would we feel about that?

Another way of viewing the Q is whether Lawyers are necessary. In order for them not to be, either Litigants would need to rely on outside consultants on their cases (but then, those people would still be Lawyers, right?, in which case we'd still have Lawyers), or else The System would need to be so simple that legal interpretations are no longer necessary (appeared to be practically impossible, but maybe that's the impression that the Lawyers and Judges want to maintain, in order to continue their high fees), or else make everything like Small Claims Court and have all questions of legal interpretation and damage computation be rendered by the Judge.

Can a Lawyer be said to be an "advocate" if operating on a mercenary basis? Does one need a Law Degree in order to act as an "advocate"? Can someone even with a Law Degree be said to be operating as a Lawyer if no one is paying them anything?

Just because a 'yes' Answer would state that we "could" do without Lawyers, doesn't necessarily mean that people shouldn't be allowed to have Lawyers on an optional basis. But then, anyone who is allowed to have a Lawyer will generally want to have one, especially if the opposing side has one, unless they can't afford a Lawyer, in which case it becomes a different Question which recalls some of our previous conclusions as to what happens financially when you win or lose a given legal case.

Considered further in Session 174 (January 2013), with an additional panelist:

Moderator cited having spoken with an attorney friend in the interim, who had made the point that genuinely-complicated cases come up which genuinely require analysis by persons with advanced legal training.

One panelist added that Litigants still need to be able to present logical arguments even in a scenario of ultra-simple laws, and that they might need to employ the skills of someone who can prepare more logical and persuasive arguments.

She also noted that some Litigants are too close to the case to make an objective presentation, and/or are too emotional and long-winded to make their presentations concisely. Going without Lawyers would remove a lot of objectivity from The System, and probably take a lot more time.

Moderator also cited point from attorney friend that ever-changing technologies and social trends create the need for additional laws and legal interpretations. Second panelist countered that Lawyers are not always objective and shouldn't always be.

Generally concluded that Yes we can expect to have need for Lawyers in our world.

Question 302.5 (continued)

What additional deterrents -- if any -- do we want to implement in order to better ensure that ethical practices are followed by lawyers?

At one panelist's suggestion in Session 174, we recommended that future Litigants should expect their Lawyers to provide them -- at the time that the retainer is paid -- with a 'letter of engagement', stating as much as the Lawyer may happen to know at

that preliminary stage about what strategy is expected to be followed, and how much and what work is expected to be achieved for the amount of the retainer. Also recommended a market expectation of periodic statements to Clients, showing the amount of retainer used so far, and what work was done for that amount. First panelist added that amended agreements can be executed during the progress of the case, as the Lawyer learns more about the available options.

Question 302.4

Is there is a better alternative to an adversarial legal system? Is there any way that we can have lawyers work together to determine the optimal solution?

Adversarial system has advantage of each Litigant having an advocate who is both knowledgeable about legal options and capable of presenting arguments in a logical and persuasive manner. Second panelist in Session 174 reminded us that logic does not always equal persuasion, although sometimes it does.

Second panelist suggested that we look at Civil and Criminal separately. As to Criminal, he asked what if we had an environment where a group of people who are not advocating for either conviction or acquittal can focus on figuring out the facts of a given case. Moderator offered that Juries seek to fulfill that function, but that we still need to give the option to both the State and the Defendant to present their sides of the story insofar as they may disagree, and that a lay Defendant will often need a professional legal expert presenting that case.

Second panelist also wanted a group of objective analysts to try to determine the facts before the actual trial process. Moderator noted that the grand-jury process sought to do this, but there was a question of how adversarial that process was or should be, which we took up in a later Session.

First panelist wanted a step to be in place to summarize the facts which the parties agree on, and the points on which they do not agree. Moderator responded from his attorney friend that Workers Comp attorneys routinely prepared a Stipulations & Issues document. Panelist asked how widespread this practice was. Moderator stated that he would find out more, to report in a later Session.

Moderator reported at the beginning of Session 175 (February 2013) that he had failed to do his two homework assignments from the previous week, so we needed to come back to Question 302.4 later. In the meantime:

Question 302.5 (continued)

What additional deterrents -- if any -- do we want to implement in order to better ensure that ethical practices are followed by lawyers?

Looked in Session 175 at the non-financial aspect of this Question. State Bar associations did some self-policing, and that's good, but we may not always be able to trust all of them to go all the way. To pick up any slack, we can rely on private watchdog agencies such as the Better Business Bureau (BBB), and websites such as Yelp, to allow customers to post satisfaction ratings and narrative descriptions of their experiences. The combination of these approaches should be sufficient.

Question 302.4 (continued)

Is there is a better alternative to an adversarial legal system? Is there any way that we can have lawyers work together to determine the optimal solution?

Going back, since the next scheduled business was Subsection I-F-3. Moderator's attorney friend was unavailable for phone conversation at the time of Session 175, so panelist read from Wikipedia article [horrors?] on the Adversarial System.

Principal alternative appeared to be the 'Inquisitorial' System, where a Judge or group of Judges investigates the case. Article claimed (there was a note that additional attributions were needed) that Justice is done when the more effective adversary is able to convince Judge/Jury that his/her perspective on the case is the correct one, but Moderator way disagreed.

Article did make point which Moderator did agree with, that the Adversarial System is subject to manipulation by skilled Lawyers, allowing Judges to become unduly biased. Another point with which we did agree was that the Adversarial System included a plea-bargain element which encouraged Prosecutors to present charges in excess of what they believed to be appropriate, so that they could get negotiated down to an acceptable level. Whatever happened anywhere as of Session 175, our model should allow plea-bargaining only for sentencing purposes, not to get in the way of our finding out the actual facts of the case.

After further discussion, we seemed to be settled that (at least for Criminal cases) yes there generally should be a preliminary process involving a group of judges (such as a Grand Jury) who operate in an inquisitorial structure, deciding for themselves which Witnesses to call, what questions to ask, etc. Their review could help the parties to decide whether a formal trial is indicated. This preliminary process probably shouldn't have Lawyers on either side, because there would be little or no distinction from an actual trial, so the solution is actually a hybrid of Adversarial and Inquisitorial. We still want to mitigate the Prosecutor's motivation to win at all costs, so maybe they should be held accountable for only those cases where the Grand Jury found enough evidence to issue an indictment.

Insofar as we have Adversarial elements in our model, neither Attorney should be penalized simply for losing the case, as long as Justice was done by the correct verdict having been reached. Only if the verdict is overturned in appellate court should the Judge and/or one or both of the Attorneys be dinged for having participated in a proceeding which yielded an incorrect result.

We took up in Session 176 (June 2013) with a new panelist the homework elements which we had given ourselves two Sessions earlier.

As to the Stipulations & Issues document, in some form or other, the same idea was undertaken in all areas of Law before trial, including as to Jury instructions.

As to the Grand Jury, the then-current emphasis was not trying to establish facts, but rather asking whether there is enough evidence to warrant trial. It was the Prosecutor's call as to whether to seek a Grand Jury indictment or the ruling of a pre-trial Judge in favor of trial, whichever appeared to be more expedient at the time. Grand Jury indictment on a given charge was generally sought before arrest on that charge, so neither the Defendant nor the Defendant's counsel was present.

For civil cases, society does not have an interest in having a preliminary inquisitorial fact-finding phase, since it is only one individual's decision that a legal proceeding is needed, so that party should be getting his/her facts through private mechanisms, as people then did. For the actual trial process itself (which we did want to keep as a public service, lest people be motivated to find justice in their own distasteful ways), our previous reasons for needing Lawyers continued to apply, viz.: Many litigants will not want to speak before a judge/tribunal/jury, and many of those who do will be lousy at it, making the process take too long. Best to keep Civil as we then had it.

Same for Administrative, Probate, and any other current or future area of Law where one party has a dispute with or complaint against some second party: Whoever it is that you are trying to convince of your position, it is generally better and faster to have a trained and experienced advocate presenting that case than the actual parties. The recommended environment therefore is basically the same as what we then had, except modifying the current inquisitorial element in Criminal cases.

Subsection I-F-3: Judicial Review of Legislation

Our 'black book' of preliminary ideas included a projected note to open this Subsection, reading:

Given that basic function of legislature is to pass laws affecting the society that it represents, and that basic function of judiciary is to evaluate whether or not a particular action violates such laws, or whether or not a particular action violates someone's rights in a way not covered by established laws:

We "fumbled" through these introductory premises for a bit in Session 176, including the alleged basic function of a judiciary, which we had never actually established in so many words, but we reviewed what we had said in Answer 284 ["We do need some kind of judiciary, to help assess whether anyone's rights have been violated, and to recommend/order specific responsive action as appropriate when that does happen."], which we felt pretty much implied what we had said in the introductory note. Generally agreed at this time with the concept of separate branches doing separate things, while noting that it is yet appropriate for them to have some interaction. One possible such way for the two branches to interact is the following:

Question 303 (continued)

To what extent should a judiciary be involved in approving laws duly passed by an elected legislature?

This is the Question about 'judicial review', a power which was assumed with dubious authority by the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of *Marbury v. Madison* (1820), under which power the Supreme Court entitled itself to throw out any given law passed by Congress if in the Court's opinion it violates the U.S. Constitution.

Agreed in Session 176 with the note in the 'black book', that a judiciary should only be assessing whether a given law violates some higher law. Even at that, though, history had shown that we cannot always rely on even a majority of the Supreme Court to make this assessment correctly. Therefore, in order to confine such instances to the actual obvious contradictions on which pretty much everyone can agree, we now recommended requiring a 4/5 majority of the prevailing judicial

assembly panel (which would mean 8 out of the 9 members of the current U.S. Supreme Court) to declare that some law violates that society's Constitution. Not requiring unanimity because you might have some random crackpot or political lackey in there who might filibuster and block every good thing for no good reason.

Also agreed with 'black book' note (as documented in the meeting summary but not in the main notes) that any such judicial powers over the Legislature should be specified in that society's constitution, not just assumed by the Judiciary.

As a further check against the abuse of judicial power, we re-introduced a concept which we had first brought up 15 years earlier in Session 33, *viz.*, that a society's Legislature should generally be considered as higher than the Judiciary, since they provide much broader representation of the popular will. For this reason, the Legislature should have the opportunity to override any attempt by a judge or judiciary panel to throw out a law for allegedly being 'unconstitutional'.

We next decided upon the specifics of this "Legislative Counter-Review" at the Federal level, *viz.*: We probably don't need to go through all 3 houses of the national Legislature, because we don't want to burden their calendar any more than we need to, and because this sort of thing doesn't necessarily affect either population-based constituencies or area-based constituencies any more than it affects the country as a whole. We initially figured that review by the highest legislative house probably is sufficient. [We later changed our position.] In any case, we didn't want to rely on any Legislative committee, because the whole idea of referring it back to the Legislature is to get the opinion of a broader representation. We required the same majority level (2/3) to override a Judicial veto as we then had in our model for overriding an Executive veto, consistent, easy to remember.

If no reversal action is undertaken by a certain time, then shall we consider the original law upheld, or the judicial veto to have prevailed? Panelist spoke in favor of stability by upholding the original law, and also didn't want things to happen by default simply because the Legislature had more important things to do before the deadline. On the other hand, if no action is taken by a certain time, then it could be construed that the Legislature did not harbor a strenuous enough objection to the judicial veto, but again that fails if they actually did have more urgent business. However, since it is the Legislature's law, they want it to be upheld, so they will not have a motivation to initiate a motion to sustain the judicial action; rather, they will only want to act to override it. Therefore, the Legislature needs to take affirmative action to override a judicial veto, otherwise the judicial veto stands. They have 60 days in which to do it, or else they need to start the process over.

We considered at the beginning of Session 177 (June 2013) whether the legislative counter-review should arise from the originating house, same as the executive counter-veto, and we agreed enthusiastically that yes it should.

Question 304

To what extent should a judiciary be involved in approving laws duly passed by initiative or referendum?

Noted in Session 177 that Q can apply to any Branch or combination of Branches. But, the Indiana State Legislature once declared (according to the *Guinness Book of World Records*) that Pi equals exactly 3.14, so we can't rely on legislatures to do the

right thing all the time. Also possible that the Populace might vote in some really bad thing like Slavery, at least if it doesn't violate a higher Constitution.

Question 304 therefore bifurcated into:

- a) To what extent shall government be involved in disapproving initiatives/referenda for alleged unconstitutionality?
- b) To what extent shall government be involved in disapproving an initiative or referendum for simply being a bad measure?

Question 304a

To what extent shall government be involved in disapproving initiatives/referenda for alleged unconstitutionality?

It might seem obvious at first that either something is constitutional or it's not, but (as discussed in the previous Session) even members of the U.S. Supreme Court don't always agree, so there frequently will be some room for subjective evaluation.

However, even if all agree that a given measure is unconstitutional, what then? Why should that be a reason to toss it? Who's in charge, the Constitution or the People?

We considered in Session 177 the possibility of allowing the People to override a Government veto by a 2/3 majority in the next election, on the thinking that some people might change their votes once they hear that there is a constitutional conflict. However, this approach suffers from the fact that the Constitution (or other higher law, if there is one) would need to be re-written in order to accommodate the new law, and so someone would need to agree on what the new language would be, which maybe could go to a legislative committee of some kind, but cleaner approach is to submit any initiative/referendum for constitutionality review before it goes on the ballot. That way, if there is a conflict, then the proponents would need to include in the ballot measure the exact changes which would be needed in all associated governing instruments. In that case, we felt that such a measure should pass if it receives a simple majority, which puts the People in charge over their society.

If a new initiative or referendum obviously violates an applicable law established within a higher civic level (e.g., if Alabama says that slavery is okay, but the U.S. Constitution says no), then the initiative/referendum is out immediately. The only way that it can get enacted is through a change in the higher jurisdiction's law, such as by the constitutional amendment process or by national initiative/referendum. Any judge at either level gets to rule that the lower law violates the higher law.

Question 304b

To what extent shall government be involved in disapproving an initiative or referendum for simply being a bad measure?

Agreed in Session 177 that no governmental entity should be in a position to invalidate any initiative or referendum for any reason other than obvious violation of an applicable higher law, especially not if the measure is allegedly bad for some moral reason: We did not elect these people as moral judges, we elected them as legal judges, and we do not accord to them the power to substitute their moral judgment for that of a population ten million times larger.

Question 305

To what extent -- if any -- should the judiciary be involved in making laws independently of legislative involvement?

Discussion in Session 178 (July 2013) closely mirrored the 'black book': Legislatures are presumed to be better at making laws than Judiciaries, but a society's laws do not cover every scenario, so sometimes a decision needs to be made quickly without going through the whole legislative process. However, if the Legislature ever does have a particular hangup about a decision made by a Judge in that jurisdiction, then they could always make a priority of passing a law to specify their contrary intent.

Therefore, no specific procedural adjustment was needed here: Judiciaries at any civic level may continue to make informal laws independently of the Legislature, wherever the current law is silent on a particular point at trial. Such decisions may continue to be cited as precedents in future legal cases, until such time (if any) that the Legislature for that jurisdiction ever adopts a formal law covering that point.

Question 306

If a judge has interpreted a relatively vague law in a certain way, and sentenced a defendant on the basis of such interpretation, and if the legislature later clarifies their actual intent by passing a revision of the law, under which revision the defendant would no longer be subject to sentencing, should such defendant be released from further punishment? Should he be compensated in any way for punishment already inflicted?

Agreed quickly in Session 178 that any new law should be retroactive. Agreed with the 'black book' that any monetary fines should be refunded with interest. Okay with general idea of providing some flat rate of monetary compensation per year of time served, in order to at least partly offset the injustice of being punished without any actual criminal intent. Amount of compensation should account for the fact that the prisoner received room&board and some other amenities, but also the fact that he probably would have enjoyed a higher income and standard of living on the outside.

Question 31 (continued)

If there is an i.o.o., then how should its enforcing arm be staffed?

We figured unilaterally on 8-Sep-2013 that any military action against the alleged violator of an international treaty should be commanded by someone from a country other than that which offered the enforcement motion, since they might feel too close to the issue (noted in 'black book' that we were thinking about the U.S. then considering action against Syria for alleged development of chemical weapons), and therefore might not be trustworthy to keep the action 'measured and appropriate'.

Question 281 (continued)

Should procedures allowing for referenda and initiatives in California be instituted at the Federal level, as well?

Noted in Session 179 (January 2016, more than two years after preceding Session) that "popular reverse veto" was what we were then calling our new practice

(established in Session 146) whereby 1/3 of the originating house can refer a failed bill to popular vote within 30 days, or else the People can ballot it by initiative if some designated number of signatures is received within 24 months. It is "popular" because the People have the opportunity to override a Legislative decision. It is a "reverse veto" because a regular veto cancels a bill which has been passed by the Legislature, whereas this action enacts a bill which the Legislature has defeated.

Question now was whether we wanted to modify the 1/3 approval requirement originally established for the "popular reverse veto". We noted that 1/4 would be too easy, and that 2/5 would be too hard. No change made at that time.

Question 306 (continued)

If a judge has interpreted a relatively vague law in a certain way, and sentenced a defendant on the basis of such interpretation, and if the legislature later clarifies their actual intent by passing a revision of the law, under which revision the defendant would no longer be subject to sentencing, should such defendant be released from further punishment? Should he be compensated in any way for punishment already inflicted?

New panelist in Session 179 made good point that applying new standards retroactively could be seen as a double-standard if not also applying more severe measures retroactively when laws get stricter. However, the difference is well explained by remembering the key principle that systems of government should generally benefit the Individual to the maximum practical extent.

Subsection I-F-4: Bad Acts

Question 307

Is it appropriate for an individual to be held accountable for an act which causes no injury to any other individual?

The term 'injury' in this Question must include 'threat of injury', because we don't want that either. With that amendment, panel agreed in Session 179 that people should be able to do whatever they want if not injuring or threatening injury to others, including recreational drugs if not driving or otherwise endangering other people.

But, even though the panel agreed, how do we convince the people who currently are leaving the laws in place which provide penalties for such acts? Panelist noted that a lot of those objections have basis in religion. Moderator added that we therefore need to convince the religious organizations to which these people belong. A tough challenge, but yes we need that, because simply posting the finished Agenda on some website may not be sufficient. [Confirmed in Third Pass that our new website was grabbing little attention at the time, even with extensive promotion on Twitter.]

Panelist noted that in Saudi Arabia it was an executable offense for an individual to change from being Muslim to not being Muslim, so this was a good example of how many of these Questions (including Q307) are really being addressed to the World as a whole, even though the Project nominally focuses on just America.

Question 308

Do we agree that -- at least in general -- it is inappropriate for an individual to be charged twice for the same "bad act"?

Noted in Session 179 that this was different from upcoming Question 333 on civil prosecution after a criminal acquittal.

Question was unclear on whether we meant two separate charges, or one charge after a previous acquittal. Assuming the latter (because two separate charges from different jurisdictions might be okay if the defendant allegedly impacted multiple jurisdictions with his alleged bad act, although such instances probably should be escalated to the jurisdiction over all those allegedly affected), generally agreed with the principle of Double Jeopardy, that we generally don't want innocent people to need to live in perpetual fear of re-trial. However, guilty people shouldn't be ignored because we didn't have sufficient evidence at the first trial, so generally allowing a new trial if new compelling evidence emerges after an initial acquittal. Just need to remember that both physical and testimonial evidence can degrade over time, so statutes of limitations can generally apply at any time as jurisdictions see fit.

Question 309

What happens if a jurisdiction has two separate laws which are similar but not identical? Can a defendant be charged under both laws?

Generally agreed in Session 179 that it is not good. Example given in discussion of discharging a firearm while carrying a concealed firearm or carrying an unregistered firearm, etc. Panelist specified note offered in 'black book', that we generally should pick the one law which is the most severe of all which are allegedly being violated.

Also agreed with last point in the 'black book', that certain acts violating multiple laws should be accorded higher penalties, if it can be demonstrated that the concurrent violation of certain additional laws makes the alleged 'bad act' even worse than it would have been otherwise. Example given was that forcible rape of a minor is worse than either consensual sex with a minor or forcible rape of an adult.

Question 310 (continued)

What happens if a particular act violates laws on multiple governmental levels?

Panelist in Session 179 had already stated in previous discussion that an issue affecting multiple jurisdictions should be tried at the lowest level comprising all affected jurisdictions.

Question 311

The 'Nuremberg question': If a military officer (commissioned or non-commissioned) orders a subordinate to do something which is viewed by the international community as a "war crime", then who should be held responsible for that act?

Panelist in Session 179 brought up example of a quality-control inspector who is ordered by management to release products known to be in violation of established

specifications, claiming that the subordinate should temporarily proceed but then look for new work: Example was good but not totally on point, because military personnel do not always have the right to resign or work someplace else.

Originally agreed in discussion that officers should be held accountable for the orders which they issue, and that subordinates should be held accountable for only those acts which they commit in excess of orders. On the other hand, this may not go far enough, because certain people following certain orders exactly maybe should have been expected to disobey those orders and take whatever consequences may apply, but then that's pretty easy to say when you're just sitting around the coffee table wearing civilian clothes. The example of Himmler initiating specific measures in excess of Hitler's general extermination order may be good as far as it goes, but we agreed that even if Hitler had specified every step to be undertaken in the extermination process, then Himmler and all other subordinates should have been morally expected to disobey, even though Hitler (and especially Stalin) would almost certainly have had them killed for doing so, and probably their families too.

This all left us still not completely certain of what general standards should apply in this type of situation to relieve the Question being repeatedly debated every time.

We considered declaring this a 'not applicable', on the presumption that we could successfully create the previously-described environment in which wars do not happen at all. However, we noted that certain such atrocities can be committed by military and paramilitary personnel even when their country is not nominally at war, so we did not properly get to avoid the Q with 'n/a'. We still needed to confront it.

Noted with new panelist in Session 180 (March 2016) that the situation is similar to a civilian hiring a hitman to kill someone, but this example was not completely on-point either, because both those civilians are aware that there is a law against the act, and because their relationship is voluntary.

The situation is different between when the alleged 'war crime' violates some specific international statute, and when it instead violates some 'universal human morality'. For the former, we can treat the two participants in basically the same way as we do any crime where two or more people are involved, because we may safely presume (mayn't we?) that both participants knew or should have known that the applicable international law existed, because we had previously stated (in our Answer 26 as revised in May 1999) that the prevailing international oversight organization ("i.o.o.") should have only limited legislative authority, so hopefully it would not be establishing a bunch of minute specifics which would require soldiers to be lawyers.

For the aspect where international law has not yet specifically covered the act in question, we claimed that any act which is so clearly bad that it can be "viewed by the international community" as a 'war crime' should be perceived as such by all soldiers involved in it, and therefore that all those soldiers should have some measure of responsibility for it. If something is only a borderline 'war crime', then we should not be so eager to try to address it as such.

Any subordinate soldier participating in a 'war crime' should have some measure of responsibility for it, because we don't want that person coming back and claiming that he was "just following orders" and that he therefore should be incurring no penalty. We also cannot simply assume a threat of serious reprisal against the subordinate or his family, although the possibility may always exist. However, his

penalty can be partially mitigated if it can be shown at trial that he had strong individual reason to expect an unusually-serious reprisal for disobeying, either by direct statement from the officers or by observing what happens to others in the same unit under the same conditions.

Commander also has a level of responsibility, again whether there are specific international statutes being violated or not. You should never be able to evade punishment by either paying or coercing someone else to do your dirty work for you.

If we are talking about an alleged 'war crime' which does not violate a specific international law (such as was the case at Nuremberg, because we didn't previously think that anybody would ever actually do stuff like that, so we never bothered to create an international law to prohibit it), then part of what can be established at trial is whether the alleged bad acts are so atrocious that they can be considered as 'war crimes', meaning that we can basically enact the laws retroactively, and try the alleged criminals as though the laws had always existed. Maybe that can be a general definition of a 'war crime', meaning something which is so atrocious that we will treat it as a legal violation even though it was not already codified into international law.

Insofar as the 'war crimes' tribunal cannot be fully trusted to decide all the above elements correctly, there can be an appeal to higher levels of international court, all the way up to the full i.o.o. or some combination of its houses, so that in the end there ought to be little doubt as to whether a certain alleged bad act is retroactively enforceable as a 'war crime'.

Subsection I-F-5: Arrest

Question 312

Shall we still require that a police car be clearly marked before its officers may detain or arrest a person, and that the arresting officer be uniformed?

Panelist in Session 181 (April 2016) was from France, *heureusement*, and he reported that some police cars were known as "*banalisé*" and were unmarked, but that they could put a police light on top of the car when making an arrest. Their officers were also allowed to be un-uniformed. Those officers could not arrest someone for a mild infraction such as simple speeding, and generally would not bother, because they had more important problems to solve. System seemed to work pretty well, because the un-uniformed police in unmarked cars could respond more quickly to prevent serious crimes and catch the criminals red-handed, which they might not be able to do otherwise. Meanwhile, the ordinary citizen who breaks only small laws (if any) did not need to live in perpetual fear of being arrested for minor offenses, which was the big problem which we had with allowing un-uniformed police. We therefore allowed the practice in America under the same conditions.

Question 313

Is it appropriate for an individual to be arrested whenever any police officer thinks it appropriate, or should probable cause be established first?

It seemed obvious to us in Session 181 that probable cause should be duly established before anyone gets arrested for anything, but the practice of arresting

people without charge had happened many times in many countries for many centuries, including within America for several years after 9/11/2001, when people were arrested simply because they looked Muslim and might therefore have been terrorists. Our visitor from France reported being held in Customs in San Francisco for nearly two hours simply because he was from France, where some other terrorist activity had recently occurred. Panel agreed that this was a problem, and that we would like to see it stopped, but wondered how we might convince the people who think (and apparently had thought for centuries) that the practice is acceptable.

We liked the notes in the 'black book', that allowing a 'police state' in which undereducated officers get to harass people with limited legal justification can lead to such a degree of abuse (even if unintentioned) that we would be creating a worse environment for the entire society than we would have had otherwise. We hoped that this argument would persuade societies and police departments to accept additional procedural steps as the price for allowing the society's people to live without fearing the police more than they did the criminals.

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Beginning in January 2017, being the 20th anniversary of the commencement of our SIG's operations, and in recognition of recent political developments appearing to create a greater urgency for our work, we effectuated a reduction of our quorum requirement from two to one, in order to increase the frequency of our meetings, even if it meant a concomitant reduction in quality. Reconsideration protocols and all other operating rules continued to apply.

Question 313.5

If a 'bad act' is committed in one jurisdiction, and then the perpetrator flees to another jurisdiction, is it appropriate for law-enforcement officers from the first jurisdiction to travel to the second jurisdiction for apprehension, or should we rely on some sort of extradition procedure?

Noted in Session 182 (January 2017): "Wow, that's a tough one for my first solo Question!"

However, the panel (such as it was) could see where we would want to prevent environments where officers designated with police powers in one jurisdiction are (or feel) authorized to act with such powers everywhere in the World. Not only would it be morally improper to assert police power beyond one's authorized jurisdiction, it also would be logistically difficult to expect every individual or every local jurisdiction to be able to confirm the officer's local police ID authoritatively.

On the other hand, we don't want criminals to be able to escape apprehension simply by crossing a border into a neighboring City. We therefore must be able to enter the other jurisdiction to make the arrest, or else we must be able to prevail upon the local police to perform the arrest, or else we must be able to appeal for intervention to the lowest authority (if any) which oversees all the affected local jurisdictions.

Either of the latter two options would require some amount of additional time, which can be a problem, because time is often 'of the essence' in securing an apprehension while the suspect's whereabouts are still known, such as when he is being pursued by a police vehicle.

We therefore generally should permit police vehicles to continue their pursuits across municipal lines, as well as allow detectives to cross borders as needed. However, such actions are subject to limitation by local authorities as applicable, both to control the police actions of others, and because they are not local authorities if they can't exercise local authority.

Therefore, to the extent that it is practical to do so, police officers should try to radio neighboring Cities whenever pursuits cross their borders. Then, the local authorities can decide whether to allow the continued pursuit, take over the pursuit themselves, work out some kind of joint operation, or else put a stop to all further action.

If it is impractical to notify the local authorities when a police pursuit enters their territory, then we generally should allow the pursuit to continue, but the locals will have an opportunity later to establish if the alien officers somehow acted improperly while in their domains, in which case any arrest occurring within that territory can be overturned.

Even in such a case, however, either disputing City may appeal their position to the lowest authority which oversees both localities, and from there up as appropriate.

In order to help prevent such disputes, Cities which have not already done so should negotiate standard policies and procedures with their neighbors. The specifics may vary according to the changing needs and desires and resources and limitations of the affected parties, but generally we are going for a balance between swift apprehension of strongly-suspected criminals and avoiding abuse of police authority.

Question 313.6 (continued)

What kind of policy shall we establish as to extradition between jurisdictions at various levels, including internationally?

This also was a bit of a 'sticky wicket' as of Session 182: We wanted to be able to pursue strongly-suspected criminals vigorously, and to capture them wherever they are. However, as stated in Answer 313.5, we didn't want police officers to be acting with unlimited authority everywhere in the World. Perhaps more importantly, we didn't want to impinge upon the right of national sovereignty, when it comes to deciding whether a given individual should be released to the government of another Nation.

Therefore, while all of us who don't want total anarchy do want at least some provision for crossing borders when necessary for the apprehension of alleged serious criminals, yet we felt that we should stay within the general boundaries of our Basic Principle of national sovereignty.

The alternative is to allow all such cases to be appealed to the I.O.O. ('international oversight organization' -- see Section I-A), and we could not imagine that we would want to put them in the business of adjudicating thousands of new criminal cases every week, when they would have so many more important issues to address.

Further, if a given Nation asserts that a certain refugee should be permitted to reside within its domains, then we would not want the I.O.O. to come in and try to take him by force, because then we would no longer have national sovereignty, and we would

become beholden to a one-world government which could not be depended upon to use its unbounded police powers for the greater good of humanity, which is a big reason why we have sovereign Nations in the first place, to allow different peoples the opportunity to live under different governmental systems with different levels of commitment to human morality.

Therefore, as with Answer 313.5, we should allow each Nation to decide whether to protect or release an individual who is wanted for criminal prosecution by another Nation. Below the level of 'nation', jurisdictions can likewise make tentative decisions as to extradition, but those decisions can be appealed to the next-higher level.

Nations often will want to have reciprocity arrangements with one another, but it should not be considered or treated as a requirement. A given Nation may generally want to act as a 'safe harbor' for all refugees, or they may decide that some individuals may be extradited but that certain other individuals should be protected, or they may want to pursue criminal proceedings on their own, or they may want to try to work out a trade for somebody who is being held in the other Nation. The different reasons for a given Nation's given actions should be respected for their sovereignty, but of course you don't have to like them, and you certainly have it within your province to engage in diplomatic or economic sanctions against a Nation whom you feel to be unduly uncooperative in the handling of alleged criminals.

Question 313.7

What happens if a solitary 'bad act' simultaneously affects multiple jurisdictions at the same level, especially if the applicable laws in those jurisdictions differ?

Examples noted in Session 182 were if you explode a bomb or start a fire on the border of two Cities, or if you hack the computers of multiple Cities at once, or if you go on a drunk drive which causes damage in different Cities.

In any case, we do not want to take the time to try the facts independently in two or more different jurisdictions. (It's wasteful if the two trials produce the same result, and it's troubling if the results are different.) The case therefore needs to be treated by the lowest jurisdiction which comprises all those affected. The applicable body will assess the facts to determine the amount of damage which is payable to the different affected jurisdictions, and any other applicable penalties.

Question 314

Is it appropriate for a statute of limitations to apply to certain types of crimes, such that no individual may be arrested and/or convicted after a certain number of years have passed following the alleged crime?

Noted in Session 182 that our 'black book' of preliminary ideas was right, viz.: Any evidence which could tend to support the arrestee's guilt would be sketchy at best, and trying to make a case from such skimpy evidence is unfair to the defendant. Besides, even if the defendant did it, and has not been convicted of repetitions of the same offense in the interim, then he does not appear to be subject to recidivism, so punishment would be redundant.

Subsection I-F-6: Investigation

Question 315

Shall standards continue to be maintained for the gathering of evidence?

This was so obviously a Yes that we were no longer sure as of Session 183 (January 2017) that it belonged in the same Outline which asks if we are even here, but at least we felt that we need not worry about arguments against this our Answer.

Our 'black book' asked us to set boundaries between our desire for privacy and the need of investigators to obtain evidence, but this was not requested in the original text of the Question, so we decided for purposes of the Monday group (at least) to add the phrase "***, and if so then what general principles shall be observed in the establishment of such standards***".

We had experienced environments -- both in America and elsewhere -- in which policemen and detectives and other government officials entered at will into private homes and businesses in order to obtain information or physical evidence or personal arrests, in the theoretical name of 'justice', but without any proper judicial process. We can continue having that kind of environment if we really want, but the historical trend (especially in America) had been for individuals and communities and nations to move away from such 'bully' tactics whenever they had the opportunity. [That condition changed later in America and other once-free countries, but that's another story.] Further, one of the Basic Values which we had adopted for America in our Answer 38 was maximum personal liberty, which we cannot have if the police have unlimited power to do whatever they want.

We therefore were recommending (no big surprise here) the continuation of the environment where we insist that a due judicial process be followed whenever we are asking for any limitation upon anyone's personal liberties. Specifically, before we enter a private home or business in order to conduct criminal investigations or any other kind of police activity, we require that the police agencies involved should obtain a warrant, by convincing a duly educated and selected judge not associated with those agencies that the cause is sufficiently valid.

We officially decry any kind of torture as a means of obtaining confessions or accusations or other 'evidence': Not only do we find the practice to be excessively harsh, and inconsistent with our Basic Value of individual liberty, but the 'evidence' thus obtained is often unreliable, because the subject has such a strong motivation to lie in order to stop the torture.

Obviously, as we learned in the Simpson case and elsewhere, we should do our best to preserve the physical and chemical integrity of all physical and chemical evidence, and to make sure that the analysis trail can be clearly reconstructed, because you never know how thorough the judge and jury and defense counsel are going to be.

These were the main points which we initially thought of, but we were receptive to the consideration of additional standards as may have been suggested later.

Oh yes, the warrants should not be granted on the basis of suspicion or accusation alone, because in that case the step of judicial approval is redundant. There should be some kind of initial evidence or 'probable cause' which the judge must evaluate,

in order to determine that an additional investigation is indicated, even if it involves in certain specified forms the deprivation of certain specified individual liberties.

We also didn't want any individuals detained, nor to have their persons or cars or homes or other belongings searched, on the basis of 'racial profiling'. With our increasing (but still woefully incomplete) national tolerance for all racial and ethnic groups, and with increasing global interaction through our advancing communication technologies, we need to be getting away from the idea that a given individual 'doesn't fit the neighborhood' because he/she is (or appears to be) a member of some particular racial or ethnic group. Anybody can be anywhere, get used to it, and don't you dare any longer target individuals for criminal suspicion on the basis of general appearance alone. For, until we finally get away from that practice, we can never be a truly civil society, let alone an enlightened one, and we would not deserve to provide any kind of moral or political leadership to the rest of the World.

Question 316

If certain evidence is obtained illegally, shall the suspect/defendant be freed with the charges dropped, or shall the case continue with evidence suppressed, or shall the evidence be admitted anyway?

Our 'black book' of preliminary ideas read as follows:

Here's where we can vary from current: We want to maintain some kind of standards, so that the privacy of ordinary citizens may be protected. However, if investigators have exceeded such standards, accidentally or deliberately, and have managed to obtain inculpatory evidence, such evidence should still not be suppressed, since if the defendant really did it, he should be punished accordingly, regardless of how the police do what they do. To prevent future occurrences of such violation, though, punishment should also be visited upon the investigators who violated the rights of the suspect; such punishment can include transfer to non-investigatory duties, suspension, expulsion, fines, jail time, or any combination of these or other remedies. In this way, we minimize the occasions of rights violations, but criminals who deserve to be punished are.

We found it tough in Session 184 (January 2017) to go along completely with the 'black book', because our impulse from recent practice was to suppress all illegal evidence. However, as stated in Answer 315, we need to find a balance between gathering evidence and rights of privacy. In this case, we need to remember that the primary objective of the entire investigatorial exercise is to figure out 'whodunit'. If some key element of evidence clearly establishes 'whodunit', and if that fact cannot be reliably established without it, then we should not deny ourselves the opportunity to set the public record straight.

We also agreed with the point in the 'black book' that officers who obtain evidence illegally should be disciplined and/or removed from investigatorial work. Specific responses should be adjudged on a case-by-case basis, depending on (among other factors) whether the violation was willful (a 'flagrant foul') or inadvertent.

Where we felt that we could vary from the 'black book' was where it talked about the criminal being "punished accordingly". It now occurred to us (although we may have thought of it earlier and simply not recorded it) that the violation of one's personal

rights should count for an offset (usually partial, but possibly full) against whatever punishment would ordinarily have been indicated in that case. This step accomplishes a number of things, including simple vindication of individual rights, possible reinforcement of the perpetrator's faith in the non-criminal functionality of our society, and an additional counter-incentive on the part of officers to obtain information illegally when there are legal alternatives.

Subsection I-F-7: The Trial

Question 317

Shall we continue to make it part of the standard procedure to have a hearing (known as an 'arraignment') wherein a defendant is asked to declare whether or not he committed the alleged crime?

Yes. As the 'black book' indicated, and as we confirmed in Session 184, if the defendant did it and is willing to own up to it, then the declaration saves us a whole bunch of time and effort and expense.

If the defendant did it and is not willing to own up to it, then it would be good to get his denial on the record, in order to help the court decide whether additional punishment is indicated for making the government go through the trial process.

If the defendant did not do it, then it would be good to allow him to make the statement on the record, hopefully in the presence of a defense advocate who can take the government to task later if they elect to try the case and then fail to obtain conviction. Also, the official denial will tell the police and the D.A.'s office that they should take the opportunity to look at all the evidence again, and to make a firmer decision as to whether they want to dismiss the charge or roll the dice with a trial.

Question 318

In such a hearing, what is to prevent a defendant who really committed the act from saying that he did not do it, in the hopes that sufficient evidence might not be produced, or that his lawyers might use some clever tricks to obtain an acquittal?

We went with the 'black book' in Session 184, as follows:

"If a defendant is guilty, then he should own up to it, take his punishment, and let's move on. If a guilty party pleads 'not guilty', then it starts out being a waste of time and taxpayers' money to go through a trial. Further, the very real possibility that a guilty defendant could actually go free as a result of legal chicanery reveals a flaw in the system, that we need to correct. Correction comes from imposing an additional penalty on any defendant who pleads 'not guilty' and then is later found to be guilty, as punishment for lying in court, and for wasting time and money to establish his guilt when he already (presumably) knew that he was guilty.

"Lawyers counseling their clients should take this into account when determining the appropriate plea. If this is put into practice, then we'll probably see a lot fewer trials, and so justice for those who are falsely accused will be speedier."

Question 319

Shall defendants who choose to go to trial have the option, in either criminal or civil cases, to have their decision rendered by a judge or by a jury?

Yes, as of Session 184, we imagine so. Even with a defense advocate, it's basically one individual against the combined powers of the Police and the D.A.'s office and the Judiciary. We do not have accurate judgments -- and therefore do not have Justice -- if those combined powers are permitted to do whatever they want. The true facts can be found only if everything is open to critical review by all parties. Defendants therefore should be accorded every reasonable opportunity to make sure that their cases are adjudicated according to their wishes and the advice of their defense advocates, and generally should be accorded every right and every 'benefit of the doubt' which we can practically provide.

Sometimes, you want your case adjudicated by an educated professional jurist, who hopefully is bureaucratically independent of both the Police and the D.A.'s office, and who hopefully is free of any other motivation to judge the case unfairly. Other times, you might prefer to go with a jury, maybe because you generally distrust judges, or maybe because you want to get the input of multiple individuals evaluating the evidence together, or maybe because you simply feel that 'ordinary' people might be more sympathetic to your situation than a degreed professional jurist. Whichever way you prefer to go (and, it may be different for different types of cases, or at different times of your life), you generally (if not always) should be allowed your preference, not simply on moral grounds, but also so that you do not have a valid excuse to formally challenge the outcome later.

Question 320

Shall we continue to keep standard jury sizes at 12, or shall we pick another number?

When our 'black book' of preliminary ideas was compiled in the mid-1990's, we did not see an immediate reason to change from current practice, and we still did not in Session 184. Yet, a big feature of this whole Project is to start with several billion people running around randomly, and then to figure out what to do with them.

Because nobody present in Session 184 had a background in the science of jury construction and selection (except for when the subject came up in a few episodes of 'L.A. Law'), we figured it best to perform some online research on the history of our current system, and on any theories currently out there for possible change.

We started by searching on the phrase 'jury size', and found an article [not cited in notes] which referred to the 6th and 14th Amendments of the U.S. Constitution, and which also suggested that 12-person juries had been found by the Supreme Court to be a "historical accident" dating back to the 1300's, which we thought interesting if true. However, the article also noted that 6-person juries had also been used.

Further research (both online and in Anastaplo's book 'The Amendments to the Constitution') showed that the right of jury was established for criminal cases in the 6th Amendment (although already provided in Article III, Section 2), and for civil cases in the 7th Amendment. Neither amendment mentions size of jury.

There was no direct reference to juries in the 14th Amendment, but it mentioned due process generally.

A jury of 6 was declared constitutionally acceptable by the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of *Williams v. Florida* (1970). They ruled against Georgia's 5-person criminal juries in the case of *Ballew v. Georgia* (1978). In *Burch v. Louisiana* (1979), they allowed Louisiana's 6-person juries, but required unanimity if the jury is that small.

Clearly, then, this issue had given rise to different interpretations and preferences in different jurisdictions at different times.

According to the federal *Rules of Civil Procedure*, Title VI (Trials), Rule 48, a jury must have between 6-12 members, and must issue unanimous verdicts unless the parties agree otherwise.

Justice Harry Blackmun's opinion in *Ballew* noted that smaller juries are less likely "to make critical contributions necessary for the solution of a given problem", and also less likely "to overcome the biases of its members to obtain an accurate result."

Ballew went on to cite something called 'Nagel and Neef' as being somehow related to certain statistical studies which had found that incorrect convictions (Type I error) increase with diminishing jury size, and that incorrect acquittals (Type II error) increase with increasing jury size. They weighted Type I as being 10 times more significant than Type II, and concluded that the optimal jury size is between 6-8. We decided to place this citation on our list for more thorough research.

Meanwhile, we read further in *Ballew* that reducing from 12 to 6 yields "substantial" financial benefits, but little savings in *voir dire* or other elements of court time.

Everybody on the Court seemed to agree that a jury of only 5 cannot be sufficiently representative of the community to be fair under the 6th and 14th Amendments, especially for "serious offenses", although standards can be different between Federal and State, and among different States, and between Civil and Criminal.

Justice Lewis Powell disagreed with Blackmun's "heavy reliance on numerology derived from statistical studies" which were not "subjected to the traditional testing mechanisms of the adversary process."

We found an interesting article by Dana McKenzie for the online publication *Slate* on "What's the Best Jury Size?". The article cited Jeff Suzuki, a mathematician at Brooklyn College, who had concluded that 6-0 and 10-2 convictions should be held unconstitutional, and that the Supreme Court should reconsider the allowability of 6-person juries.

In *Apodaca v. Oregon* (1972), 8 of the 9 Supreme Court justices agreed that Federal and State juries should have the same quota for conviction, but couldn't agree on what that quota should be, and split 4-4 on whether to require unanimity. Justice Powell believed that Federal juries should be unanimous, but that States could experiment with non-unanimous verdicts.

We did not find any argument supporting juries larger than 12, and it appeared that 12 was established in Common Law.

At this point in our research, we began to feel that we probably need to grade jury sizes according to the relative severity of the alleged offenses.

We found an article from 3/23/2012 in *Inside Science*, edited by Chris Gorski, asserting that 12-person juries date back to AD 725, when the Welsh king Morgan of Gwynedd decided upon that number in order to link the judge and jury with Jesus and the 12 Apostles. The article also referenced Suzuki of Brooklyn College, who had pointed out that "the Supreme Court [had been] making these decisions basically on an intuitive basis."

Suzuki apparently was trying to build estimates of false convictions by counting how many verdicts were later overturned, which was one of our first thoughts, and which we were surprised not to find receiving greater mention in the other sources, but this article made the good point that many of the overturns had more to do with new technology (such as DNA testing) than with the size of the original jury. Still, we imagined that a count could be taken of cases which were overturned simply on the basis of appeal or other secondary review, as opposed to by the introduction of new exculpatory evidence.

Where space and finance and the interest may exist, jurisdictions may want to experiment with having certain trials witnessed by multiple juries concurrently, with some jury sizes being the same for control purposes and some jury sizes being different, and then we might get a better handle on how much of the distinction is based on jury size versus other factors.

Another consideration which seemed important to us was whether the jury was simply being asked to 'try the facts' of the case, or whether they were also being asked to 'represent the community' in terms of assessing the relative acceptability of the established actions.

We researched in Session 185 (January 2017) that 'Nagel and Neef' referred to a certain article in the *Washington University Law Review*, Vol. 1975, Issue 4, pp. 933 *et seq.*, titled "Deductive Modeling to Determine an Optimum Jury Size and Fraction Required to Convict". The authors were Stuart S. Nagel, Professor of Political Science at the University of Illinois, and Marian Neef, then a Ph.D. candidate in that department. The article stated in its first footnote that it was based on a longer paper presented in the workshop on "Science and Technology in Criminal Justice" at the 1975 annual meeting of the American Society for Public Administration.

The article (which ran for more than 40 pages) referred to a paper by Zeiser & Diamond in the *University of Chicago Law Review*, where they had offered the same suggestion that we have offered above, namely to have criminal cases decided simultaneously by 12-person and 6-person juries. However, their 'flavor' was that the decision of only one jury would be binding, so that either the non-binding jury wouldn't take its job seriously, or else randomizing the binding between the two juries without telling them might constitute a deprivation of the defendant's rights.

The article also referred to a study by Professors H. Kalven & H. Zeisel of the University of Chicago, finding that 12-person juries deciding unanimously convict in 64% of the cases brought before them. They then compared other models with this rate, as though it were an ideal to be matched by any other model, and therefore as though any model not delivering that rate must be bad. We were not sure in Session 185 that we went along with that premise.

By the time that we started getting into Section II of the article, on "Basic Data and Assumptions", where they started to define some special symbols to reflect various concepts (such as $PAC_{N-1/N}$ to refer to the probability of an 'average defendant' (whatever that meant) being convicted with an N-person jury where N-1 jurors are sufficient to convict), we were beginning to feel Justice Powell's concern about the "numerology" of this approach.

Further reading showed that they were making a lot of assumptions without satisfactory up-front support, such as on p.942 of the Volume 1975: "We will say, for the sake of discussion, that 40 percent of innocent defendants are convicted...." Why didn't they just say for the sake of discussion that the rate was 0 percent, and then we could all have gone on to something else?

We compiled the following additional notes between Sessions:

The next paragraph similarly claimed that "Seventy percent can be used for discussion" of the probability of convicting a truly-guilty defendant.

It occurred to us at this point in our reading that the conviction rate previously determined from Kalven/Zeisel may not continue to hold true if we institute our rules about additional penalties going to guilty defendants who plead 'not guilty', and about reduced penalties for defendants convicted with illegally-obtained evidence. We therefore should not be continuing to seek equality with that standard in any alternative model.

Section II-C of the article began with a statement that "We now must make some [additional] assumptions", so the conclusions (whenever we once got to them) were becoming less and less credible. In particular, they assumed that only 5% of defendants are actually innocent, which we found to be an unreliably small estimate.

We were continuing to hope at this point in our reading that we could get to a discussion of how often verdicts are overturned for jury error, although this would have told us only half the story, because double-jeopardy prevented an acquitted defendant from being retried on the same charge.

However, we did acknowledge their qualitative point on p.946 that "When jury size is reduced, unanimity becomes easier to obtain, causing the risk of wrongful conviction to increase while the risk of failing to convict a guilty defendant decreases."

Their table pointed to a jury size of 6.7 (rounded to 7) as having the greatest balance between correct convictions and correct acquittals, but again those figures were based on a lot of untenable assumptions.

Their footnote #21 actually introduced natural logarithms into the process, and we had a really hard time accepting the applicability of a logarithm function here.

We read these interim notes into the record in Session 186 (February 2017), and resumed our reading from Section III-C. But, we began to skim the fancy math stuff, again because the underlying assumptions were suspect, and because the empirical data taken from previous studies may not be applicable any longer in a modified judicial environment.

From their p.954, "we simply do not know" the overall impact of changing jury sizes or voting requirements upon the psychosocial interactions among jurors, making us wonder what the heck we were doing here studying this paper.

Their footnote #30 (which required three pages to express) criticized several other mathematical jury-size models for various alleged deficiencies, showing again at least that the subject was non-trivial even for 'experts'.

We began at this point to consider different jury sizes for different steps in the trial process, such as starting with a smaller jury in the initial trial, and then moving to a higher level if a successful appeal results in a retrial. On the other hand, a retrial usually results from some kind of defect in the presentation of the case, and not from irregularities within the jury, unless it is a hung jury.

Only in Section V of the Nagel/Neef paper did they begin to look at how changes in some of the underlying assumptions could change their "reasonably complete model of jury behavior": If they knew that the assumptions needed to be changed, then why introduce them in the first place, instead of what the assumptions should have been? Or, if the underlying numbers needed to fall within a certain range, then say that, and use those figures to produce your range of conclusions, but don't state your conclusion first and then change your assumptions.

We did agree with the point on their p.963, "that the choice of an optimum jury size depends heavily on the assumption made about the proportion of truly guilty defendants among all defendants who receive jury trials."

Section V spent more time justifying the original assumptions than showing how the assumptions could be different, but they did often acknowledge that the assumptions may need to be different, hopefully on the basis of "further empirical research".

According to their p.970, "the most important predictive characteristic of a juror is his propensity to convict", which "We know from the Kalven and Zeisel data" to be a factor of 0.677, but we had not seen by that point anything about standard deviation of the result, so we felt that we must allow that there could be a big difference between the figure resulting from their sample data and the 'true' factor, if there is such a thing. However, we had to believe on a qualitative basis that different people are going to react differently to how the evidence and arguments are presented at different trials: For example, you may generally have a higher propensity to convict than I do, but you also may be more persuadable than I am on the basis of what happens in court or in the jury room. In other words, different jurors may have different levels of 'elasticity' among their respective average propensities to convict, so it probably is 'statistically suspect' to exponentiate that one average factor by the number of jury members, without allowing for individual variations in the average factor, and without allowing for differences in individual 'elasticity' in their propensity to convict based on what happens during the trial.

We finally began in p.971 to see about how far from the 0.677 aggregate average an individual jury might fall in its collective propensity to convict. Specifically, they appeared to be communicating to us a standard deviation of 0.098, such that 50% of all juries would be in the range of 0.579-0.775, which to us seemed like a pretty big variation to be coming up with such precise conclusions as 6.7 members in the optimally-sized jury.

It was suggested in p.973 that it may be unconstitutional to vary jury size according to the type of crime, "except for very gross classifications, such as felonies versus misdemeanors", but it did not positively assert that conclusion. We found it hard to imagine that a gradation of jury sizes according to predictable factors could truly be unconstitutional (notwithstanding any then-current legal opinions to the contrary), since neither the original Constitution nor any of its pre-2017 amendments mentioned jury size in any way.

There was a Section VI for 'Variations on the Basic Model', and a Section VIII for 'Conclusions', but no Section VII, so maybe it was considered unlucky, like the 13th floor in a hotel, or else perhaps -- for all their fancy symbologies and formulas and tables and graphs -- they yet ended up being lousy counters.

In any case, their section on 'Conclusions' stated: "Because the empirical premises of our model have not been tested, we cannot definitively state how much effect jury size or the fraction required to convict has on the jury's reliability or accuracy." It took them 42 pages to reach that inconclusive conclusion.

They asserted on p.976 that "a 10/12 rule will always result in a higher probability of the innocent being convicted than a 6/6 rule", but that seemed pretty intuitive, and again did not require 40+ pages of analysis.

However, per p.978, "the model is capable of providing insights into the effects of different jury sizes and different fractions required to convict," for whatever good that does us.

Having finally finished with the Nagel/Neef paper, our next step was to look up any scholarly support or criticism of the model, and any more recent thought which might more reliably inform our response to Questions 320 *et seq.*

We figured between Sessions that we can get some good empirical data about jury accuracy if we ask each judge to record -- after the jury retires for deliberation, but before it returns with a result -- what he/she thinks the verdict ought to be, on the basis of the evidence presented. We can then compare their non-binding opinions with the actual jury verdicts, and then we can see what the variances are like with different combinations of jury size and voting requirement.

Mind you, a large variance would not necessarily mean that the juries were usually wrong, because we cannot always depend on the judge's judgment, which is why we have jury trials in the first place. However, if the variances tend to lessen as we approach a particular jury size and/or voting requirement, then we can have more confidence that those levels are generally the most reliable.

Data collection should factor in judicial bias by separately tracking the results for judges who previously worked as prosecutors and as defenders and in the civil courts. We can also factor in years of experience on the bench, the types of verdicts reached (convicted/liable versus acquitted/nonliable), State or region (we may actually want different jury sizes and/or voting requirements in different States or regions), civil or criminal case (we may want different jury sizes and/or voting requirements for different types of cases), and other variables. However, it is the overall combined rate which we suspected would be the most interesting to us.

We therefore needed to find out whether such data were then being kept at all, and if so then where, but if not then how we could make that happen. We asked a practicing attorney not a current member of our group, who reported that such data were not then being collected. We needed to confirm this from additional sources.

For whenever we do start to collect and collate such data, we are suggesting that a much cleaner and simpler notation than that used in the Nagel/Neef paper would be that which is observable in the example of "12-11-10", where "12" refers to the overall jury size, "11" refers to the number of votes needed to find in favor of conviction or liability, and "10" refers to the number of votes needed to find in favor of acquittal or nonliability. It should be much easier this way to categorize various cases according to their jury sizes and voting requirements, and then to break things down further according to the other variables listed above.

Question 440 (continued)

But, if an employer is allowed to hire non-citizens, then won't many employers be motivated to hire aliens who are not subject to minimum-wage restrictions, and won't this tend to divert jobs and resources away from Americans?

We ideated during the week following Session 186 that the Question of minimum wage must be considered in two phases, once in the context of our then-current environment where the apparent cost of living increased only because we were using more dollars to represent the same quantities of stuff, and once in the context of our proposed economic system where one dollar represents approximately the same amount of stuff from year to year basically forever.

In the former environment, of course we need to raise wage levels across the board in order to keep up, but there is no real advancement there, because if wages and prices are moving up at the same rate, then again all that we're really talking about is using a higher number of dollars to refer to the same basic amount of stuff.

One possible way to illustrate the concept of inflated money is to refer to the different years of dollars as different denominations of coins, for just as 5 of your dimes add up to the same value as 10 of my nickels, we could say that 5 of your 2017 dollars are equivalent to 10 of my 1967 dollars, and so on that basis we could be exchanging them just as we currently exchange different denominations of coin.

Question 2 (continued)

Should we look only at isolated topics, or should we construct a 'whole agenda' covering everything?

We asked ourselves during the week following Session 186: Weren't we afraid of the prospect of having one set of Answers which blocks out even the existence of other parties, and which therefore effectively establishes one way of thinking for everybody on the planet? Far from it, because we can tell you now without giving away too many spoilers that one of the most common themes throughout the entire work was that 'it can depend' and that 'countries and states and communities may decide for themselves how they want to proceed', both to see in real life what works best (if anything does), or simply to give people an option as to what kind of environment they want to have.

Question 320 (continued)

Shall we continue to keep standard jury sizes at 12, or shall we pick another number?

We read all interim notes into the record in Session 187 (February 2017), and then started to look at scholarly reactions to the Nagel & Neef paper. However, we saw only repeated historical references to the original citation, other papers produced by either or both, or biographical information. This was after looking through the top 100 entries out of 17,400 associated with the expression "Nagel and Neef" .

Without any scholarly commentary easily available to help inform our discussion, we came to rely upon our previous findings, standing by the position that the whole approach of the Nagel & Neef paper was bullshit, although we again acknowledged the general point that we should get more empirical data about jury performance under different combinations of jury size and voting requirements, although we should do it in a manner not discussed in their text.

Specifically, we should summarize on a public website all the jury cases which each judge tries each year (probably more reliable than in each month, because some trials take a lot of court time over several weeks, so a monthly count probably would not be very indicative of the court's overall workload), such that the numbers of different kinds of opinions (guilty, not guilty, etc.) add up to the total number of jury cases tried. The secured module of that website would then track the number of times when the judicial opinions were different from the jury verdicts, and then we could collate the data according to the various distinguishing characteristics of judges as identified above.

In the meantime, on the basis of the very low apparent impetus within our society to even experiment with juries larger than 12 (although certain tables in the Nagel/Neef paper went as high as 15), and on the basis of the Supreme Court findings (we were not seeing any reason to substitute any alternative judgment) that 5 is too small, we were suggesting -- at least temporarily, while we collect more empirical data -- that we graduate standard jury sizes from 6-12 according to the relative severities of the alleged offenses: Because wrongful convictions apparently increase with smaller juries, we should make sure that only lighter crimes get tried by smaller juries. Conversely, because wrongful acquittals apparently increase with larger juries, and because we would rather free the guilty than punish the innocent, we should recommend that we use larger jury sizes for heavier crimes.

We considered that we should allow the standard jury size for a given alleged offense to be decided by the defendant, because the whole ideas of allowing the defendant to choose between judge and jury are (1) to accord every practical offsetting advantage to the defendant, and (2) to preclude a convicted defendant from citing the trial format as an excuse to appeal the conviction. We can recommend to defendants and their lawyers the general tendency points about wrongful convictions and wrongful acquittals, but they may have different expectations based upon what has been happening recently within their region, and so they may want to try to 'buck the trend'. If so, then perhaps we should let them, provided that they stay within the 6-12 range, again at least until we get better empirical data on jury behavior as compared with judicial expectations, and again provided that they may not use the trial format which they selected as an excuse to appeal the verdict.

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We learned during the week following Session 187 (courtesy of the author's wife) about a notice found in Facebook, possibly apocryphal, but claiming to offer a \$5M cash prize to whoever submitted the best plan for Global Governance by 24-May-2017, so we added that to the bottom of our medium-priority list, but intended to work on it intermittently during personal breaks and stuff, because the plan was mostly formulated already in what was then the General Summary of the Monday group (though we wanted to check the Wednesday notes for any possible variations), so it just needed to be taken out and packaged for global consideration. More later.

Question 321

Shall we continue to require a unanimous jury verdict in criminal cases, or choice of unanimous for 'guilty' or some other number for 'not guilty', or some other set-up?

Generally, our finding from Answer 320 applied here, that we really couldn't predict the optimal combination of jury size and voting requirement until we got much more empirical data on different combinations in different States/Regions, as well as overall, and broken down by various additional factors which may prove relevant.

However, we added a general point in Session 188 (February 2017) that we probably should be thinking more in terms of allowing verdicts to be decided even with one dissenting vote, and maybe with dissenting votes of two or more for lighter cases. Idea here was that a biased juror may occasionally filter through the *voir dire* process, and could consistently vote for either conviction or acquittal just on general principle, independently of the facts of the case, and we don't want Justice to be derailed just because some of our citizens feel compelled to play unfairly.

On the other hand, the classic teleplay "12 Angry Men" dramatized what happens when an initial jury vote is 11-1 in favor of conviction, and the requirement of unanimity gives the lone dissenter the opportunity to sway all the other jurors to his side. Those types of cases can occur, and we similarly do not want Justice to be derailed because non-unanimous juries arrive too quickly at the wrong decision.

On the previous hand, though, if we can't get a unanimous vote on the Supreme Court, then how can we expect unanimity among ordinary people? Answer here is because we have had unanimous jury verdicts before, so we know that it is possible. However, it is also true that we have had a lot of hung juries in cases which might have been decided accurately and more quickly if we had allowed a non-unanimous verdict to stand.

Final argument, though, needs to come from our Basic Principle that the defendant's rights must be safeguarded above all other considerations, again because he is so far outnumbered by the various civil authorities who are eager to prosecute him. If even one juror holds out in favor of acquittal, then there must be enough 'reasonable doubt' to allow for acquittal, unless the prosecution can somehow show that the juror was 'unreasonable'. On the other hand, the prosecuting attorney found that juror to be reasonable when she was empaneled, so you probably don't get to claim later that she is unreasonable, just because she disagreed with your case.

Therefore, even if the empirical data tend to show more similarity between judicial opinions and actual jury verdicts in cases where conviction could still happen with one dissenting vote, we yet suggest on a purely philosophical level that unanimity must be required in order to convict someone, but that acquittals may happen with one or more dissenting votes, depending upon analysis of the empirical data.

Question 322

What do we feel is the best minimum number of jury votes to use in civil cases?

Before we could discuss this Question, we felt that we needed to make an important distinction in our terms: When we speak here of 'civil cases', we refer specifically to the class of legal actions where one party claims to have been damaged by another party, in a manner which does not strictly violate any current prevailing law.

This definition had not always been observed in current real life as of Session 188, however: Many of us know of one famous instance in particular from the 1990's, where a certain celebrity defendant was acquitted of murder in his criminal trial, but later found liable for 'wrongful death' in a subsequent civil trial, where the voting requirement was much more lenient, and where the slightly-different phrasing of the charge supposedly obviated double-jeopardy protections. We now found that a separate civil trial for 'wrongful death' or any other such charge does indeed count as a second trial on the same accusation, and that it should have been prohibited in any jurisdiction which constitutionally disallows double jeopardy.

If we were to allow civil trials to basically double as criminal trials, especially for 'wrongful death', then we should accord the defendant the same rights to which he was entitled in the criminal case, particularly the requirement of unanimous jury agreement as a condition of liability. As it was, because we were disallowing any such shenanigans in our model, we could focus the present discussion on cases matching our definition stated above.

Under this definition, we were talking about cases where the alleged actions allegedly caused damage without violating any specific statute. The case therefore would be requiring not just a finding of 'whodunit', but also some level of value judgment on the part of the jury.

For, even if there is stipulation between the parties on the sequence of events (or if that can be deduced by the jurors as triers of the facts), and even if it is clearly established that damage was caused, and even if it is clearly established that the stipulated actions directly caused the stipulated damage, the jury still must consider (unless that part of the decision is devolved to the judge) how willful or negligent the defendant's actions were, and therefore how much of a penalty should be imposed on top of any strict economic remediation as a means of 'teaching him a lesson'.

Those sorts of value judgments are very hard to find unanimously among 12 randomly-selected (or even pre-screened) jurors, as evidenced by all the arguments which we encounter and witness in so many aspects of our daily lives. We can't even agree on balls and strikes all the time, so how can we always be expected to agree on exactly how much Joe should pay to Jane for his willful or negligent non-criminal actions?

Even though we had a 9-3 standard in California as of Session 188, and even though we did not yet have enough empirical data to conclude that this was non-optimal for civil cases conducted in that State, we yet tentatively recommended a 10-2 standard: More generally, civil verdicts could be decided with as many as two dissenting votes, but not with as many as three. Idea here was that you were eliminating the high scorer and low scorer from the decision, same as they had done for many years at the Olympic level of Figure Skating and Gymnastics.

Once you eliminate the two outliers, we suspected that a preponderance of the remainder generally should provide a fairly-reliable indicator of the 'true' merits and demerits of the case, but again we were willing to be outspoken by a sufficiently-large sampling of empirical data.

Question 323

Shall all citizens be required to serve periodically on juries, or should there be some restrictions as to who shall serve, or shall we set up a system of professional jurors?

Session 188 note: "This is another tough one, so we just gotta work the problem."

There was a temptation to require jury service of all citizens as a condition of continued civil protection, same as the concept which we had often heard (and which we also had seen in history) that a term of military service should be required of all citizens. We had found in Answer 154 that we should not require people to serve in the military who do not wish to, since we should be listening if a large number of people are telling us that they don't want to do that.

Similarly, if some people simply do not possess the temperament or willingness to serve as a juror even once in their lives, then we do both them and our peaceful society a disservice by sticking a bayonet in their backs in order to compel their nominal participation.

Jury service therefore should be invitational, not compulsory. We should market it as an opportunity to let your voice be heard within 'the system', and to have a direct impact on the administration of Justice in your community. We also should make the experience interesting and non-obnoxious for them, so that they will not try to dodge it as much as people had in the past. We also should provide a reasonable stipend for their time, and not require them to pay for parking.

Young people wanting to make their minimal civic statement should be allowed priority access to the jury pool. After that, access should be allowed to as many people as would like to keep serving, even if it's all the time. Priority should be given to those who have served on fewer juries, in order to diversify access to 'the system', but vacancies may be filled by full-time jurors who may be retired or between screenplay sales or something, and who have the spare time and the willingness to use it for the civic good.

The stipend should not be so high as to be able to serve as a living wage, so no we didn't want there to be 'professional jurors' who contribute nothing toward society beyond their judgments about the actions of others.

If the jury pool still ends up being too small even with all the local retirees and would-be screenwriters sitting on juries on a full-time basis, then this is where you need to consider incentivizing the jury experience better, or else allowing smaller juries for certain types of cases (and, make sure to keep those stats for the different jury sizes), or both.

In any case, no, make it invitational, not compulsory.

The 'black book' (containing preliminary notes compiled for many of the different Questions back in the 1990's) did make a good point that an acrimonious experience between two jurors in one case could make things difficult if they serve together in a subsequent case. We therefore should make it a requirement that prospective jurors disclose during selection if they recall having served with anyone else on the panel of prospective jurors, and then let the court decide based on the specific considerations whether or not they should be allowed to sit together again.

The 'black book' made another good point that it would be very hard to establish and adjudicate qualifications for serving as 'professional jurors', so best to avoid that whole trip.

Question 324

If service is to be compulsory, then what happens when an individual prefers not to serve, for whatever reason? Is he not likely to make statements in voir dire that will result in his excusal in each case, or to otherwise gum up the works?

Not applicable as of Session 188. We had established in Answer 323 that we would rather have fewer jurors in the available pool than force the inclusion of people who really don't want to be there, and this was one of the reasons why.

Question 325

As to making jury service non-compulsory, might not the pool of prospective jurors be so low that those who do serve will be serving so often that they will be the equivalent of professional jurors, creating the same problems that would exist if we were to set up such a system directly?

Also addressed in Answer 323. Being a full-time juror is not the same as being a professional juror, because you still are receiving only a modest stipend to cover transportation and meals and a little something for your time. It's not supposed to be enough to pay your rent.

Question 326

How do we make jury service more interesting and rewarding, and less obnoxious?

Mostly agreed in Session 188 with the 'black book', but with a couple of exceptions. The original text read:

First, raise the fees at least slightly. Next, don't pay for mileage on a one-way basis. Make parking easier. Reduce waiting around by scheduling voir

dire hearings more sequentially within a given building, so that the necessary pool can be smaller, and so that those who are there can be going to more hearings. Streamline *voir dire* hearings by asking entire panel first if there are any occupations, past similar crimes, or other disqualifying factors represented among them. Streamline evidentiary hearings outside of the jury's presence by placing time limits on lawyer speeches, and by clarifying further what evidence is admissible and what is not. Pick up speed of actual trial by discouraging lawyers from picking at every single little point (let 'em win the little ones), and asking ten minutes worth of questions just to admit a single slide into evidence.

We now disagreed with the suggestion of streamlining evidentiary hearings conducted outside the jury's presence, by imposing time limits on lawyer speeches. We found instead that sometimes lawyers need the extra time, and that the rights of their clients should not be compromised simply for juror convenience.

We also disagreed with the suggestion of streamlining the trial by discouraging lawyers from picking at every single little point, and asking ten minutes' worth of questions just to admit a single slide into evidence. It was true that we didn't want to sit around for days and days listening to evidence being introduced which may not be needed, but we also didn't want to limit the attorneys' ability to introduce evidence simply for time reasons.

On this latter point, we considered that maybe we could speed things up by allowing the prosecutor to present only part of the evidence up front, and then the jury could have an opportunity to render a speedy conviction and wrap up early. If the jury comes back and says no we're not convinced yet, then the prosecutor could present more of the supplemental evidence, or perhaps all of it.

Such a system might end up being too cumbersome to be net-desirable, so it was floated only as an idea at this point: If a particular community is having trouble attracting jurors, then this question might be included in a survey of what factors tend to be keeping prospective jurors away. If enough of them suggest breaking up the trial into primary and supplemental phases, then some jurisdictions can experiment with that format and see how it goes.

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During the week, we looked more closely at the entry requirements for the Swedish competition on Global Governance (it was sponsored by an outfit called the "Global Challenges Foundation" (GCF), based in Stockholm), so that we could begin actual composition of the package as inspired throughout the coming weeks. We noted in particular that they had set a maximum of 9250 words, and that they also had apparently extended the submission deadline to September 30, which we wished that they had not done, because we could have beaten a lot of folks to the punch with our proposal basically already good to go, so now there would be stiffer competition, and therefore less likelihood that our proposal would get noticed, but it was what it was, and we would still do what we could.

We noted that there were only 6392 words from the beginning of Section I-A of the General Summary to the point where we began to speak about the national government, so it should have presented little difficulty to get all our material packaged into the Swedish competition's word constraint.

We broke ground on a Word document titled 'hrg plan for global governance', establishing what we hoped would prove to be effective titles for the three parts of the submission which were established in the rules of the competition.

We broke ground on the actual text of the global doc, leading with the short eye-catcher of 'We still have war', and then referring to the then-current U.N. Charter, which we would need to look up soon to see what it nominally intended. More later.

Question 327

Are there ways that we can improve the speed of voir dire, and/or improve the quality of the jury selected?

We really liked in Session 189 (March 2017) what the 'black book' had to say:

Current method is to pick a panel of 12+ people, ask them a bunch of questions, and let lawyers take turns excusing them; as each excused juror is replaced, more of the same questions are asked, and lawyers continue to alternate in their excusing, until they end up with a panel that both lawyers can live with. Problems with this approach are that it's very time-consuming, even in the normal case, but especially if one or more prospective jurors is missing when the rest of the panel is ready for *voir dire*; and that lawyers are basically rolling the dice that no other prospective jurors remaining in the pool are even better for their cause than the ones that they're settling for; if there is any truth to the latter, then it is conceivable that the jury may arrive at an incorrect verdict, which would be contrary to the public interest. Potential solution would be to question the entire pool (or, at least, a larger segment of it) at once; then, the lawyers can make lists of acceptable jurors.

Basically, we need to have all potential jurors answer a set of questions before they ever enter a courtroom, and then the lawyers can select a narrower pool to question in person. Specific subsequent steps are here paraphrased from the 'black book':

- If the number of names appearing on both lists is exactly equal to the number of jurors and alternates needed, then those jurors are sworn, and the case moves forward immediately.
- If the number of names appearing on both lists is greater than the number of jurors and alternates needed, then all other prospective jurors may be excused immediately, and a negotiation session can begin to narrow down the field to the required number. Possible method could be for each lawyer to rank the jurors in order of desirability, from first to last, and then those prospects with the lowest combined score are sworn in, with the remainder excused. Alternate selection could be used instead, as long as the process is quick, so that potential jurors are not sitting around for too long getting bored and wishing that they had never volunteered for jury service.
- If the number of names appearing on both lists is less than the required number, then those jurors are sworn, and the remainder are chosen from among those appearing on only one of the lists. Possible method could be for the lawyers to take turns choosing the least odious persons from each other's lists, until the required number is met. Alternate selection could be used instead to nominate additional

prospects from each lawyer's own list, with the opposing lawyer allowed a certain number of peremptory challenges, similar to the current system. In either case, if an odd number of additional jurors is needed, then a convention could be set in place to give the prosecution the first choice (since they are the ones bringing the charge, and seeking to have it substantiated by jury analysis), or perhaps the parties could agree on designating an additional alternate in order to equalize the remainder of the selection process.

Question 328

How shall we deal with the reality that many lawyers like to pick jurors in such a way that the overall makeup is 'demographically balanced', and not by individual compatibility with the case?

The group found disagreement in Session 189 with the ideas suggested in the 'black book', which proposed that we should try to eliminate any form of 'racial balancing' in jury selection, in order to help get us all the faster to the point where race is no longer used as a factor to make any kind of decisions about anything.

While we were sympathetic to this suggestion, yet we had seen what happens when no such standards are in place. As much as we would have liked for it to be so, and as much improvement as we had made thus far in our society, and as much as we hoped that maybe we could get there someday, we felt that we must regretfully acknowledge that our society was not yet fully ready to retire the 'affirmative actions' which were necessary to re-train our minds away from the paradigm of allowing any decisions on anything to be made on the basis of race.

Further, a big reason noted in Answer 320 as to why the Supreme Court rejected a 5-person jury in *Ballew v. Georgia* (1978) was that it was seen to be too difficult "to overcome the biases of its members". Generally, we want to be satisfied that the jury is representative of the community, especially in civil cases where a greater level of value judgment of the indicated actions is needed. It follows that we cannot have true representation of such a diverse society as ours if we do not have inclusion of the various ethnicities and cultural traditions which we find in our society.

Therefore, the Answer to the Question as phrased is that we should 'embrace it'.

Question 328.2

Are there any other specifications which we wish to make as to opening statements, introduction of evidence, questioning of witnesses, closing arguments, instruction of the jury on the law, presence of cameras in court, jury deliberation, and/or anything else about the trial proceeding?

As we saw in the Simpson case, it is okay to have cameras in the courtroom, broadcasting on local public-service channels, in order to allow more public oversight of the judicial process, without requiring citizens (again in the generic sense of that term) to contribute to traffic and parking congestions by physically driving to the courthouse. We need only make sure that the juror faces and identities are always concealed, so that they may feel free to do their jobs without fear of reprisal.

No other issues came to mind in Session 189 which we had not already covered.

Subsection I-F-8: Punishment

Question 329

Assuming that an individual actually commits what society agrees or perceives to be a 'bad act', is it appropriate for such person to claim either leniency or full innocence on the basis of permanent or temporary insanity?

Leniency perhaps, but not innocence, except possibly in the most extreme circumstances.

We apparently have liked to think that there are 'sane criminals' and 'insane criminals', such that the 'sane' ones can be found guilty and sentenced to prison and/or some other form of punishment, whereas the 'insane' ones can be found 'innocent by reason of insanity' and thereby excused from any punitive action.

Our group found in Session 189, however, that anybody who commits an act which he knows to be harmful to one or more others does so either because he can't distinguish right from wrong, or else he can make the distinction but is either unwilling or unable to edit his actions in such a way as never to injure or threaten injury to others. Because very similar (if not identical) phrasings have been used to describe the set of 'insane' criminals who have been receiving different verdicts and different dispositions, we claim that any individual who can control his own actions at all must possess some level of 'insanity' if he performs any knowingly-harmful acts.

We concede that some individuals are so neurologically disordered that they have little or no control over their own actions, and that they therefore cannot be held to be 'guilty' -- in terms of possessing advance criminal intent -- when someone gets shot or stabbed or burned because the subject was allowed access to a gun or knife or lighter without supervision. We presume, however, that any such individuals are going to be identified in advance and properly diagnosed and held in protective custody, without any possibility of access to weapons or other dangerous objects, and that they therefore will not ever have occasion to commit such a harmful act.

That leaves us with the set of people who have been found to possess sufficient mental fitness that they are allowed to move about society more or less freely. That standard of 'sanity' should be officially changed, however, in our group's opinion, if any such individual commits a harmful-to-others act with the apparent knowledge that it was going to be harmful to others. That individual must have some level of mental disorder (for, we find that there are many levels of mental disorder, not just 'sane' and 'insane'), and therefore must be kept away from the general public until such time (if any) that the disorder can be sufficiently relieved.

In any case, regardless of how 'insane' the perpetrator was at the time of the offense, we don't want to call him 'innocent' if his actions did actually cause the alleged harm, because that might imply to some people that he had no part whatsoever in the action in question, and that we therefore should be seeking the perpetrator elsewhere, whereas in fact his actions did precipitate the alleged harm, so the official finding should make it clear that there was causation between his actions and the alleged harm.

We therefore recommend that -- at least for some defendants, if not for everyone -- we should get in the habit of referring to the basic findings as 'causative' and 'not

causative', as opposed to 'guilty' and either 'not guilty' or 'innocent'. Using the expressions 'causative' and 'not causative' makes it clear that we are focusing on the 'whodunit' aspect of the case, so that we can at least settle clearly whose actions had the greatest impact on the alleged harm.

Once we establish causation, we can then advance to the further finding of whether the defendant was 'guilty', in terms of possessing a knowledge of his harmful action, or whether his brain was so far gone that he had no idea about his having caused harm to anyone.

We can then consider the disposition of the defendant's case in that context: Those whose brains really are damaged beyond repair can be placed within the safe environments which they need, with little or nothing in the way of punitive actions which would have no constructive effect, which yes we would characterize as a form of 'leniency'. Conversely, those whose minds might still be receptive to rehabilitation can have some other set of dispositions imposed which hopefully are likely to result in their being allowed eventually to resume life within ordinary society.

Question 330

But, we hold it as a right that a defendant must be able to face his accusers, and to participate in his own defense: If he is so insane that he is not competent to stand trial, then should the charge be dismissed?

If an individual is 'incompetent to stand trial' under the current application of that expression, then that doesn't mean that the trial should not be taking place. To the contrary, we still wanted as of Session 189 to make sure that we know 'whodunit', because knowing the sequence of events is in the public interest (which is why we have public judiciaries in the first place, subsidized by the civic fund), and we still wanted to use the adversarial process as a means of maximizing the reliability of the finding. We therefore should not allow the defendant's alleged mental unfitnes to obviate our legal ability to determine the facts of the case.

Regardless of whether the defendant is 'fit' or 'unfit' according to whoever's definition, yet he should always be allowed to be present at the trial, just in case he is able to perceive more than we think that he can. He should not be drugged or otherwise actively hampered from participating to the extent that he normally can. He also should be represented by a public defender who has special training in acting on the behalf of defendants who cannot contribute actively to their own defenses.

Question 331

Is it appropriate, then, to find a defendant 'innocent by reason of insanity'?

No, not temporary insanity, and not permanent insanity. We will allow 'non-guilty by reason of insanity' if his brain is seriously damaged ('non-guilty' being better than 'not guilty' because the entire phrase 'not guilty by reason of insanity' is ambiguous between 'not guilty, by reason of insanity' (which is what they probably mean) and 'not [guilty by reason of insanity]' (meaning that he could still be guilty for some other reason)), meaning again that he is incapable of forming a criminal intent, but then such conditions generally don't apply on a 'temporary' basis, so as of Session 189 we did not allow such a thing as 'temporary insanity' to exist.

In any case, even if defendant is totally insane, and 'non-guilty' for that reason, yet we should find that he was 'causative', so we can close the case without ambiguity.

Question 332

Is it appropriate to find a defendant 'guilty by reason of insanity'?

Not really, even though the 'black book' suggested that it might be okay. Our finding in Session 189 was that anyone who is 'guilty' of anything possesses by definition the mental capacity to form a criminal intent, and that anyone who is willing and able to proceed with such criminal action must possess some level of 'insanity'. In other words, anyone who is truly 'guilty' at all is 'guilty by reason of insanity', so the expression is redundant at the very least, and is also dangerously misleading, because it may imply to some that the defendant should receive some lighter sentence than would actually be proper under the indicated conditions.

Question 333

What happens if a defendant is acquitted in a criminal proceeding, and later sued in a civil proceeding for the same alleged act?

The 'official' theory here as of Session 189 had been that different standards of doubt apply, and/or that different numbers of juror votes are necessary, and that the second proceeding therefore does not constitute 'double jeopardy'. However, we had found in Answer 322 that such duplicate proceedings should never be allowed to happen. For, how could you be 'liable' if you are 'not guilty'?

Question 334

Suppose that the sequence of events has been determined in a given case, and that the defendant has been found to be in violation of the law or good conduct: What then is to be done?

Technically, it depends: Simply being in violation of the law was not necessarily a bad thing for us as of Session 189, for we had found in Answer 18.5 that individuals should be allowed to disobey laws if they can show in court that those laws are generally bad, or that they are generally good but for some other reason should not apply in the present case. Also, the phrase 'good conduct' can mean many different things to many different people, and can cover 'fluffy' topics such as table manners or tie patterns, where no real harm is being inflicted upon anyone even if the conduct is not 'good', such that remediation can often be accomplished by a first step of simple counseling, failing which we would need to decide whether to accept the continued conduct or dismiss the subject from the social group in question.

What we are really talking about, then, is the type of situation where someone has been injured or threatened with injury, and where the perpetrator appears to have known in advance that his actions were likely to cause harm.

Generally in such cases, we don't want petty crimes to be punished by execution or long imprisonment, as has happened in some of our past cultures, because we do not wish to live in perpetual fear that the slightest violation of the slightest law might get us nailed for life. We thus would like to get the convict back into ordinary society as expeditiously as we can without severely endangering the public safety.

Specifics generally should be left up to the court, because every case and defendant is different. Generally, though, we want to aim for the easiest path which gets the convict back into society. Maybe it is just a warning or a counseling session, or maybe a small fine in addition to any strict compensatory restitution. If the case is more serious, and/or if the defendant has committed the act again after such lighter treatments have already been attempted, then we may need some heavier forms of punishment in order to get the perpetrator's attention, and motivate him to change his behavior if only out of fear of punishment, if not simply for the good of society.

Question 335

What if the allegedly-injured party claims damages for 'pain and suffering', or some other intangible quantity?

All actions requiring any type of punitive response must have caused 'pain and suffering' to somebody, or else we would not prosecute them in our model, which as of Session 189 (see beginning of Subsection I-F-4) did not consider an act to be a 'bad act' if it does not cause injury or the threat of injury to others. It therefore is redundant to claim 'pain and suffering' as an adjunct to the primary accusation. Rather, the court should basically assume that 'pain and suffering' is a component of whatever 'bad act' is being alleged, and should set the disposition accordingly.

Question 336

What manner and extent of limits shall we place on 'pain and suffering' damages?

This is a very subjective area, where the standards might need to vary by region and/or over time. For, stealing a bottle of water from someone trying to cross the Mojave Desert on foot is more serious than it would be at a picnic where dozens of other water bottles are present. Also, crimes like identity theft can become more serious over time as different technologies get created which can create more risk for damage, or maybe less serious as greater safeguarding mechanisms get developed.

Generally, though, we want to make sure that no judge having a really bad day is allowed to hang someone for jaywalking, and we also want to make sure that judges (and juries, for that matter) are not allowed to impose 'pain and suffering' damages which are greatly in excess of the amounts which have been charged for similar offenses in that jurisdiction within the recent past. In other words, allow judicial precedent to set effective limits upon 'pain and suffering' damages, and encourage defense attorneys to be sufficiently familiar with such local parameters that they can argue against an allegedly-excessive judgment, and/or appeal it to a higher court.

Question 337

Should the payment of any such non-fiscal recovery (as well as court costs) constitute the full extent of 'punitive damages', since the guilty party is now paying more than he illegally obtained, or should there be some punitive measures on top of that?

Punitive damage may need to come in some non-monetary form, because the super-rich likely will not be moved even by a monetary fine higher than the local standard.

Question 338

Why do/should we have punishment?

Handwritten note in the 'black book' suggested that this may duplicate Q287, but that Question ("*If anyone's rights are found to have been violated, is it appropriate for society to take some punitive action against the perpetrator?*") was a rephrase from the original ("*...what action -- if any -- should be taken by the society*"), so Question 338 basically became a duplicate sometime after its original composition.

Nevertheless, we felt in Session 190 (March 2017) that we certainly could look to Answer 287 to help us here, not that we needed a whole lot of help on this one: Question 287 had been treated in Session 150, when a panelist was present who gave us great ideas for a total of over 50 Sessions, so we felt pretty robust about the result. Notes from that Session had found that there was some 'subjectivity' in the reasoning appearing in the 'black book', that the threat of punishment is not a 100%-effective deterrent, that an environment of punishment does not completely alleviate people's freedom from fear (although it may help some), that non-punitive alternatives may sometimes accomplish the same objectives, and that it must be up to the Judiciary to assess the most appropriate disposition of any particular case.

Returning to the present Question as phrased: We need for punishment to be inflicted in at least some instances, so that the threat of punishment will carry some meaningful value as a potential/partial deterrent. We need to keep the threat of punishment available as a potential/partial deterrent because history has shown us repeatedly all over the world -- and still does so every day, as can be verified trivially by reviewing the court dockets of any large city on nearly any court day -- that even some people who had healthy home lives and a quality primary education and a wholesome religious influence still grow up to commit acts which they know are likely to cause or threaten injury to others. The problem can be helped further by counseling sessions (such as traffic school, or the group talks after one's first DUI), and also by warnings which can go on one's record temporarily until a sufficient period of time has passed without repetition. However, we have seen time and again that these measures taken together are not sufficient to alleviate everyone's willingness to commit knowingly-injurious acts.

We further recognize that this condition is likely to continue to exist to at least some nonzero extent, even if/after we implement all the measures which this Plan intends for a more prosperous and equitable society. Some people are still going to have neurological aberrations (possibly from genetics, possibly from a physical trauma occurring either before or after birth) which might not respond constructively to normal education and social conditioning, but which may in some cases respond to punishment or the threat of punishment. Also, some people (especially children, but clearly some adults also) may have brains which are basically 'normal' in their physical functionality, but which are yet able to 'learn' about proper behavior only through punitive conditioning. (If I am made to stand in the corner enough times, eventually I get the message that I need to be modifying my actions.) Finally, some people with normal brain functioning and normal learning abilities may have had some bad interpersonal experiences in their lives which make them feel like lashing out with one or more injurious acts, as if to punish the rest of the World for their individual problems.

When punishment and the threat of punishment become unnecessary, we will rejoice. For the foreseeable future, however, we expect that punitive conditioning will still sometimes be needed to mitigate the occurrence of injurious acts, even in our improved societal model.

Question 339

Do we agree with the basic concept that it is possible for punishment of a given bad act to be excessive, and that excessive punishment should be avoided?

We found in Session 190 that this clearly is a matter of judgment, because numerous past cultures have routinely inflicted punishments which some of us today find excessive: *Les Miserables* was all about a guy who received a 5-year prison sentence for stealing a loaf of bread. *Shogun* illustrated a time and place where the slightest contradiction of the orders and expectations of one's feudal superior was held to be just cause for immediate decapitation. *Roots* showed that it was commonplace -- even in supposedly-enlightened America -- for an individual to be horsewhipped simply for not answering to his newly-given name.

So it is with a lot of what many of us now consider to be 'fundamental rights' (including some enumerated in the U.N.'s 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights'), but which were not always recognized as such in all places at all times of history.

Is it therefore acceptable for a society today to impose punitive measures which the rest of us find to be excessive, as long as everyone within that society understands and respects those standards? Yes and No: Answer 19 holds that we should not have a one-world government, and that Nations generally get to do within their own borders anything which does not create any injury or threat of injury to any other Nation, so that's the 'yes' part.

The 'no' part is that our society has progressed to a point far beyond those societies from centuries ago: People at those times often had nowhere else to go, no way to get anywhere else even if they had a secure destination, and sometimes no knowledge that alternative social constructs were even possible. By contrast, our TV and our Internet have managed to reach nearly all inhabited places on the Globe. Our coverage has shown repeated instances of internal revolutions against rich and powerful tyrants (Egypt and Iraq and Libya being recent big examples), so they know that it is possible to do. Anyone ruling or seeking to rule a Nation is therefore strongly advised not to be excessive in your punishments, because if you are excessive then the risk of your forcible removal from power (which, when it happens, will probably not feel very good) is much higher now than it was in earlier centuries.

Question 340

Should additional action focus on rehabilitation, forced removal from the occasion, deterrence of the individual, deterrence of the general public, or some combination?

As discussed in Answer 334, all cases are different, and all defendants are different. Further, the characteristics of one defendant can change over time, sometimes from simple differences in life circumstances, but certainly in the number of harmful acts already tallied up in one's criminal record. We therefore felt in Session 190 that we

need an impartial and objective official, with a strong knowledge of corresponding legal precedent, to adjudicate the case and decide upon an appropriate disposition, whatever combination of forms that may take, provided that the treatment is consistent with recent similar cases in that locality.

Generally, though, we want to have as little disruption as we can in our normal social functioning: Those of us who have been conditioned to respect human life don't want the burden on our collective conscience of taking any more human lives than we really need to, and those of us who are not super-rich don't want the economic and logistical burdens of crowding our prisons more than actually necessary. As often as we safely can, then, we want to get people back in ordinary society, functioning as productive citizens and taxpayers. Whether that can happen through simple counselings and warnings, or whether some form of punitive action is needed first, must be adjudicated on a case-by-case basis, with a general aim of striking a balance between leniency and the public safety.

Question 341

If it is possible to make the victim completely whole, and still cover court costs and/or police overhead, should any additional damages be levied?

Again, will depend on the circumstances, as we found in Session 190: For one example, we had noted in Answer 337 that the super-rich criminals are not likely to be deterred very much by the prospect of simply making their victims whole and covering court costs. They might just see that as the simple 'cost of doing business', so they may need some additional judgments in order to 'get their attention'.

In other cases, you might be dealing with an individual who is not out just for money, but to commit some violent act simply for the purpose of acting out some pent-up aggressions, which also are not likely to go away simply because restitution has been made to previous victims, so sometimes some stronger measures are going to be needed to at least try to rehabilitate the individual, and in the meantime to keep society protected from the mentally unwell.

Question 342

Suppose that actual fiscal loss and non-fiscal damages have been determined in a case with multiple defendants found guilty under due process: Should each defendant be required to pay the full amount, or should the amount of damage be apportioned among them?

We found in Session 190 that if the injury is simply economic, then (as the 'black book' described) it would constitute excessive punishment to require each participant to pay the same amount of damage as he would if he had committed the act all by himself. And, again, we generally want to avoid excessive punishment, partly because at some point it can lead to civil unrest, because the people now are not as tolerant of government actions as they used to be.

If the case results in a physical injury of some kind, then we thought that we may have been talking about a situation which might be treated by the so-called 'felony murder rule' (under which each participant is punished as if he were the sole participant). However, our online research showed that this applied only when a death occurred as a result of a separate felony where murder was not intended, so

that was not what we were talking about here, because that could apply to a solitary perpetrator, whereas the Question directly dealt with a shared crime.

Our intuitive feel was that the punishment for any criminal conviction should be distributed among the multiple participants, in proportion to their respective levels of participation. However, we recognized that every attendee present during Session 190 was a professional accountant, who was accustomed to 'amortizing' liability among multiple sources when applicable. We therefore figured that we should think more about how we could convince non-accountant's to change their minds if needed, or about whether it was we who needed to change our minds. Good next step would be to find where the alternative doctrine is documented which calls for all participants to receive the same sentences as their solitary counterparts, and the putative logical justification for that doctrine.

Question 341 (continued)

If it is possible to make the victim completely whole, and still cover court costs and/or police overhead, should any additional damages be levied?

We were reminded after the meeting that we also need to consider the set of unsuccessful criminal attempts: If I attempt to shoot you, and if I miss simply because I happen to be a lousy shot, then you have not been physically injured at all. Maybe you experience some emotional shakeup from the attempt [Third Pass: if you even saw me shoot at you at all], but a few bucks of compensatory damage probably would make that better. In any case, we probably should not stop there if we want to discourage any future attempts, either from me individually or from society at large, so we generally do want to be prepared to impose additional damages as an attempted deterrent against repeated harmful behavior.

Question 342 (continued)

Suppose that actual fiscal loss and non-fiscal damages have been determined in a case with multiple defendants found guilty under due process: Should each defendant be required to pay the full amount, or should the amount of damage be apportioned among them?

We consulted a lawyer between Sessions, who suggested that we review the 'elements of crime'. We made a note to perform this research in the next Session.

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During the week, we thought further about the 'Swedish project':

Document could include language about how we always had the opportunity since 1920 to declare No War, and that we now need to actually do it, because with our advanced communication technology we are much more of a global community than we ever had a chance to be before, and because we have other problems of a global scale which need addressing without the distraction of coping with ongoing threats to our international security.

Each defensive action will require its own commander-in-chief, who often should come from the country which is being attacked, because she will often be the most familiar with the geography and languages and resources of that country, and

because that country has the most at stake. But, you sometimes may want someone else who has even greater experience and command skills, and possibly even greater knowledge of the internal geography and languages and resources of the country being attacked. In any case, you give the commander specific orders to repel the attack in progress, and possibly incur further into the attacking country, according to your case-by-case judgment. Big thing here is to refer to any potential commander-in-chief in the feminine gender, partly in order to generate a little affirmative action to challenge gender stereotypes.

Some countries may not want to contribute their military personnel and materiel toward the enforcement of our global No War policy, but other countries will have troops who are very eager to participate, America probably being one of them, because you don't want to keep training and training without having an opportunity for some real-life combat once in a while.

Even after you declare No War, however, there still are many other problems of a global nature which need addressing, and the United Nations by itself cannot be expected to handle them all as well, so it should have separate assemblies with constituencies who are much better versed in those specific types of problems.

Question 342 (continued)

Suppose that actual fiscal loss and non-fiscal damages have been determined in a case with multiple defendants found guilty under due process: Should each defendant be required to pay the full amount, or should the amount of damage be apportioned among them?

We performed the suggested research into the 'elements of crime' in Session 191 (March 2017). According to wisegeek.com, the four key components of a crime are intent, conduct, concurrence, and causation:

- Intent (Latin '*mens rea*' = 'guilty mind') requires clarity that the defendant wanted in advance to commit the crime, and that the defendant possessed the mental capacity to form such intent. However, they included a curious example of an intended robber who hits and kills a pedestrian with his car on the way to the robbery, stating that he cannot be convicted of murder because he had no advance intent to kill anyone, but they went on to assert that he can still be convicted of manslaughter, which is still a crime even though advance intent did not exist, so their definition was already fuzzy.

- Conduct ('*actus reus*' = 'guilty act') requires actual action to carry out the intent.

- Concurrence requires a connection between the intent and the conduct, although there may be a separation in time.

- Causation requires that the combination of intent and conduct led to the crime. Here they used the same hypothetical example which we put to the outside lawyer, about a would-be assassin who fires his gun but misses his target, in which case intent and conduct are present, but not causation. Here again, though, the shooter can be charged with attempted murder, which is still a crime even with no causation of harm.

However, Wikipedia (which was not our primary source!) concurred with this summary, but acknowledged that causation is an element of only some crimes. It also stated that omission of an act can also constitute the basis for criminal liability.

Mecklenburgdwi.com left out concurrence, but included 'social harm' as a required element. However, that website was for an attorney practicing in North Carolina, where the standards may have been different.

Markedbyteachers.com asserted that the four elements are a law, an offender, a target or victim, and a place.

Answers.yahoo.com suggested that the three required elements are motive, intent, and execution.

Criminal.lawyers.com defined only two types of crimes, being felonies (generally punishable by more than one year of imprisonment) and misdemeanors (generally punishable by less than one year of imprisonment), stating nothing immediately about infractions. However, it also noted that a new 'model penal code' (allegedly adopted by approximately 22 States as of Session 191) recognized four degrees of crime, not inclusive of lesser criminal actions such as offenses and violations.

This last website asserted that there are only two elements required of crimes other than 'strict liability' crimes, and that those elements are 'guilty mind' and 'guilty act'.

We were generally seeing a lot of variation in the approaches taken by different sources, but not a universal definition which might have been helpful to us.

Even if there were such a universal definition, however, it was not clear from any of the consulted sources how their answer would inform our Question.

We next looked up 'sentencing guidelines', and found through Wikipedia an easily-verifiable citation that a document known as the 'federal sentencing guidelines' was created by the 'United States Sentencing Commission', which had been created in 1984 by the Sentencing Reform Act, which had sought to alleviate disparities which were observed within the sentencing system then in existence.

The article went on to describe that the two main factors used to determine sentencing are the conduct associated with the offense, and the defendant's criminal history. There were 43 offense levels at the time that we performed this research during Session 191, but proposals apparently were underway to reduce this number.

Section 5K1.1 of the United States Sentencing Guidelines (2012 ed.) showed that "Substantial weight should be given to the government's evaluation of the extent of the defendant's assistance, particularly where the extent and value of the assistance are difficult to ascertain." This told us that the U.S. Government officially did recommend the reduction of a defendant's sentence according to his partial involvement in the crime at question. However, it did not go so far as to specifically allocate the aggregate sentence to the multiple defendants proportionally.

A total of 24 grounds for departure from the basic standards was listed, but none of these related to a case involving multiple defendants.

We next looked up 'multiple defendants', hoping for a more on-point discussion.

Justia.com gave the standard post-trial instruction from judge to jury, but most other citations that we could find related to civil cases, including torts and patents

and product liability. One citation discussed multiple defendants being indicted for an alleged drug-trafficking conspiracy, but conspiracy by itself -- while potentially actionable -- is too difficult to apportion to fall easily within this Question.

A paper written in 1979 by Prof. Peter W. Tague of the Georgetown University Law Center posited that there is an inherent conflict of interest in having one attorney represent multiple defendants in a criminal case, but our Question would continue to hold even if each of the multiple defendants had separate counsel.

We also saw some citations (including model jury instructions) where each of multiple defendants was being charged with exactly the same crime, or with completely different charges in a single trial. It was hard to find anything on a single action which required multiple different participations, no one of which would have been a possible crime on its own.

Thomasvalonzo.com was a site for an attorney practicing in Louisiana, and stated that he would often seek to sever his client's trial from those of the co-defendant's of the same crime, generally because evidence brought against other co-defendant's (including the testimony of other co-defendant's) could taint his client's case.

We finally went back and downloaded the complete United States Sentencing Guidelines document (2016 ed.), with the aim to review it offline for any treatment of our Question which we could not find in the Wiki coverage of that document.

Began to review the manual in Session 192 (March 2017). Entire document ran 628 pages, and it appeared from review of the Table of Contents that Chapter 3, Part B, "Role in the Offense", beginning on p.363, probably would address our main topic, but we still read through the first part of the doc for general knowledge and curiosity.

Question 334 (continued)

Suppose that the sequence of events has been determined in a given case, and that the defendant has been found to be in violation of the law or good conduct: What then is to be done?

Noted with interest from p.2 of the Guidelines Manual (2016 ed.) of the United States Sentencing Commission in Session 192 that the sentencing range set by a particular court must be narrow, with the maximum of the range exceeding the minimum by less than the greater of 25% or six months, per 28 U.S.C. §994(b)(2). Sounded good to us.

Question 194 (continued)

Any other questions on any of these operations, or on the structure of the Department of Justice?

Noted from p.2 of the Guidelines Manual (2016 ed.) of the United States Sentencing Commission in Session 192 that the Commission had been "established as a permanent agency to monitor sentencing practices in the federal courts", because it was expected "that continuing research, experience, and analysis will result in modifications and revisions to the guidelines through submission of amendments to Congress." We agreed that this is a useful function, and that we should allow this agency to continue to exist within our model Department of Justice.

We really liked the writing in §1A1.3, "The Basic Approach", where they discussed the historical problems which Congress had sought to remedy by enacting clearer sentencing guidelines, and the ongoing challenge to balance uniformity (similar sentences for similar types of crimes) and proportionality (adjusting for specific variations) without making the entire system too complex to manage.

Question 338 (continued)

Why do/should we have punishment?

Interesting footnote to our previous discussion, from our Session 192 research into Question 342: The "Guidelines Manual" (2016 ed.) put out by the United States Sentencing Commission included a treatment on pp.4-5 on the purpose of criminal punishment. There apparently was a philosophical dispute within the Commission between the 'just deserts' principle of scaling punishment "to the offender's culpability and the resulting harms", and the 'crime control' principle of lessening the likelihood of future crime by either deterrence or incapacitation. Turned out that they found the debate to be irrelevant "because in most sentencing decisions the application of either philosophy will produce the same or similar results."

Question 194 (continued)

Any other questions on any of these operations, or on the structure of the Department of Justice?

It was established in §1A2 on pp.13-14 that the Commission was created by the Sentencing Reform Act of 1984 as an independent agency of the Judicial Branch, but we were not convinced as of Session 192 that this is the most appropriate placement. Seemed like a better distribution of 'checks and balances' if the Judiciary provides input into the process by issuing rulings and occasional departures from the standard guidelines, the Executive conducts administrative review of the rulings and departures in order to form recommendations for guideline revisions, and the Legislature considers those recommendations for formal adoption as indicated, thus providing qualified feedback to the Judiciary to help inform their future decisions, continuing the same process indefinitely. If the Judiciary is creating guidelines to inform its own decisions, even through a nominally-independent commission, or if it simply appears to be doing so, than at the very least it is a bad look.

Completed reading Part A of Chapter 1 of the Sentencing Guidelines, "Introduction and Authority", in Session 192. Fun stuff. We really liked what the Commission had done and was doing, we felt that they definitely were on the right track, and we especially liked that they recognized that keeping the guidelines workable and relevant is an ongoing process of continued monitoring and analysis. We had here caught the Government doing something right.

Continued in Session 193 (April 2017) reading through the Guidelines, resuming from the beginning of Chapter 1, Part B (of two), "General Application Principles".

We also liked the 'recipe' approach expressed in the beginning of 1B, prescribing certain steps to be taken in a certain sequence.

Question 317 (continued)

Shall we continue to make it part of the standard procedure to have a hearing (known as an 'arraignment') wherein a defendant is asked to declare whether or not he committed the alleged crime?

We found it good while reviewing the Guidelines Manual (2016 ed.) of the United States Sentencing Commission in Session 193 that one of the listed downward adjustments was for the defendant's acceptance of responsibility, which was our Answer 317 in reverse.

Question 334 (continued)

Suppose that the sequence of events has been determined in a given case, and that the defendant has been found to be in violation of the law or good conduct: What then is to be done?

We did not particularly like their application note 3(B), allowing that multiple adjustments from different aspects of a single criminal act generally were to be "applied cumulatively", such as the adjustments for 'bodily injury' and 'official victim' if one shoots a police officer during a robbery. We concurred as of Session 193 that an upward adjustment may be indicated for such 'special circumstances', but in our opinion it is excessive for the sentencing to proceed as though the two outcomes resulted from two completely separate acts. However, they did also allow that there may be specific instructions to the contrary within the specific guidelines.

Question 342 (continued)

Suppose that actual fiscal loss and non-fiscal damages have been determined in a case with multiple defendants found guilty under due process: Should each defendant be required to pay the full amount, or should the amount of damage be apportioned among them?

We noted in Session 193 that §1B2.3(a)(1)(B) of the Sentencing Guidelines allowed that a defendant is accountable for the conduct of others if it was:

- (i) within the scope of the jointly undertaken criminal activity;
- (ii) in furtherance of that criminal activity; and
- (iii) reasonably foreseeable in connection with that criminal activity.

This makes it seem as though I can be accountable for their actions, and they can be accountable for mine, so the total sentence associated with the crimes is basically multiplied by the number of individuals who participate to even the slightest degree, as long as such participation falls within these definitions.

This seemed intuitively excessive and unfair to us, but we resolved to keep reading to see whether further discussion within the document might explain this position.

One example which they gave is when two defendants agree to commit a robbery, and one of them assaults and injures a victim during the act. They claimed that the second defendant is accountable for the assault as well as the robbery, even if he advised against it. This did not seem fair and just to us.

Another example which they gave is when ten defendants are charged with offloading one ton of illegal substances from a ship. They claimed that each of the

ten defendants should be charged as though he personally offloaded the entire shipment, because he "aided and abetted" the offloading of the entire shipment by being personally involved with a portion of it. Again, we saw no logical or moral justification for this principle.

They extended this example by applying principle (iii) above, that the existence of one ton of contraband was "reasonably foreseeable" because importation by ship often involves large quantities. We found this reasoning to be rather tenuous, because sometimes small quantities get transported by ship, especially if one is seeking to avoid detection. We felt that whether the defendant is doing a lot of damage by bringing in a lot of contraband, or doing a smaller amount of damage by bringing in a smaller amount, should be taken into consideration by the court.

Another example which they gave is the getaway driver in a bank robbery in which a teller is assaulted and injured. They claimed that the getaway driver is accountable for the assault and injury as well as the robbery itself, because again it was "reasonably foreseeable" under the circumstances. They seemed to be merely stating that it is so, and not assembling much of a logical defense.

Another example which they gave is two defendants conspiring to sell fraudulent stocks. They each derived a different amount of money from the scheme, but under the stated principle each must be treated as though he was responsible for the combined amount of the fraudulent income. This went against our intuitive feeling in the initial element of this discussion, being that economic loss should be allocated proportionately among the multiple defendants according to their respective gains.

Question 306 (continued)

If a judge has interpreted a relatively vague law in a certain way, and sentenced a defendant on the basis of such interpretation, and if the legislature later clarifies their actual intent by passing a revision of the law, under which revision the defendant would no longer be subject to sentencing, should such defendant be released from further punishment? Should he be compensated in any way for punishment already inflicted?

United States Sentencing Guidelines (2016 ed.) §1B1.10 established that a prison sentence should be reduced if the sentencing guideline is reduced after a defendant was sentenced to a longer term. This agreed with our position as of Session 193.

Question 334 (continued)

Suppose that the sequence of events has been determined in a given case, and that the defendant has been found to be in violation of the law or good conduct: What then is to be done?

Chapter 2 of the Guidelines Manual, "Offense Conduct", dealt with all specific varieties of criminal activity, for which we generally were content to defer to the guidelines as periodically updated, absent any specific question or complaint coming from any source in the future, because again we generally liked the entire systematic approach that they were taking in this document, although not all the specifics.

However, we tended in Session 193 to feel that their collection of 43 "base offense levels" (such that first-degree murder was rated 43, second-degree murder was

rated 38, voluntary manslaughter was rated 29, and involuntary manslaughter was 12) might be a little too elaborate even for our group's collective taste, but again we were generally content to defer judgment to the Commission and the Legislature to refine the guidelines over time as they deem fit in their professional legal judgments.

We found it interesting that they devoted over 6 pages to a 'drug quantity table' which assigned 17 different 'base offense levels' from 6-38 to different specific quantities of different specific drugs. They did the same thing with a wide variety of 'precursor chemicals'.

We also found it interesting that treason got a rating of 43 if it is tantamount to waging war against the United States, which action seemed to us to be far more serious than a 'simple' first-degree murder receiving the same rate.

Upon skimming ahead to Chapter 3, "Adjustments", we saw that they advocated increasing the offense rate by 3 levels if it is a 'hate crime'.

Question 342 (continued)

Suppose that actual fiscal loss and non-fiscal damages have been determined in a case with multiple defendants found guilty under due process: Should each defendant be required to pay the full amount, or should the amount of damage be apportioned among them?

We looked very closely at §3B, "Role in the Offense", beginning on page 371, in Session 193. We could see an upward adjustment for a defendant who was an organizer as well as a participant. Good that the offense level could be reduced between 2-4 levels if the defendant's participation was "minimal" or "minor". Various other upward adjustments were detailed for certain specific extra-bad elements, such as abuse of a position of trust, or involvement of a minor.

Question 309 (continued)

What happens if a jurisdiction has two separate laws which are similar but not identical? Can a defendant be charged under both laws?

United States Sentencing Guidelines (2016 ed.) §3D, "Multiple Counts", provides detailed rules for determining the overall sentence range when a given criminal act violates multiple different sections of the Code, so in Session 193 we found it good that these were not always simply added together cumulatively, although -- as with other sections of the Guidelines -- the formulaic structure was so elaborate that we wondered whether it really fit our human experience, so we probably would not have opposed a simplification, but neither were we specifically recommending it.

Question 317 (continued)

Shall we continue to make it part of the standard procedure to have a hearing (known as an 'arraignment') wherein a defendant is asked to declare whether or not he committed the alleged crime?

The principle in favor of arraignment was expressed in §3E, "Acceptance of Responsibility", of the *United States Sentencing Guidelines* (2016 ed.), providing a decrease of 2 offense levels if the defendant clearly accepts responsibility for the

offense, and of 1 additional level if the base level is 16 or higher, and if the defendant provides timely notification to authorities of his intent to plead guilty, "thereby permitting the government to avoid preparing for trial and permitting the government and the court to allocate their resources effectively".

Question 342 (continued)

Suppose that actual fiscal loss and non-fiscal damages have been determined in a case with multiple defendants found guilty under due process: Should each defendant be required to pay the full amount, or should the amount of damage be apportioned among them?

We did not see anything in Chapter 3 of the Sentencing Guidelines to explain or justify the principle that a defendant participating in only a portion of the criminal act is to be treated as though he committed the whole thing. Absent such explanation, we felt in Session 193 that we must hold with our intuitive finding that this was a significant flaw in an otherwise-excellent system of sentencing guidelines.

Question 334 (continued)

Suppose that the sequence of events has been determined in a given case, and that the defendant has been found to be in violation of the law or good conduct: What then is to be done?

Chapter 4 discussed "Criminal History and Criminal Livelihood", which was beyond the scope of Question 342, but we skimmed it anyway for Question 334. It resulted in the designation of one of 6 categories of criminal history.

Chapter 5 was "Determining the Sentence", beginning on page 427. It began with a 'sentencing table' providing a range of months of imprisonment for each combination of the 43 offense levels and 6 criminal-history categories. For purposes of this table, adjusted offense levels of less than 1 were treated as 1, and adjusted offense levels of greater than 43 were treated as 43. Certain 'zones' in the sentencing table allowed for probation under certain additional conditions.

Question 302 (continued)

How shall the judiciaries of the several jurisdictional levels be funded?

United States Sentencing Guidelines (2016 ed.) §5E1.5 provided that the "costs of prosecution shall be imposed on a defendant as required by statute." We agreed with this principle in Session 193. [We changed our position in the Third Pass.]

Question 339 (continued)

Do we agree with the basic concept that it is possible for punishment of a given bad act to be excessive, and that excessive punishment should be avoided?

United States Sentencing Guidelines (2016 ed.) §5E1.7 discussed "shock incarceration", which blessedly referred not to electric shock, but rather "to a highly regimented schedule [of training and discipline and ceremony] characteristic of military basic training".

Question 194 (continued)

Any other questions on any of these operations, or on the structure of the Department of Justice?

Cool that the USSG document had an appendix listing numerous specific sections of the United States Code being violated, according to title and section number, along with the guidelines section(s) relating to each. They also had an alphabetic index of subjects and where they were specifically discussed within the document.

Question 342 (continued)

Suppose that actual fiscal loss and non-fiscal damages have been determined in a case with multiple defendants found guilty under due process: Should each defendant be required to pay the full amount, or should the amount of damage be apportioned among them?

Upon completing our review of the entire 628-page document in Session 193, we still were not persuaded to change our position on Question 342.

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During the week, we advanced on the 'Swedish project' by adding a paragraph to our introductory section about the threat of War.

Question 342 (continued)

Suppose that actual fiscal loss and non-fiscal damages have been determined in a case with multiple defendants found guilty under due process: Should each defendant be required to pay the full amount, or should the amount of damage be apportioned among them?

We had feedback from the legal community between Sessions that a straight allocation of the standard sentence range among all multiple participants would also be bad, because it might not present a sufficient deterrent to alleviate our collective fear of criminal activity to a satisfactory degree.

We therefore agreed in Session 194 (April 2017) that we can bump up each defendant's apportioned offense level by an appropriate increment (we thought 2 points in the then-current 43-level model) to address the conspiracy element in addition to the actual offense. For, crimes committed singly often result from temporary pressures without thorough evaluation of the moral and legal consequences of the actions, whereas a crime executed with multiple participants clearly involved a deliberate process of advance thought, with an almost-certain knowledge among the group that the planned action constituted a legal violation (which is why they needed to get together to plan it in the first place), so we cannot properly be as lenient with them collectively as we might want to be for a solitary defendant who was just having a really bad day.

Therefore, do apportion the offense level according to the role taken in the offense, but then adjust each participant's proportion upward by a couple of points for participating in a conspiracy.

Question 343

Suppose that actual fiscal loss is determined, and that an appropriate level is set for any non-fiscal damage in a particular case: What then happens if the guilty/liable party does not have the monetary resources to make full recovery?

If punishment were only monetary, then it clearly would be too easy for a destitute individual to commit a crime and then claim freedom from punishment because he had no resources to pay the fine. Wealthier individuals also have been able in some cases to avoid having to pay monetary judgments because they had been successful in hiding their incomes and/or assets from attachment. We therefore need to be able to extract in some other manner the retribution which is properly due both to the direct victim(s) and to society generally.

Imprisonment may help with the societal retribution, and may provide some partial comfort to the direct victim(s), but such victims and their families (especially in the case of wrongful death) might not feel fully retributed with imprisonment alone: They may need some monetary compensation for their pain and suffering, as well as coverage of their funeral costs, uninsured medical costs, any rise in insurance premiums resulting from the incident, psychological counseling, and/or lost income. If the defendant is monetarily unwilling or unable to provide the appropriate amount of monetary restitution, then should the victim(s) be required to go through the rest of their lives with no financial help at all?

We think not. Therefore, we suggested in Session 194 that a revolving fund be maintained for victim recovery, depending on budgetary availability within each locality, as a supplement to private insurance and whatever can be successfully extracted from the defendant. A portion of each locality's taxes would basically serve as an insurance premium being kept in the fund, and disbursed as appropriate by local officials, who for electoral purposes would be motivated to maintain a healthy balance between liberal disbursements and conservative fund maintenance. In order to mitigate the likelihood of such crimes happening in the first place, and thus alleviate the need for excessive disbursements, localities would generally have increased motivation to provide adequate police protection.

The disbursement would be our way of saying as a society that we are sorry that we didn't do a sufficient job of protecting you from crime, so here's something from our public coffer to help make up for it, insofar as the perpetrator is unwilling or unable to subsidize the recovery total completely.

At that point, because we are paying some or all of what the perpetrator should have paid, he then basically owes the money to us, and needs to make up for it sooner or later, one way or another, including by community service or other productive labor.

Same principle applies to a litterer who causes a flat tire. Society needs to cover the costs of towing, parts, and labor because we failed to keep the streets and highways sufficiently clean, so we need to increase taxes to cover our increased maintenance cost, giving taxpayers a motivation to litter less. [This point had been handwritten into our 'black book' following conception on 27-Jun-2004, *en route* to Sunday softball at Grant Park, and was entered into the official record in Session 194.]

Question 344

If we imprison somebody, do we have an obligation to keep him reasonably well-fed, comfortable, and protected from crime?

If we're not going to kill him outright, because we feel that it would be morally improper under the circumstances, then it also would be morally improper to simply toss his body into a dungeon with little or no further care. It might even be morally worse, because the convict is then physically suffering in addition to simply having his freedom of life terminated. One of the major improvements which we have made in our society (including since the French Revolution) has been the improvement in prison conditions, so we don't want to go backward in this important area.

Besides, to maintain inhumane prison conditions sends the wrong message to convicts, potential convicts, and society generally. We are sending the message that it is morally acceptable within our current society for some people to restrain other people by force, and to make them live in destitute and unhealthful conditions. That is the opposite of the message which we should be sending: We do not want people making other people live in unsanitary conditions, so we should not be setting an example of such bad behavior by committing it ourselves.

Also, it defeats one of the central purposes of punishment as described in Answer 338, being to provide mental training to the convict to enable him to return to society as a peaceful and productive citizen. For, if we are not actively working him toward societal reintroduction, then we have little reason to keep him alive at all. Conversely, if we are actively trying to work him toward societal reintroduction, then we need to make sure that he emerges from prison reasonably well-fed, and not carrying any disease which he didn't bring in with him, and set up with living quarters and employment as local conditions at the time allow.

We also had a very big problem as of Session 194 with conditions then prevailing in many American prisons, specifically that prisoners were effectively allowed to commit serious crimes upon other prisoners, including assault, rape, and extortion. If we do not want these actions happening within our ordinary society, then it would be hypocritical of us to allow them within our prisons. As with the issue of maintaining sanitary conditions for the individuals entrusted to our public care, it sends the wrong message to everyone if any acts which we seek to prohibit everywhere else are allowed to occur within prisons.

We were reminded of the 'L.A. Law' episode where a controversial talk-show host (portrayed authentically by J.T. Walsh) argued in favor of maintaining poor living conditions within prisons, on the grounds that the prisoners are there to be punished, and that if people don't want to live in those conditions then they simply shouldn't get sent to prison. The failure of that argument lies on a couple of levels:

First, not all prisoners should be treated alike, because people are in there for different types of crimes, they have different levels of historical recidivism, and some may have been legitimately unaware that they were committing a crime (such as the drunk driver who sincerely thought that he was okay to drive, and then fell asleep at the wheel before getting into an accident). We might be able to allow worse prison conditions for serious criminals and repeat offenders, but the 'lighter' criminals who committed lower-level offenses for the first time should not be treated so harshly.

Second, the argument fails because it overlooks a key reason for having punishment, being to retrain the individual not to commit crimes anymore: If he is allowed to commit such crimes in prison, and if others are allowed to commit crimes upon him, then that continues to be the only world that he knows, so the only way that he can get along is by continuing the same criminal pattern as everyone else, only better, and he will never learn how to behave in the way that we want everybody to behave.

It may give us a momentary feeling of satisfaction to say "take that" by sentencing a convicted defendant to rot in an unsafe and unsanitary dungeon with little food and little water and little protection from other prisoners, and maybe some of those folks actually deserve such treatment, but with that strategy we may in any case be causing more problems than we're solving, so each jurisdiction should consider very carefully how much deterioration they are ever willing to allow in their prisons.

Now, that said, we were willing to consider a systematic gradation in the conditions prevailing among different prisons in the country. The 'minimum security' prisons should be made available to those first-time convicts guilty of lesser crimes. They may serve out their entire terms in those locations as long as they avoid escape attempts and otherwise maintain good behavior. If they attempt to escape (whether successfully or not), or if they commit any additional bad acts while in prison, or if their initial crimes were more serious, or if they commit new bad acts after having been released from prison earlier, then they should be assigned instead to other prisons with stiffer security, lousier food, less medical care, lighter internal protections, more difficult labor requirements, and other inferior conditions.

They can keep getting 'sent down' to worse levels if they continue to demonstrate bad behavior, down to and possibly including Hell. Correspondingly, if they are already assigned to lower levels, and demonstrate good behavior for a sufficient period of time, then they can be eligible for 'promotion' to a lighter-grade prison, as a 'reward' to help encourage the kind of behavior which we ideally want to see in all our citizens and all our prisoners.

We considered at this time some other notes handwritten in our 'black book':

One possibility which we can consider (written into the 'black book' on 15-Jun-2004) is deportation to an insular penal colony, as had happened before within our global history: Drop them off, and let them fend for themselves. If it's so important for them to live in a society without laws, where the biggest and strongest and fastest get their way, then let them have it. If they can make it back to organized society on their own devices, then let them, and maybe they'll think twice about committing another crime and maybe going through the whole process all over again.

But, if we go this way, then should we have separate islands for convicts of different bio-genders, or do we want to allow/encourage heterosexual interaction and species propagation? Maybe have at least one island for all men, at least one island for all women, and at least one for co-ed. Convict can have choice of either single-gender or co-ed.

Anyhow, they would be liable to gain a much greater appreciation for organized societies which can create food and bandages and textiles and other creature-comforts which they probably had taken for granted before. We just wish that we could monitor their activities as in *Survivor*. [Third Pass: Maybe someday we can?]

Handwritten in 'black book' on 24-Dec-2007, and adopted in Session 194: Have way more gradations of prison conditions in any one facility, like 8-9, and allow prisoners to move up and down the ladder according to behavior. Bad act in prison causes demotion to next level. Staying on good behavior for a given period can qualify for promotion to next level. We're giving the cons something to shoot for, instead of just waiting out a sentence with nothing to do. Gets them more oriented toward a rehabilitated state, and prepares them for outside life. (By the way, do a lot of working with any prisoner just before release, and make sure that he's set up with living quarters and employment and stuff, and get him operating as a responsible citizen as much and as soon as possible.) And, since we're totally segregating the different sections, no one prisoner gets to evolve to be "the boss", except by consent of prison authority. (Generally should find ways to keep prisoners moving around, to keep them from exerting too much influence in any one place.) One intermediate level might be that you have solitary confinement in a cell where you can see out and talk to other similar prisoners around you, but you just can't leave for meals or exercise or anything except shower, and maybe even that's built-in.

Handwritten in 'black book' on 24-Feb-2008 (while getting sent to Jail in a computer Monopoly game), and adopted in Session 194: We should allow the press to observe prison conditions routinely, including by gallery over cafeterias and workrooms and exercise areas (possibly showers also, but that might be too creepy, maybe in only selected facilities), so that they can report directly on any fights or rapes or other problems, which reports if sufficiently negative will tell the public that they need to replace the wardens and guards, who therefore have a motivation to keep the peace.

Handwritten in the 'black book' sometime (maybe directly) after 24-Feb-2008 note: Why should Society care that Prisons have non-violent conditions? Because it's an economic waste to keep them in there for Life, and we want them to be cured of the habits of violence whenever they finally get out, for our own continued safety and security. So, we damn well want to make sure that the wardens and guards are doing what they can to control violence and actively rehabilitate prisoners, including by the punishment-reward system described on 24-Dec-2007 if and as needed.

Question 345

By what criteria shall a particular jurisdiction determine the appropriate number of years of imprisonment?

We again were satisfied as of Session 194 with the general approach taken by the United States Sentencing Commission, to maintain a single set of standard prison terms to be applied on a nationwide basis, allowing different 'offense levels' for different crime types and criminal histories, and receiving continual feedback from our Judicial and Legislative communities as to what specific ranges for imprisonment appear to be more appropriate or less appropriate for different types of situations.

We saw possible opportunities for specific improvement, including possibly reducing the number of base levels from the then-current 43, and in any case treating first-degree murder as being less serious than waging war against the United States. However, we were content to allow the process to continue producing tactical improvements to the system on an ongoing basis, subject to the specific suggestions which we offered in the course of Answer 342.

[We never got to Parole as scheduled, so we picked it up in the Third Pass.]

Question 346

When a Legislature sets ranges for imprisonment, to what extent should the Judiciary be able to 'review' that legislation, and strike it down as being excessive and/or a violation of the Constitution?

Basically went along in Session 194 with the 'black book' and earlier findings:

The Constitution does not [specifically] state when punishment is excessive. It [merely states] that punishment in a particular case should not be far in excess of the social standards of the day. Those standards may be determined [or codified] by elected Legislatures. If the Judiciary of a given jurisdiction feels that the Legislature's setting of imprisonment ranges/rates is inappropriate, [then] it should not be able to strike them down, since it does not represent society; however, it may call for a referendum, so that a popular vote may ratify [or overturn] the legislature's action.

Legislative Branch is where we in ordinary society elect individuals to represent us in creating and modifying laws according to our collective preference. Judiciary is not elected by society (at least not at the Supreme Court level under the current model), so it cannot properly be said to represent society. They are there to exercise their professional legal judgments to determine (among other things) when a lower law appears to violate a higher law. When that happens, their role under our A18.5 is to officially notify the offending Legislature of the discrepancy, so that the Legislature can either modify the legislation or appeal the ruling to higher authority, because even people with law degrees can see the same set of circumstances differently.

In particular, we again liked the general system created by the United States Sentencing Commission and approbated by the Supreme Court, although we again preferred that the Commission be reassigned to the Executive Branch, so that all three branches have input into the process.

Question 347

Suppose that a person commits one or more bad acts, and that he has been found guilty/liable in due process, and that he has completely exhausted his monetary resources in making partial compensation to his victims, and that it has been determined that no amount of community service or forced labor will completely compensate society for its share of the debt load, and that some amount of jail time has been prescribed as alternative punishment: What if the amount of such jail time (that is, adding up the minima of judicially established ranges) is significantly more than the criminal's remaining life span?

We found in Session 195 (April 2017) that there are three scenarios to be considered here. One is where someone has committed many bad acts without ever having been caught and tried until now. Second is where someone has been captured and incarcerated, but then escapes from prison before completing all his terms (which is a 'bad act' in itself, because recapturing him consumes a lot of public resources, and because the public is threatened in the meantime), and probably then commits additional crimes after that. Third is where someone remains in prison but commits multiple additional bad acts while there.

In the first scenario, there may be an outside chance in some circumstances that the perpetrator was not completely aware that all his various actions were illegal or injurious, in which case a simple counseling might be sufficient. In other cases, some amount of prison time may still be indicated, as an aid toward retraining the convict's brain to refrain from such bad acts in the future, at least for fear of further punishment if not for sheer moral rectitude.

In still other cases, especially in certain 'war crimes' situations or extensive serial murders, the psychological evidence may indicate that no amount of retraining will ever make this individual a peaceful and productive citizen. If this really is the fact, then we have little motivation to keep him alive, not only because he is compounding his original evil by forcing society to pay for his livelihood, but also because he presents a deleterious influence on other prisoners whom we do have hope of redeeming to normal status at some point.

Trick there is that we are relying on psychological evidence alone, which may not be sufficiently compelling to justify the termination of the perpetrator's life. We therefore want to be really sure, and give the perpetrator every practical opportunity that we can to allow him to demonstrate that he will somehow eventually mend his ways to the point where his future contributions to society will at least offset the societal resources which he would consume by continuing to live.

If he still flunks all his chances, then at some point it should be permissible to terminate his life, before he has an opportunity to cause any further damage, but that decision should require the concurrence of at least two separate trials with different judges and different juries.

Second scenario is easier, because he already has had some prison time to allow him to 'think about what he did', and to realize that his bad behavior justly warranted punitive action. If he then demonstrates by escaping that he is not willing to take his mental medicine by sitting out the time that he justly deserves to put in, then clearly the previous treatment did not sufficiently work, so we should try sterner punishments (i.e., worse prison conditions) as an expedited means of 'getting his attention', as described in Answer 344.

If he commits additional bad acts during his period of escape, then that could be a simple result of the fact that he did not complete his mental retraining, so demotion to the lower-level prison might still be sufficient to 'bring him around' eventually, so this probably would not be sufficient to warrant the termination of his life.

Third scenario is when he has committed so many bad acts after initial incarceration (possibly including escape attempts) that he has already gotten demoted to the worst prison level yet conceived by Man, and still shows himself to be a net-destructive presence in our society. In this case, our group claims that we have both the moral right and the moral duty to terminate his life, again once the same decision is reached in at least two separate formal evaluations. Any right-to-life which he may ever have possessed (whether naturally or civilly granted) has been effectively waived by his repeated destructive acts, and by his unwillingness/inability to respond to any means of corrective treatment. That being the case, society no longer has any moral obligation to help keep him alive, and it should not be required to exhaust any further resources to do so. It might be inhumane to simply allow him to starve, though (even with all his past bad acts), so probably best to terminate his

life actively, with whatever final dignities (last meal, visit from a priest, etc.) the local jurisdiction may find to be appropriate under the circumstances.

Question 348

Shall such an individual be committed to prison for the balance of his life?

The only time that we should be committing anyone to life in prison is if he is both willing and able to do some offsetting good while there, maybe community service, maybe some productive manual labor, maybe teaching or counseling other prisoners, maybe something else.

The offsetting good would need to be enough to offset both the original bad that he committed and the continued societal costs of keeping him alive and comfortable and protected while in prison. However, the premise of Question 347 was that his combined bad acts already cost more than he could possibly make up in the form of productive work, so it does not make logical sense to keep him in prison, especially during conditions of prison overcrowding, which we certainly had when this Question was considered during Session 195, and in other recent years.

As stated in Answer 347, we are generally sympathetic to the moral desire not to take other people's lives without their consent, for we actively decry that practice when it is committed by individuals or non-civic groups acting unilaterally. However, this individual has clearly waived his right to live in a civil society by his repeated bad acts committed even after some amount of incarceration, so he either refused to accept corrective treatment, or else was neurologically unable to do so. In either case, he does not deserve to be kept alive at all, and we do not deserve to keep paying for his livelihood, especially not when we have so many innocent people starving in our own neighborhoods, and all over the World.

Therefore, as loath as some of us might be to execute others, yet at some point in some cases we need to simply acknowledge that this guy is a lost cause, and to basically 'write off' the asset before our losses get any worse.

Of course, we should provide him with as many warnings as we can, as well as initial education during the primary stages that being bad enough often enough can get you executed as well as merely imprisoned. And, again, his case should be evaluated independently by at least two separate panels, possibly more if required by the corresponding jurisdiction.

Question 349

If an individual has waived his right to live, including by the commission of multiple serious anti-social acts, is it in the interest of society to continue to keep him alive?

No, as already addressed in Answer 348.

Question 350

Should the termination of his life be passive or active?

Active, as already addressed in Answer 347.

Question 351

If we allow that multiple crimes can result in the forfeit of one's own life, what is the maximum penalty that we should be able to levy on any one single crime?

This is another area where we depart from the United States Sentencing Commission and their 'Guidelines Manual' (2016 ed.), which prescribed sentences of up to life-in-prison for selected single crimes. We felt as of Session 195 that such extensive sentences should be imposed only if someone is guilty of multiple crimes, because we always want to give any first-offender the option of rehabilitating while in prison, so that at some point he can re-enter society as a peaceful and productive citizen, and eventually make up for his bad acts a lot faster than he could do in prison. It is only when he receives such chances for rehabilitation and flunks them that his cumulative sentences should approach or exceed his maximum life expectancy.

We also allow for the very real possibility of wrongful conviction, for we occasionally hear on the news (as we did for Marco Contreras in March 2017) that someone gets released after up to 20 years of imprisonment, when the authorities finally realized that someone else did it. Hopefully such miscarriages of justice decrease over time, with our advancing technologies in analyzing DNA and other crime-scene chemicals, but we must still allow for the possibility, until it is demonstrated to our collective satisfaction that it never possibly will happen again, which may never be the case.

Combining these factors, we imagine that 20 years is the maximum sentence which should be imposed for any one criminal act. It is long enough to hopefully facilitate deterrence, but it is short enough that someone sitting out the entire sentence without further incident might possibly have time left in his life to more completely make up for what he did, and conclude his life on the plus side of the moral ledger. It is also short enough that we have not committed too grave of a sin by convicting somebody incorrectly, because he still might then have enough life left to net-enjoy the experience, especially with whatever compensation we give him for his trouble.

Question 352

Given that life termination may not be inflicted for any one crime, no matter how heinous, due to the possibility of error, what number of years shall we set as a minimum, beyond which an accumulation of sentence minima shall constitute a waiver of the criminal's right to live, permitting the active termination of his life?

We found with the lifespans prevalent as of Session 195 that the criminal should be allowed to remain in prison if his current age plus the minima of all remaining sentences (*i.e.*, his 'earliest release age') is less than 200 years, and that his life should be terminated actively if the sum exceeds that level. We realized that it might sound/seem illogical to impose either a single or a cumulative sentence which requires the perpetrator to live longer than anyone has ever lived since the time of Noah. However, we again allowed for the possibility that some of the convictions were wrongful, so some years might need to get dropped off at some point. Also, we recognized that life expectancies were on the increase, such that people may be living to Age 150 routinely by the time that the perpetrator reaches Age 100.

We possibly could have a minimum cumulative sentence of more than 200 years, but if too high then we make it near-certain that the total term exceeds any foreseeable life expectancy even when allowing for the possibility of wrongful convictions, so then we would be back to housing and feeding this evil person for life, which we felt per the previous Answers does not make logical or moral or economic sense.

Question 353

Shall anyone found to be in excess of such minimum be granted the right of automatic appeal, as currently done in capital cases?

Noted in Session 195: Definitely yes, definitely appeal, definitely make double-sure that each of those previous convictions was valid. Our consciences may be heavy enough in some cases when we determine that we need to execute anyone, and we don't want/need to compound our moral mud-wrestling by fretting about whether any of the convictions were invalid which helped to add up to the minimum cutoff which the individual appeared to exceed.

However, the 'black book' of preliminary notes reminded us that the presumption of innocence need no longer apply, because the individual was already found causative/guilty under due process, so it is safe to presume his guilt in a retrial, and to require active evidence of innocence in order to overturn the previous verdict, unless the proper court decides that an exception is indicated in a particular case.

PART II - THE ECONOMIC ANSWERS

For this Part of the Outline, as for the other two Parts, we trashed all current institutions and practices, and started totally over, making a brand-new economy from scratch, so that we can see what elements appear good and productive, and which ones might not be. We expected as of Session 196 (April 2017) that we might end up in our model with a lot of the institutions and processes which we then had in real life, but if so then we would know why they are good to keep. Meanwhile, the exercise of checking Everything would allow us to identify some problems which we might not have noticed if we had simply sat down and listed all problems that we could think of, as discussed extensively in Answer 2.

We again started out with some Basic Principles upon which we can expect everyone to agree, then built in gradually the more controversial elements as we developed the means to tackle them. [We made several revisions during the Third Pass.]

SECTION II-A: BASIC PRINCIPLES

Question 354

How shall we define 'economy' for the purposes of this discussion?

Before we began to talk, we felt it important as of Session 196 that we come to a common understanding of just what it is that we are talking about.

Both in the news media and in our own everyday conversations, we frequently speak of the economy being 'good', or the economy being 'bad', or the economy getting 'better' or 'worse' over time or in different countries: What do we mean by that?

We must mean [mustn't we?] when we observe that the economy is 'good' or 'better' that most people have access to the resources which they need and want and value, and that the economy is 'bad' or 'worse' when such access is more limited.

Access to valuable resources generally increases when more such resources are produced, and when more of those resources are able to be accessed by the people who wish to consume or otherwise utilize them.

Economy therefore is 'production and distribution of valuable resources', such that it is 'good' when those functions are operating well, and it is 'bad' when there are problems in one or both.

Question 355

Why should we concern ourselves with looking at economy at all?

It is clear from obvious inspection all around us, both in the so-called 'Third World' and even on our own American streets, that many millions of people are suffering from homelessness and hunger and disease. In addition, many others of us are fortunate enough to have access (at least for the present, knock wood) to the basic human needs of shelter and food and medical care, but we would like to have access to additional resources which are presently denied to us because so many of us are unemployed, or employed but not making as much as we deserve, or making as much as we deserve but having to pay too much of it in taxes to 'the masters'.

Now, we can sit back and ignore this situation (as a lot of our current corporate and political 'fatcats' appear very content to do), or we can do something about it.

As of Session 196, we perceived that we probably will always have some people who have no scruples and no morals and no concern for the welfare of others. We cannot persuade them to have a conscience. Either they don't believe in after-life punishment, or else they believe in it but don't care (remember Mordred's line in *Camelot*? -- "I cannot wait to rush in / Where angels fear to go"). They already have enough 'stuff' that they would not be interested in an argument that caring about others would be in their own economic interest (even if they were once convinced of it, which also would be non-trivial in many cases). And, they are complacent enough to have no fear of 'the masses' coming to take their resources and lives away.

But, perhaps they should have such fear. We considered that this is indeed a point which even the richest of individuals should consider actively: We have seen in history (the French and Russian Revolutions being two key examples, but there are others, including in our own time and in our own country) that large numbers of people may initiate a forcible redistribution of wealth if they ever once perceive that the disparity between Rich and Poor is too wide for their collective taste. Therefore, in order to mitigate civil unrest (which was the same basic reason why we like to avoid excessive punishment, as described in Answer 339 *et seq.*), even those who currently enjoy the highest positions of economic wealth should for their own sake be eager to make sure that at least some minimal provision is made for the poorer segments of the population, because otherwise they someday might decide to come after you in force, in which case we probably will not be able to talk them out of it.

That leaves the rest of us, who are in either the middle or lower classes of our present economic structure. Most of us want more than we currently have, or at

least want to preserve what we have for the remainder of our lives and the lives of our children and grandchildren. But, those objectives become endangered if the economy (that is, the "production and distribution of valuable resources", as defined in Answer 354) is inadequately managed. It therefore definitely is in the self-interest of all of us non-wealthy types to be interested in how the economy is managed, and to exercise our voices and our other energies to help shape it to our collective satisfaction, even if we don't happen to have any concern of conscience over the many millions who are even worse off than most of us reading this report.

Besides, the threat of assault and theft is not limited to the super-rich: Many others of us in the 'middle' class, and even among the homeless populations, have been victimized by people taking things from us, including by actual force or the threat of force. We therefore share this attribute (if no others) in common with the 'super-rich', that we want to make sure for our own self-preservation that everybody in each of our respective communities is somehow enjoying enough of an ongoing economic benefit that he will have little or no motivation to try to take things away from the rest of us through theft or assault or other illegal and injurious means.

Question 356

Is it agreed, then, that we want to try to take some proactive measures to optimize the production and distribution of resources, as opposed to isolationism and economic anarchy?

We found in Session 196 that the same principle applies at the international level which applied in Answer 355 to individuals and local populations: If you don't want anyone (either an individual, a gang, a mob, or an entire Nation) attempting to invade your space and to take away what you got, then you are strongly advised for your own self-interest (if not also for any moral reasons of not wanting other innocent people to suffer if we can help it) to see to it that all individuals and all populations in all Nations have access to at least a modicum of resources sufficient to mitigate their motivation to acquire additional resources through illicit means.

It therefore follows that we should not have a policy of pure economic isolationism, as tempting as the idea may initially appear to the more selfish among us. Provide to other people and other Nations, and they will be motivated to protect you and help you. Deny resources to them, and you make yourself a target for attack, as we saw when Japan launched a military offensive against America in 1941, and also in several later terrorist attacks by individuals and groups who opposed the actions of 'the Great Satan' to accumulate the resources of the rest of the World unto itself.

We still should be concerned about the economic welfare of other Nations even in our model No War environment, partly because Nations with nothing to lose might feel free to go ahead and take their best shot anyway, and partly because we'd rather not launch a global military attack upon a Nation which simply wants a loaf of bread.

Question 357

How shall we proceed to devise the optimal production and distribution of valuable resources?

The 'parameter' approach rejected in Answer 2 for the overall Project might work a little better in just the economic Part, although it still carries the disadvantage of

being overly obvious in the numerical goals: We would like 0% hunger, 0% unemployment, 0% disease, 0% crime, and 0% complaining over not having enough 'stuff', but that's just not realistic (is it?), and any non-zero figures which we might assign to those different categories would be arbitrary and perpetually mutable.

Rather than try to create specific numerical parameters, then, we figured it better in Session 197 (May 2017) to describe on a more philosophical level what factors would constitute a 'good' or 'healthy' economy, and then try to create (or maintain) those institutions and practices which appear most likely to further those objectives.

Question 358

What are the features of a 'good' or 'healthy' economy?

First, we claimed in Session 197 that under an ideal economic system there would be zero or near-zero poverty. That is, everyone on the Planet would have at least their basic human needs satisfied of food and clean water and shelter and reasonably-decent health. If large numbers of people on a global scale are suffering from privation, or if the same is happening to smaller numbers in affluent communities like New York or Los Angeles, then either we are not producing enough of those basic goods, or else we are producing enough but not doing a good-enough job of connecting people with resources.

It is hypothetically possible that some population counts are simply too high, on either a Municipal or Regional or National or Global scale, but we found it difficult to accept that this is the actual case: We see many livable areas of the planet still being underutilized (remember Sam Kinison's line? -- "Move where the food is!"). We also see large quantities of food being either dumped in the harbor because of inadequate distribution, or consumed by overweight populations who clearly have enough already, or tossed in the garbage because some of us have more than we can possibly eat. We also see a lot of physical materials going into military equipment which could instead be going into low-income housing. Finally, we see a few individuals controlling billions of dollars of wealth, when billions of other people have little or no wealth at all.

Now, we realized that some people feel that at least some of these factors are as they should be: Some feel that populations should be allowed to become poor if that is the natural tendency in the applicable regions, on the premise that it is Nature's way of communicating to those regions (as described by both Malthus and Scrooge) that they need to reduce those populations, either through voluntary birth control or through the natural deaths of young people before they have an opportunity to have many or any children. And, perhaps that is actually true to some extent in some specific cases (China and India being possible examples). However, just because large numbers of people in a region are consistently hungry does not necessarily mean that the population is too large: It may be that the size of the population is fine as it is, but that we instead need to be doing different things with our valuable resources, either making more of them or distributing them differently.

In any case, a lot of those poorer populations are going to keep having kids anyhow, as we have consistently observed in the 'real life', one big reason being to maximize the chances that some of those kids will survive long enough and prosper well enough that they can take care of the parents in their old age. If we really want those populations to thin out, then we must convince the fertile adults to have fewer

kids, and the only way that we can do that (absent a program of forced sterilizations, which is a maybe but could do more harm than good) is by somehow guaranteeing that they will be taken care of in old age, even if they have few or no children.

There is also the school of thought that individuals should be allowed to become 'super-rich' if they have somehow managed to acquire and/or inherit that wealth within 'the system', because either they or their ancestors did enough constructive good in society to deserve that wealth. Under that philosophy, anybody who is not enjoying such wealth clearly didn't do enough to deserve it, and everybody is basically getting what they deserve. Whatever you legally have, you deserve.

It is a tantalizing premise, especially to those who already have lots of 'stuff', and who naturally are not eager to give it up. However, we yet must hold against it on a philosophical level: If you have 1 super-rich person and 9 dirt-poor people, then the 1 super-rich person clearly has not done enough on an ongoing basis to deserve all that wealth. The only way that one can deserve wealth is by providing wealth to other people. Anyone who acquires wealth solely at the expense of others is just a bully, and we don't tolerate bullies in our ideal society.

Then, of course, there are those who have consistently argued for generations that concrete and steel and other physical resources should be going into weapons and military installations rather than toward shelters and schools and hospitals and the conveniences which could be going into them. As previously described (including in Subsubsection I-D-1-b), we readily acknowledge that Earth should never completely disarm, because if we did then some individuals and some Nations would endeavor to attack others and possibly take away what they got, no matter how prosperous and equitable our society ever becomes, either just to break the boredom ("Fie On Goodness!") or else to show that they can do it ("I'm the best man in Inisfree!") or else to act out unrelated frustrations. Beyond the necessary levels, however, continued military buildup not only fosters an environment of continued aggression and threat of aggression, but it uses up valuable resources which could instead be used to provide a greater life experience to millions of innocent people.

Corollary to this general principle is the specific controversy debated in 2016-17 over building a large wall on the Mexican border in the hopes of controlling illegal immigration. As one might have guessed who has read our previous positions on various topics, we vigorously oppose this plan or anything like it, on several grounds: First, we find a border wall to be antithetical to a core American value (inscribed on the Statue of Liberty) of accepting people from all areas of the World who are seeking either personal freedom or economic opportunity; it would be completely selfish and un-neighborly and un-American to not only take the country away from the indigenous populations, but then to tell everyone else that now that we've got it none of them may share in it. Second, it probably would be highly ineffective, as Patton wisely observed. (The exact phrasing of the quote varies among different sources, but the version in the classic 1970 biopic is eloquent and reflective enough, viz.: "Fixed fortifications are monuments to the stupidity of Man. If mountain ranges and oceans can be overcome, anything built by Man can be overcome.") Third, it ignores the possibility that we might agree upon a new border with Mexico at some point, just as the Chinese border with Mongolia changed after the Great Wall was built. Fourth, if you later decide that building a big wall was a big mistake, then reversing the action would involve large amounts of labor, in addition to the labor required to build the dumb thing in the first place. Fifth, as previously suggested, the structure would tie up construction materials and other resources which could

instead be used to provide large numbers of people with some basic human comforts, a need to which super-rich individuals like the one who suggested it during and after the 2016 Presidential campaign may not have been sufficiently sensitive.

Another concern frequently mentioned about making sure that everyone has a place to stay and enough food to stay minimally healthy, is that providing such valuable resources to poor people for free might remove any motivation for them to work and support the economic system from which they are benefitting. This can indeed be true to some extent, so one additional factor of a 'good' or 'healthy' economy must be that people have an ongoing incentive to work and produce, or else our supply of valuable resources is likely to go way down, as we predicted would eventually happen in Communist countries, and as has actually happened in many such real-life cases. Okay to provide minimal care to the poor, as a means of 'deserving' whatever additional wealth you may enjoy as an individual or as a Nation, but also give them the opportunity to improve their standard of living further by actively working for it.

Corollary to the above points is that the disparity between rich and poor should not be so severe that people notice it and complain about it: It's a waste of valuable resources to have too many of them controlled by individuals who could never possibly utilize them all, it's an illogical redistribution to allow people to inherit large estates who did little or nothing to earn them other than getting themselves born, and it's an invitation to civil unrest to have large palaces sitting in fixed locations as targets for groups of people who eventually get sick of passively tolerating the gross inequities which can come about through the wrong type of economic system.

Another corollary which we inferred from the above in Session 198 (May 2017) is that we should not be allocating too much in labor and materials to products and activities which do little or nothing to benefit society. Societal benefit need not be either tangible or quantifiable, because we also benefit from Art and Science and Entertainment, but we also waste a lot of resources in bureaucratic circularities, and in holiday gifts which the recipients don't actually need or want.

The 'black book' reminded us of an additional factor which we agreed to specify at this early stage, being "that the prices that people pay for various goods and services [should] reflect their true relative value, so that some consumers are not required to pay more than they should, and so that all producers of goods and services receive all that they deserve." Corollary to this principle is that wages also should accurately reflect the true relative value of the work performed, and should not vary according to race or gender or any other immaterial attribute.

Another element of a good-or-healthy economy is sustainability: It is not enough to satiate all poor people living today, if we are not able to keep satiating poor people in all future generations. We must not commit the same moral mistake by which we were victimized by our ancestors, namely to borrow from future generations to pay for immediate pleasures. We had discussed this in Subsection I-D-1-c as applying to the specific example of forest land, but it applies to all expendable resources. We must make sure always that we do not extract so much from the Earth that future extractions will need to be excessively curtailed.

Final element is protection of the natural environment. England (especially London) enjoyed a huge economic boom in the Industrial Revolution of the late 19th century, but it came at the cost of devastating pollution of the local air and water. There also are those who suggest that our modern-day lifestyle is creating (or exacerbating)

changes in our upper atmosphere which could lead to radiation sickness, the flooding of seaside communities, and other bad things; whether those suggestions are actually correct or not (or partly so), we certainly did want as of Session 198 to make sure that we avoid such considerations going forward.

In sum, the main factors of a good-or-healthy economy include:

- (1) zero or near-zero poverty;
- (2) incentives for people to improve their standard of living by working to help the society which provides it;
- (3) sustainability of natural resources;
- (4) protection of the natural environment; and,
- (5) relative accuracy of wages and prices. [More added later.]

Question 359

What are the basic methods by which these goals can be achieved?

First basic method is a straight barter system, as we did back when we were simply running around randomly. Every individual or family produces what it can, then trades any excess to other individuals/families for other desired goods and services.

Second basic method is having all goods routed to a central public authority (let's here call it 'The State'), who would then have the responsibility of distributing all goods to all people as it deems most net-appropriate. This is the so-called principle of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs", frequently associated with the theories of Socialism and Communism. Under the former, The State is the nominal owner of common property and the means of production. Under the latter, they are nominally owned by The People. In real life, it amounts to basically the same thing.

Question 360

What are the main advantages and disadvantages of these systems?

Barter systems have several big disadvantages:

- (1) It can be considerably inconvenient to transport the applicably-sized container of Pumpkins every time that you want to acquire any amount of any commodity from anybody, especially if the trading partners are located far away.
- (2) The vendor from whom you wish to acquire commodities may already have enough of whatever you're offering, or maybe he just doesn't like Pumpkins.
- (3) You would need to negotiate separate deals with each trading partner, and may need to renegotiate periodically depending upon local supply and demand, which can take a lot of time which could otherwise be spent on either more production or simply enjoying life. Some vendors in certain cultures appear to be really into that, and we suppose as of Session 198 that they should be allowed to do so if they really want, but it's not the most efficient way to proceed.
- (4) There can be so many localized variations in supply and demand of the various regionally-produced commodities that it can be difficult to tell what the 'actual' relative value of each commodity is. Without a clear picture of how much each unit of each commodity is worth, it can be possible for some people to get more than they deserve, meaning that other people would be getting less, and therefore -- according to Answer 358 -- we would not have a healthy economy.

(5) A system relying completely upon individual control makes no provision for the care of elderly, orphaned, ill, or otherwise-disadvantaged persons who may have worked before and/or may work later, but who in any case need help from society in the meantime.

(6) Individual production without a central monitoring agency could result in the production of too much of one commodity and not enough of something else: In theory, we could allow producers to find out about these disparities for themselves when the collective demand for their goods drops below the cost of producing them, but we don't want to be that heartless. Besides, it makes greater macroeconomic sense to tell people up front how much of each commodity is being produced on the aggregate scale, so that some producers can switch to other commodities and fill in the gaps before they go bankrupt and starve. That way, we end up getting enough produced of all the commodities which we want, and we do not end up with so many units of other commodities that they end up going to waste.

Systems involving central distribution of all valuable commodities also have several disadvantages:

(1) They depend upon the central authority being able to assess accurately the needs of each individual and family, which would require either an assumption that the needs of all individuals and families are exactly identical (which is clearly untrue on the basis of diet and geography and age and family size and medical conditions and numerous other factors), or else a personalized assessment of the needs of each individual and family. The latter would be so labor-intensive that the field enumerators would continually be so swamped with work that they would not always have the time (and maybe not the patience) to make accurate analyses, and even if they could then it would be a highly wasteful effort. It further assumes that all individuals and families are stating their needs honestly, which is by no means a trivial proposition.

(2) As we have seen time and again in history, the central authority in charge of receiving and distributing the goods cannot be depended upon to avoid for very long the natural human temptation to skim resources 'off the top', in excess of whatever they would justifiably deserve for the work which they are performing, such that everybody else gets less than they deserve.

(3) There is an additional inefficiency factor, which we again have seen in many 'real-life' times and places (including during the American Depression of the 1930's), with people spending so much time waiting in line for bread or other public handouts that they don't have enough time left over to work to help create and distribute additional resources.

(4) As discussed in Answer 358, and again as seen over and over in history, people will tend to slack off in their production if they know that it will not have any impact on the benefits which they receive from the central authority. Humans and many other living beings tend to do whatever makes them feel good (as noted in Answer 0.8), and tend to avoid doing whatever makes them feel bad, so they naturally will avoid strenuous work in favor of restful ease if they do not have any incentive to do otherwise. Less work therefore ends up getting done on the macro scale, fewer commodities get produced and distributed, and we end up with more poor people as a result.

The main disadvantage which attends both systems of Individual control and State control is that neither completely works. If it did, then we would have seen it emerge long ago as the One-And-Only System which everybody should and did embrace. As it is, both systems have shown themselves to be inadequate when applied on any scale larger than a village, which would not be enough to provide for

even the basic needs of everyone on Earth, let alone the advanced conveniences to which many of us in the industrialized nations have become accustomed.

Therefore, in order to maintain a healthy economy which will adequately provide for the needs and desires of our current population levels with our current technology and our current collective appetites, we need a hybrid system which combines elements of Individual and State control, to be specified in future Sessions.

Question 361

Considering all these factors, which basic economic system would we prefer to have in America?

We prefer Individual control to State control, both because of the general problems attending State control as described in Answer 360 (reduced incentive to work, waste of trying to assess everyone's production abilities and consumption needs accurately, and temptation for the central authority to skim resources off the top), and because our heritage in America has been for individuals and families and corporate entrepreneurs to build homes and businesses and cities for themselves. However, it must be tempered by some amount of State supervision, in order to mitigate some of the Individual disadvantages also mentioned in Answer 360.

At this point of Session 199 (May 2017), absent a specific Question or series of Questions on the subject, we found that we needed to talk about Land Management, at least in terms of how we want things to happen in America, if not also globally.

Decided to try first on a global scale. [Packaged as separate Question in Third Pass]:

Question 361a

Generally, who owns or can own The Land?

Although some Biblical fundamentalists may still care to contest the point, the overwhelming astronomical and geological and biochemical and paleontological evidence suggests that the Earth has been here for several million years, and that Human Beings as we know them have been around for only a few millennia. As such relative 'latecomers' to the planetary scene, can we properly think of ourselves as 'owning' the planet, or any portion(s) of it?

We found in Session 199 that there are 5 main possibilities to consider, viz. :

(1) that no one owns the Earth (other than possibly itself), because it existed long before living beings came to exist on it, and may possibly continue long after the last living being deceases;

(2) that the Earth belongs to the Transcendental Being who created it, and is here only as our 'playground' but not for our ownership;

(3) that the Earth previously belonged to the Transcendental Being who created it, but that He [*sic*] subsequently gave it to Human Beings, on the stipulation that we should "replenish the earth, and subdue it" (Gen. 1:28);

(4) that the Earth belongs to those who have conquered it, regardless of what they do with it; and,

(5) that portions of the Earth belong to those who have applied the first constructive labor upon them, then to be deeded to other entities according to mutually-agreeable terms.

Before attempting to consider these possibilities further, we felt that we should consider on an even more fundamental philosophical level what it means to 'own' anything [also rolled into a separate numbered Question in the Third Pass]:

Question 361b

What does it mean to 'own' anything?

Noted in Session 199: If any piece of Art or Literature which I create is immediately subsumed by 'The State', which then disposes of my creation however it may decide, and which realizes any economic benefit which may attend such disposition, then I will very quickly lose any motivation to put my heart and soul into any such work, and so it makes little economic or artistic sense to consider The State as the immediate and automatic owner of all property produced within The State.

Similarly, if all the Pumpkins which I grow are immediately subsumed by The State, to be dispensed as it will for its own economic benefit, and if I receive no compensation for my effort beyond a simple addressing of my basic human needs, which I still would get anyway no matter how many or how few Pumpkins I produce, then (as discussed in Answer 360) I will have little motivation to try to maximize my Pumpkin crop. To the contrary, my principal inclination would be simply to go through the minimal motions of Pumpkin husbandry, and then claim to The State that I have produced according to my ability, because these are all the Pumpkins which this plot of land would produce this season: How could they prove me wrong? With that reduced motivation, our agricultural output would drop rapidly across the board, so again it is economically illogical to assert that The State is the immediate and automatic owner of all agricultural commodities.

I must therefore have initial Individual ownership of all goods which I produce. If either The State or any private entity wishes to acquire any of the goods which I create, then they must provide me with an appropriate amount of compensation. If they want more of my created goods, then they must provide me with more compensation, so that I finally have an incentive to create more marketable goods.

Therefore, any person or group of people may 'own' a commodity only if they have created it, or if they have acquired ownership of it in exchange for an appropriate amount of valuable consideration, *i.e.*, if they have 'purchased' it.

Question 361a (continued)

Generally, who owns or can own The Land?

Can the principle derived in Answer 361b (that we have initial Individual ownership of whatever we produce) be applied to the Earth generally, or to any portions of it? After all, however the Earth got here, it certainly was not we Humans who created it.

If -- as many people believe -- the Earth came into existence entirely through mechanistic means, with no 'intelligent design' or other transcendental intervention on anyone's part (which is hard to believe for a universe which has Bacon in it, but

maybe...), then yes it could be asserted that the Earth created itself, and therefore would be its own owner, at least initially. However, if the action was purely mechanistic, then there was no conscious effort involved, so the same principle could not apply as attends the Pumpkins or Sonatas which I individually produce. Possibility #1 therefore seems unlikely.

If -- as many other people believe -- the Earth was created (or at least influenced) by one or more transcendental entities, then yes it could be asserted that they own the Earth, or at least did initially. However, if I create anything, then either I am going to keep it under my own direct control until I once sell or donate it, or else I am going to lend/lease it to another entity with the express stipulation that it must eventually come back to me, or else I am going to deposit it in some kind of 'bank' with appropriate documentation to establish clearly to The State and all private entities that the property in question belongs to me. In contrast, it is not clear that the transcendental creators of the Earth have retained such proof of ownership unto themselves: They have effectively allowed Mankind to run around all over the planet, polluting or even destroying large portions of it as though it belonged to us, with no clear and uncontroverted claim coming to our collective attention in recent human memory, alleging that we have been abusing their current property. (The 1977 film *Oh, God* comes close, but the authority is contestable.) Therefore, either they never had ownership of the planet, or else they once had it but have since effectively waived it. Possibility #2 therefore seems unlikely.

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We took two weeks off after Session 199 to hypertroll on the Swedish project, so that we could make their original deadline of May 2017, just in case getting it in early might attract the positive attention of the judging panels. We would have spread the work out over more previous weeks, but the author was also busy with GLAAM Awards, GLAAM Bylaws, GLAAM Finance, and the GLAAM Regional Gathering.

Question 29 (continued)

If there is an i.o.o., then should each nation -- no matter how big or small -- have an equal vote in matters coming before it?

First step in the packaging of our model for the Swedish competition of May 2017 on global governance was to consider how many delegates should constitute the population-based house. Our initial feel was 200, in order to approximate the number of nations recognized in the then-current U.N., so that each house could have the same basic structure and procedures, and so that the average representation of each delegate in each house would be approximately equal.

However, we looked up at this time that the current world population was 7.5 billion, which would mean that each of only 200 delegates would be representing 37.5 million people, which intuitively seemed too much for any one person to cover.

Besides, a non-round number such as 37.5 million is more difficult to divide quickly into a national or regional population to determine the number of seats which it would have, 30 million being much better for that job, and also within easier reach of adequate representation by a single delegate.

But, having each delegate represent 30 million people would mean a house of 250 delegates, which was a bit bigger than we had envisioned, but which might not be too big, especially if more nations get recognized down the road.

We decided that the tiebreaker should be the then-current population of Australia & New Zealand, because it would not make geographic sense to assign any portion of that unique area to any other region, so it should have a whole number of delegations by itself. We found that Australia had 25 million people, and New Zealand 5 million, so 30 million it was for all the World, starting now.

Next step was to assemble a table of 250 delegations for the population-based house, pulling info by nation as of 2017 from the Worldometers website. We used citypopulation.de to add provincial data for China's 46 seats, and Worldpopulationreview.com to add municipal data, and drilled down to the level of administrative divisions.

We then made 52 delegations out of the combination of India and Bangladesh, finding the process to become easier with practice. We grouped the remaining countries according to area of the World, to determine the aggregate number of delegates in population-based house to be assigned to each area. Exercise resulted in 10 world areas with definite delegation counts adding up to exactly 250.

We treated the remaining 8 sections in alpha order, assigning 41 delegations for Africa, 19 for North America, and 14 for South America. Our 14 for Asia North was reduced from the original 15 because we had moved Georgia and Azerbaijan to Southwest Asia, so we upped North America from 19 to 20 by splitting Canada, which we were tempted to do before anyhow, and now had a good excuse, and it would hopefully make *Les Québécois* a lot happier as well. We then assigned 9 delegations for Asia Southeast, 15 for Oceania, 19 for Asia Southwest, and 20 for Europe saving the funnest for last. Whole process took four solid days of work.

Following are the details for the 46 delegations in the China section:

| Delegation | Provinces | Population | Capital & Large Cities | Admin. Divisions | Total Population | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------|---------|
| 1 - Suzhou | Anhui - N | 61440000 | Suzhou 5345961 | 9 | 2114000 | 29,354,000 | |
| | | | | 14 | 5353000 | | |
| | | | | 4 | 4851000 | | |
| | | | | 3 | 3164000 | | |
| | | | | 8 | 7600000 | | |
| | | | | 10 | 2334000 | | |
| | | | | 7 | 3938000 | | |
| | | | | 1027655 | 10 | | 2334000 |
| | | | | 7 | 3938000 | | |
| | | | | 1 | 7457000 | | |
| 2 - Hefei | Anhui - S | Hefei 3310268 | 12 | 5612000 | 30,146,337 | | |
| | | | 13 | 2304000 | | | |
| | | | 16 | 3443000 | | | |
| | | | 15 | 1562670 | | | |
| | | | 5 | 2533000 | | | |
| | | | 2 | 4472667 | | | |
| | | | 6 | 1403000 | | | |
| | | | 11 | 1359000 | | | |
| | | | 11 | 1359000 | | | |
| | | | 3 - Beijing | Beijing | | 21710000 | Beijing |
| 4 - Chongqing | Tianjin | 15470000 | Tianjin | 11090314 | 30,170,000 | | |
| 5 - Fujian | Chongqing | 30170000 | Chongqing | 7457600 | 38,390,000 | | |
| | Fujian | 38390000 | Fuzhou | 1179720 | | | |
| 6 - Gansu | Gansu | 26000000 | Xiamen | 3531347 | 32,680,000 | | |
| | | | Lanzhou | 3616163 | | | |
| | | | Tianshui | 3500000 | | | |
| | | | Dingxi | 2628426 | | | |
| 7 - Hainan | Hainan | 9110000 | Haikou | 2046189 | 28,794,777 | | |
| | | | Guangdong - S | 15 | | 6994832 | |
| | | | Guangdong | 16 | | 5817494 | |
| | | | total = | 17 | | 2421748 | |
| | | | 108490000 | 18 | | 4450703 | |
| 8 - Guangzhou | Guangdong - W | Yunfu 2612800 | 7 | 2367154 | 29,881,375 | | |
| | | | 6 | 3916467 | | | |
| | | | 1 | 3698412 | | | |
| | | | 8 | 7197394 | | | |
| | | | 9 | 12701948 | | | |
| | | | 3600000 | 8 | | 7197394 | |
| | | | 11071424 | 9 | | 12701948 | |
| | | | 6 | 3916467 | | | |
| | | | 1 | 3698412 | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------|--------|----------|------------|
| 9 - Jieyang | Guangdong - E | | | 2 | 2826246 | 31,491,914 |
| | | | | 3 | 2950195 | |
| | | | | 4 | 4238461 | |
| | | | | 5 | 2669466 | |
| | | Shantou | 5329024 | 14 | 5389328 | |
| 10 - Shenzhen | Guangdong - C | | | 11 | 4598402 | 31,270,718 |
| | | | | 12 | 2935469 | |
| | | Jieyang | 5884347 | 13 | 5884347 | |
| | | | | 20 | 1562530 | |
| | | Zhongshan | 3121275 | 19 | 3121275 | |
| | | Dongguan | 8000000 | 10 | 8220207 | |
| | | Shenzhen | 10358381 | 21 | 10358381 | |
| 11 - Nanning | Guangxi - W | Hong Kong | 7401941 | | | 20,977,800 |
| | | Macao | 606384 | | | |
| | | Guangxi total = | 47960000 | | | |
| | | Nanning | 6661600 | 7 | 6661600 | |
| | | | | 12 | 3079700 | |
| 12 - Guilin | Guangxi - E | | | 13 | 1539300 | 25,048,900 |
| | | | | 3 | 3758700 | |
| | | | | 8 | 2099700 | |
| | | Guigang | 4118808 | 9 | 4118800 | |
| | | Guilin | 4748000 | 14 | 5487400 | |
| 13 - Guizhou | Guizhou | | | 4 | 1954100 | 35,300,000 |
| | | | | 5 | 1954100 | |
| | | Guiyang | 1171633 | | | |
| | | Zunyi | 6127009 | | | |
| | | | | 10 | 2882200 | |
| 14 - Zhangjiakou | Hebei - N | | | 5 | 1954100 | 32,771,613 |
| | | | | 4 | 3473197 | |
| | | Hebei total = | 4345485 | 11 | 4345491 | |
| | | 74250000 | | 8 | 2987605 | |
| | | Tangshan | 7577284 | 9 | 7577284 | |
| 15 - Shijiazhuang | Hebei - S | Langfang | 868088 | 7 | 4358839 | 37,434,488 |
| | | Baoding | 2176857 | 2 | 10029197 | |
| | | Cangzhou | 1205814 | 3 & 12 | 7267053 | |
| | | Hengshui | 522147 | 6 | 4340773 | |
| | | Shijiazhuang = | 4303700 | 1 | 9547869 | |
| 16 - Heilongjiang | Heilongjiang | Handan | 2845790 | 10 | 7104114 | 38,120,000 |
| | | Harbin | 5878939 | 5 | 9174679 | |
| | | | | 11 | 2233972 | |
| | | | | 7 | 6549486 | |
| | | | | 8 | 10263006 | |
| 17 - Nanyang | Henan - W | Luoyang | 1390581 | 7 | 6549486 | 36,792,806 |
| | | Nanyang | 1811812 | 8 | 10263006 | |
| | | Henan total = | 94800000 | 18 | 675710 | |
| | | | | 9 | 4904367 | |
| | | | | 4 | 3539860 | |
| 18 - Puyang | Henan - N | Zhengzhou | 4253913 | 1 | 8626505 | 28,086,860 |
| | | | | 2 | 5172834 | |
| | | Puyang | 3590000 | 10 | 3598494 | |
| | | | | 3 | 1569100 | |
| | | Xinxiang | 902731 | 13 | 5707801 | |
| 19 - Xinyang | Henan - S | Kaifeng | 5000000 | 5 | 4676159 | 29,144,081 |
| | | Shangqiu | 1536392 | 12 | 7362472 | |
| | | Xuchang | 1952666 | 15 | 4307199 | |
| | | Luohe | 1294974 | 6 | 2544103 | |
| | | Zhoukou | 535738 | 16 | 8953172 | |
| 20 - Shiyan | Hubei - W | | | 17 | 7230744 | 28,372,939 |
| | | | | 14 | 6108863 | |
| | | | | 13 | 3290294 | |
| | | Hubei total = | 58520000 | 17 | 76140 | |
| | | Shiyan | 3460000 | 7 | 3340843 | |
| 21 - Wuhan | Hubei - E | | | 12 | 4059686 | 28,864,801 |
| | | | | 9 | 5500307 | |
| | | | | 6 | 5691707 | |
| | | | | 5 | 2873687 | |
| | | | | 15 | 946277 | |
| 22 - Changsha | Hunan - N | | | 14 | 1418913 | 31,348,633 |
| | | | | 16 | 1175085 | |
| | | | | 8 | 2162222 | |
| | | | | 11 | 4814542 | |
| | | | | 10 | 2462583 | |
| 23 - Shaoyang | Hunan - S | Wuhan | 9785388 | 1 | 9785392 | 34,365,089 |
| | | | | 2 | 1048672 | |
| | | | | 4 | 2429318 | |
| | | | | 3 | 6162072 | |
| | | | | 12 | 1476521 | |
| 24 - Yueyang | Hunan - S | Hunan total = | 67830000 | 2 | 5747218 | 31,348,633 |
| | | Yueyang | 5477911 | 11 | 5477911 | |
| | | | | 14 | 2547833 | |
| | | | | 9 | 4313084 | |
| | | Changsha | 7044118 | 1 | 7044118 | |
| 25 - Shaoyang | Hunan - S | | | 5 | 4741948 | 34,365,089 |
| | | | | 8 | 2748552 | |
| | | | | 6 | 3785627 | |
| | | | | 13 | 3855609 | |
| | | Shaoyang | 7071741 | 7 | 7071826 | |

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------|----------|-----------|----------|----|--------------|------------|
| | | | Hengyang | 7141462 | 4 | 7141462 | |
| | | | | | 10 | 5180235 | |
| | | | | | 3 | 4581778 | |
| 24 - Xuzhou | Jiangsu - N | | | | 4 | 4393914 | 22,489,856 |
| | | Jiangsu | Xuzhou | 2623066 | 10 | 8580500 | |
| | | total = | Suqian | 4730000 | 6 | 4715553 | |
| | | 79760000 | Tongshan | 1199193 | 3 | 4799889 | |
| 25 - Yancheng | Jiangsu - C | | Yancheng | 1615717 | 11 | 7260240 | 23,621,393 |
| | | | | | 12 | 4459760 | |
| | | | | | 8 | 4618558 | |
| | | | Nantong | 1994708 | 5 | 7282835 | |
| 26 - Nanjing | Jiangsu - S | | | | 13 | 3113384 | 32,548,654 |
| | | | Nanjing | 7165292 | 1 | 8004680 | |
| | | | Changshu | 1047700 | 2 | 4591972 | |
| | | | Wuxi | 3543719 | 9 | 6372624 | |
| | | | | | 7 | 10465994 | |
| 27 - Jiujiang | Jiangxi - N | | | | 8 | 6579714 | 23,358,094 |
| | | Jiangxi | | | 5 | 1587477 | |
| | | total = | Jiujiang | 4728764 | 6 | 4728763 | |
| | | 45660000 | Nanchang | 5042565 | 1 | 5042565 | |
| | | | | | 10 | 5419575 | |
| 28 - Ganzhou | Jiangxi - S | | | | 11 | 1124906 | 21,209,381 |
| | | | | | 9 | 1138873 | |
| | | | | | 2 | 3912312 | |
| | | | | | 7 | 1854510 | |
| | | | Ji'an | 538699 | 4 | 4810340 | |
| 29 - Jilin | Jilin | 27530000 | Ganzhou | 1977523 | 3 | 8368440 | 27,530,000 |
| | | | Changchun | 4193073 | | | |
| | | | Jilin | 1881977 | | | |
| 30 - Shenyang | Liaoning - N | | | | 9 | 2623541 | 21,437,887 |
| | | Liaoning | | | 5 | 3044641 | |
| | | total = | | | 10 | 3126463 | |
| | | 43820000 | | | 8 | 1819339 | |
| | | | Shenyang | 6255921 | 1 | 8106171 | |
| | | | | | 13 | 2717732 | |
| 31 - Dalian | Liaoning - S | | Fushun | 1400646 | 7 | 2138090 | 22,308,436 |
| | | | | | 4 | 1709538 | |
| | | | | | 6 | 2444697 | |
| | | | Dalian | 4087733 | 2 | 6690432 | |
| | | | | | 14 | 2428534 | |
| | | | | | 12 | 1392493 | |
| | | | | | 11 | 1858768 | |
| | | | | | 3 | 3645884 | |
| 32 - Nei Menggu | Nei Menggu = | | Anshan | 1199275 | | | 25,110,000 |
| | 25110000 | | Hohhot | 2866615 | | | |
| | | | Ordos | 1940653 | | | |
| | | | Baotou | 1301768 | | | |
| 33 - Xi'an | Shaanxi | 37930000 | Xi'an | 6501190 | | | 37,930,000 |
| | | | Xianyang | 1034081 | | | |
| 34 - Qingdao | Shandong - E | | | | 14 | 2804800 | 30,375,400 |
| | | Shandong | | | 15 | 6968200 | |
| | | total = | Qingdao | 3718835 | 2 | 8715100 | |
| | | 98470000 | Zhu Cheng | 1000000 | 13 | 9086200 | |
| | | | | | 11 | 2801100 | |
| 35 - Jinan | Shandong - N | | | | 5 | 2035300 | 29,785,000 |
| | | | | | 3 | 3748500 | |
| | | | | | 4 | 5568200 | |
| | | | | | 9 | 5789900 | |
| | | | Jinan | 4335989 | 1 | 6814000 | |
| | | | Zibo | 3129228 | 17 | 4530600 | |
| | | | | | 8 | 1298500 | |
| 36 - Linyi | Shandong - S | | Tai'an | 5499000 | 12 | 5494200 | 35,632,600 |
| | | | | | 6 | 8287800 | |
| | | | | | 7 | 8081900 | |
| | | | | | 16 | 3729300 | |
| | | | Linyi | 2303648 | 10 | 10039400 | |
| 37 - Shanghai | Shanghai | 24150000 | Shanghai | 22315474 | | | 24,150,000 |
| 38 - Shanxi | Shanxi | 36500000 | Datong | 1052678 | | | 36,500,000 |
| 39 - Liangshan Yi | Sichuan - W | | | | | Garze | 1091872 |
| | | Sichuan | | | | Liangshan Yi | 4532809 |
| | | total = | | | | Panzhihua | 1214121 |
| | | 82040000 | | | | Yibin | 4472001 |
| | | | | | | Ya'an | 1507264 |
| | | | | | | Leshan | 3235756 |
| | | | | | | Zigong | 2678898 |
| | | | | | | Luzhou | 4218426 |
| 40 - Chengdu | Sichuan - C | | | | | Ngawa | 898713 |
| | | | | | | Chengdu | 14047625 |
| | | | | | | Deyang | 3615759 |
| | | | | | | Ziyang | 3665064 |
| | | | | | | Meishan | 2950548 |
| | | | | | | Neijiang | 3702847 |
| 41 - Nanchong | Sichuan - E | | | | | Mianyang | 4613862 |
| | | | | | | Suining | 3252551 |
| | | | | | | Guangyuan | 2484125 |
| | | | | | | Nanchong | 6278622 |
| | | | | | | Guang'an | 3205476 |
| | | | | | | Bazhong | 3283771 |
| | | | | | | Dazhou | 5468092 |

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|----------|----------|---------|---------|------------|
| 42 - Xinjiang | Xinjiang | 23600000 | Urumqi | 3029372 | | 32,720,000 |
| | Qinghai | 5880000 | Xining | 2208708 | | |
| | Xizang | 3240000 | Lhasa | 559423 | | |
| 43 - Dali Bai | Yunnan - W | | | 9 | 1211000 | 20,447,000 |
| | Yunnan | | | 4 | 2506000 | |
| | total = | | | 10 | 534000 | |
| | 47420000 | | | 11 | 400000 | |
| | | | | 8 | 2430000 | |
| | | | Dali Bai | 12 | 3456000 | |
| | | | Lijiang | 6 | 1245000 | |
| | | | | 7 | 2543000 | |
| | | | | 16 | 1134000 | |
| | | | | 13 | 2684000 | |
| | | | | 3 | 2304000 | |
| 44 - Kunming | Yunnan - E | | Kunming | 1 | 6432000 | 25,519,000 |
| | | | | 14 | 4501000 | |
| | | | | 5 | 5213000 | |
| | | | | 2 | 5855000 | |
| | | | | 15 | 3518000 | |
| 45 - Hangzhou | Zhejiang - N | | | 3 | 2893500 | 29,734,800 |
| | Zhejiang | | | 4 | 4501700 | |
| | total = | | | 11 | 1121300 | |
| | 55390000 | | Hangzhou | 1 | 8700400 | |
| | | | Ningbo | 2 | 7605700 | |
| | | | | 8 | 4912200 | |
| 46 - Wenzhou | Zhejiang - S | | | 5 | 5361600 | 24,692,200 |
| | | | | 7 | 2122700 | |
| | | | | 9 | 5968800 | |
| | | | | 6 | 2117000 | |
| | | | Wenzhou | 10 | 9122100 | |
| | | | | | | |

Following are the details for the 52 delegations in the India section:

| Delegation | Provinces | Population | Regions | Districts | Total Population |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| 1 - Godavari | Andhra Pradesh - E | | Uttarandhra 9338177 | [all districts] | 31,823,543 |
| | total = | | Kosta Andhra - E | Godavari 9088515 | |
| | 49506799 | | total = 34195655 | Krishna 4517398 | |
| 2 - Rayalaseema | Andhra Pradesh - W | | Kosta Andhra - W | Guntur 4887813 | 32,391,946 |
| | | | Rayalaseema 15184908 | Prakasam 3397448 | |
| | | | | Nellore 2966082 | |
| | Telangana - SW | | | [all districts] | |
| | Telangana | | | Vikarabad 927140 | |
| | total = | | | Siddipet 709415 | |
| | 35193978 | | | Nalgonda 1631399 | |
| | | | | Mahbubnagar 708952 | |
| | | | | Nagarkurnool 893808 | |
| | | | | Wanaparthy 1238660 | |
| | | | | Jogulanda-Gadwal 664971 | |
| 3 - Telangana | Telangana - NE | | | [all other districts] | 27,446,355 |
| 4 - Assam | Assam | 31205576 | | | 35,688,913 |
| 5 - Purnia | Bihar - E | | | Araria 2811569 | 29,042,244 |
| | Bihar | | | Kishanganj 1690400 | |
| | total = | | | Katihar 3071029 | |
| | 104099452 | | | Madhepura 2001762 | |
| | | | | Purnia 3264619 | |
| | | | | Saharsa 1900661 | |
| | | | | Supaul 2229076 | |
| | | | | Darbhanga 3937385 | |
| | | | | Madhubani 4487379 | |
| 6 - Champaran | Bihar - N | | | Champaran 9034413 | 31,748,654 |
| | | | | Gopalganj 2562012 | |
| | | | | Muzaffarpur 4801062 | |
| | | | | Saran 3951862 | |
| | | | | Sheohar 656916 | |
| | | | | Sitamarhi 3423574 | |
| | | | | Siwan 3330464 | |
| 7 - Samastipur | Bihar - S | | | Khagaria 1666886 | 27,256,345 |
| | | | | Samastipur 4261566 | |
| | | | | Banka 2034763 | |
| | | | | Begusarai 2970541 | |
| | | | | Bhagalpur 3037766 | |
| | | | | Jamui 1760405 | |
| | | | | Lakhisarai 1000912 | |
| | | | | Munger 1367765 | |
| | | | | Sheikhpura 634927 | |
| | | | | Nalanda 2877653 | |
| | | | | Nawada 2219146 | |
| 8 - Gaya | Bihar - W | | | Patna 5838465 | 31,005,323 |
| | | | | Vaishali 3495021 | |
| | | | | Arwal 699000 | |
| | | | | Aurangabad 2540073 | |
| | | | | Bhojpur 2728407 | |
| | | | | Buxar 1706352 | |
| | | | | Gaya 4391418 | |
| | | | | Jehanabad 1125313 | |
| | | | | Kaimur 1626384 | |
| | | | | Rohtas 2959918 | |

| | | | | | |
|------------------|---------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|
| 9 - Chhattisgarh | Chhattisgarh | 25545198 | | | 29,215,302 |
| 10 - Surat | Gujarat - E | | | | 33,368,600 |
| | Gujarat | | | | |
| | total = | 60439692 | | | |
| | | | Anand | 2090276 | |
| | | | Aravalli | 1039918 | |
| | | | Bharuch | 1550822 | |
| | | | Chhota Udaipur | 1071831 | |
| | | | Dahod | 2126558 | |
| | | | Dang | 226769 | |
| | | | Kheda | 2053769 | |
| | | | Mahisagar | 994624 | |
| | | | Narmada | 590379 | |
| | | | Navsari | 1330711 | |
| | | | Panchmahal | 1642268 | |
| | | | Sabarkantha | 1388671 | |
| | | | Surat | 6079321 | |
| | | | Tapi | 806489 | |
| | | | Vadodara | 3093795 | |
| | | | Valsad | 1703068 | |
| | | | Gandhinagar | 1387478 | |
| 11 - Ahmedabad | Gujarat - W | | Ahmedabad | 7045313 | 35,722,706 |
| | | | Amreli | 1513614 | |
| | | | Banaskantha | 3116045 | |
| | | | Bhavnagar | 2393272 | |
| | | | Botad | 656005 | |
| | | | Devbhoomi Dwarka | 752484 | |
| | | | Gir Somnath | 1217477 | |
| | | | Jamnagar | 1407635 | |
| | | | Junagadh | 1525605 | |
| | | | Kutch | 2090313 | |
| | | | Mehsana | 2027727 | |
| | | | Morbi | 960329 | |
| | | | Patan | 1342746 | |
| | | | Porbandar | 586062 | |
| | | | Rajkot | 3015229 | |
| | | | Surendranagar | 1585268 | |
| | | | | | 28,993,732 |
| 12 - Haryana | Haryana | 25351462 | | | 37,727,573 |
| 13 - Jharkhand | Jharkhand | 32988134 | | | 35,177,913 |
| 14 - Belagavi | Goa | 1458545 | | | |
| | Karnataka - N | | | | |
| | Karnataka | | | | |
| | total = | 61095297 | | | |
| | | | Davanagere | 1946905 | |
| | | | Shivamogga | 1755512 | |
| | | | Bagalkot | 1891009 | |
| | | | Belagavi | 4778439 | |
| | | | Bidar | 1703300 | |
| | | | Dharwad | 1846993 | |
| | | | Gadag | 971952 | |
| | | | Gulbarga | 2174742 | |
| | | | Koppal | 1391292 | |
| | | | Raichur | 1924773 | |
| | | | Uttara Kannada | 1437169 | |
| | | | Vijayapura | 2175102 | |
| | | | Yadgir | 1172985 | |
| | | | Ballari | 2532383 | |
| | | | Haveri | 1597668 | |
| 15 - Bangalore | Karnataka - S | | Chitradurga | 1660378 | 35,855,372 |
| | | | Chikkamagaluru | 1137753 | |
| | | | Bangalore | 10576167 | |
| | | | Chamarajanagar | 1020962 | |
| | | | Chikkaballapur | 1255104 | |
| | | | Dakshina Kannada | 2089649 | |
| | | | Hassan | 1776221 | |
| | | | Kodagu | 554519 | |
| | | | Kolar | 1540231 | |
| | | | Mandya | 1805769 | |
| | | | Mysuru | 2994744 | |
| | | | Ramanagara | 1082739 | |
| | | | Udupi | 1177908 | |
| | | | Tumakuru | 2678980 | |
| 16 - Kerala | Kerala | 33406061 | | | 38,279,280 |
| 17 - Ganjam | Lakshadweep | 64473 | | | |
| | Odisha - W | | | | |
| | Odisha | | | | |
| | total = | 41974218 | | | |
| | | | Angul | 1273821 | 24,464,162 |
| | | | Debagarh | 312520 | |
| | | | Jharsuguda | 579505 | |
| | | | Nayagarh | 962789 | |
| | | | Sambalpur | 1041099 | |
| | | | Sundergarh | 1830673 | |
| | | | Boudh | 441162 | |
| | | | Balangir | 1648997 | |
| | | | Bargarh | 1481255 | |
| | | | Ganjam | 3529031 | |
| | | | Gajapati | 577817 | |
| | | | Kalahandi | 1576869 | |
| | | | Kandhamal | 733110 | |
| | | | Koraput | 1379647 | |
| | | | Malkangiri | 613192 | |
| | | | Nabarangpur | 1220946 | |
| | | | Nuapada | 610382 | |
| | | | Rayagada | 967911 | |
| | | | Subarnapur | 610183 | |

| | | | |
|------------------|---|---|------------|
| 18 - Bhadrak | Odisha - E | Balasure 2320529 Bhadrak 1506522 Cuttack 2624470 Dhenkanal 1192811 Jajpur 1827192 Jagatsinghapur 1136971 Khordha 2251673 Kendujhar 1801733 Kendrapara 1440361 Mayurbhanj 2519738 Puri 1698730 | 23,240,230 |
| 19 - Bankura | West Bengal - C West Bengal total = 91276115 | Nadia 5168488 Purulia 2927965 Bankura 3596292 Bardhaman 7723663 Hooghly 5520389 West Midnapore 5943300 Jhargram 1136548 | 36,616,509 |
| 20 - Kolkata | West Bengal - S | Howrah 4850029 Kolkata 4486679 North 24 Parganas 10082852 South 24 Parganas 8153176 Purba Medinipur 5094238 | 37,360,271 |
| 21 - Murshidabad | West Bengal - N | Alipurduar 1700000 Cooch Behar 2822780 Darjeeling 1797422 Kalimpong 251642 Uttar Dinajpur 3000849 Malda 3997970 Dakshin Dinajpur 1670931 Murshidabad 7102430 Birbhum 3502387 | 30,258,090 |
| 22 - Kashmir | Sikkim 610577 Jammu and Kashmir 12541302 Himachal Pradesh 6864602 Chandigarh 1055450 Uttarakhand 10086292 | | 34,936,457 |
| 23 - Delhi | Delhi 16787941 | | 19,199,881 |
| 24 - Chennai | Tamil Nadu - N Tamil Nadu total = 72147030 | 2 - Chennai 4681087 27 - Tiruvallur 3725697 8 - Kanchipuram 2690897 28 - Tiruvannamalai 4121965 30 - Vellore 4028106 | 22,013,096 |
| 25 - Namakkal | Tamil Nadu - W | 15 - Nilgiris 735071 11 - Krishnagiri 1883731 5 - Dharmapuri 1502900 19 - Salem 3480008 7 - Erode 2259608 3 - Coimbatore 3172578 10 - Karur 1076588 14 - Namakkal 1721179 26 - Tirupur 2471222 | 20,932,479 |
| 26 - Tirunelveli | Tamil Nadu - S | 22 - Theni 1143684 20 - Sivaganga 1341250 12 - Madurai 2441038 6 - Dindigul 2161367 9 - Kanyakumari 1863174 23 - Thoothukudi 1738376 25 - Tirunelveli 3072880 32 - Virudhunagar 1943309 | 19,491,171 |
| 27 - Thanjavur | Tamil Nadu - E | 18 - Ramanathapuram 1337560 1 - Ariyalur 752481 31 - Viluppuram 3463284 13 - Nagapattinam 1614069 21 - Thanjavur 2302781 29 - Tiruvarur 1268094 4 - Cuddalore 2600880 16 - Perambalur 564511 24 - Tiruchirappalli 2713858 17 - Pudukkottai 1618725 | 21,189,041 |
| | Andaman and Nicobar Islands 380581 Puducherry 1247953 | | |
| | | <u>Divisions</u> <u>Population</u> | |
| 28 - Nashik | Daman and Diu 243247 Dadra and Nagar Haveli 343709 Maharashtra - N Maharashtra total = 112374333 | Nashik 15774064 Aurangabad - N Aurangabad 3965928 Beed 2585962 Parbhani 1835982 Hingoli 1177345 Jalna 1958483 | 31,890,946 |
| 29 - Pune | Maharashtra - S Pune 19973761 Aurangabad - S | Osmanabad 1660311 Latur 2455543 | 24,680,944 |
| 30 - Amravati | Maharashtra - E Aurangabad - E Amravati 11266653 Nagpur 10665939 | Nanded 3361292 | 28,927,882 |
| 31 - Konkan | Maharashtra - W Konkan 28739397 | | 32,868,415 |

| | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| 32 - Jabalpur | Madhya - E | Narmadapuram 3386524 | 35,318,479 |
| | Madhya | Jabalpur 11772617 | |
| | total = | Rewa 5397010 | |
| | 72626809 | Sagar 7867437 | |
| 33 - Indore | Madhya - W | Shahdol 2458089 | 39,934,846 |
| | | Bopalal 8018118 | |
| | | Chambal 4356653 | |
| | | Gwailor 4598489 | |
| | | Indore 9261948 | |
| | | Ujjain 8682916 | |
| 34 - Meerut | Uttar Pradesh - NW | 1 - Saharanpur 7566197 | 34,984,103 |
| | total = | 8 - Meerut 14584234 | |
| | 199812341 | 9 - Aligarh 8438875 | |
| 35 - Moradabad | Uttar Pradesh - N | 2 - Moradabad 12631203 | 28,899,777 |
| | | 3 - Bareilly 12638107 | |
| 36 - Lucknow | Uttar Pradesh - C | 4 - Lucknow 27093707 | 27,093,707 |
| 37 - Faizabad | Uttar Pradesh - NE | 5 - Devipatan 10175857 | 26,984,412 |
| | | 12 - Faizabad 13418701 | |
| 38 - Gorakhpur | Uttar Pradesh - E | 6 - Basti 6728882 | 34,927,221 |
| | | 7 - Gorakhpur 13767963 | |
| | | 13 - Azamgarh 10042725 | |
| 39 - Mirzapur | Uttar Pradesh - SE | 16 - Allahabad 13400436 | 37,793,109 |
| | | 17 - Varanasi 13733706 | |
| | | 18 - Mirzapur 5911295 | |
| 40 - Kanpur | Uttar Pradesh - SW | 10 - Agra 1585704 | 29,635,058 |
| | | 11 - Kanpur 14665363 | |
| | | 14 - Jhansi 4890913 | |
| | | 15 - Chitrakoot 4770243 | |
| 41 - Punjab | Punjab | <u>Admin. Divisions</u> | 31,729,251 |
| 42 - Jodhpur | Rajasthan - W | Jodhpur 11868793 | 22,904,161 |
| | total = | Bikaner 8158086 | |
| 43 - Jaipur | Rajasthan - E | Jaipur 16790158 | 26,693,706 |
| | 68548437 | Bharatpur 6550213 | |
| 44 - Udaipur | Rajasthan - S | Ajmer 9723337 | 28,875,475 |
| | | Udaipur 9826426 | |
| | | Kota 5698298 | |
| 45 - Rangpur | Mizoram 1254842 | | 34,819,755 |
| | Tripura 4201752 | | |
| | Manipur 3266088 | | |
| | Nagaland 2262755 | | |
| | Arunachal Pradesh 1582528 | | |
| | Meghalaya 3393145 | | |
| | Bhutan 792877 | <u>Admin. Divisions</u> | |
| | Bangladesh - N | Rangpur 18065768 | |
| 46 - Khulna | Bangladesh - SW | Khulna 17951340 | 34,866,920 |
| | total = | Barisal 9526973 | |
| | 164827712 | Faridpur 7388607 | |
| 47 - Dhaka | Bangladesh - C | Dhaka 34301876 | 34,301,876 |
| 48 - Sylhet | Bangladesh - NE | Sylhet 11340161 | 24,350,734 |
| | | Mymensingh 13010573 | |
| 49 - Chittagong | Bangladesh - SE | Chittagong 32524167 | 32,524,167 |
| 50 - Rajshahi | Bangladesh - NW | Rajshahi 21152032 | 21,152,032 |
| 51 - Sri Lanka | Sri Lanka 20905335 | | 21,281,202 |
| | Maldives 375867 | | |
| 52 - Nepal | Nepal 29187037 | | 29,187,037 |

Following are the details for the 41 delegations in the Africa section:

| Delegation | Nations | Population | Provinces | Big Cities | Admin. Divisions | Total Population |
|----------------|------------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 1 - Mozambique | Mozambique | 29537914 | | | | 29,790,982 |
| | Mayotte | 253068 | | | | |
| 2 - Ghana | Ghana | 28656723 | | | | 28,656,723 |
| 3 - Angola | Angola | 26655513 | | | | 26,659,483 |
| | Saint Helena | 3970 | | | | |
| 4 - Madagascar | Madagascar | 25612972 | | | | 28,691,140 |
| | Mauritius | 1281353 | | | | |
| | Reunion | 873356 | | | | |
| | Comoros | 825920 | | | | |
| | Seychelles | 97539 | | | | |
| 5 - Pretoria | Swaziland | 1320536 | | | | 34,151,656 |
| | South Africa - E | | | | Limpopo 5518000 | |
| | South Africa | | | | Mpumalanga 4128000 | |
| | total = | | | | Kwazulu-Natal 10456900 | |
| | 55436360 | | | Pretoria | Gauteng 12728400 | |
| 6 - Cape Town | South Africa - W | | | | North West 3597600 | 22,335,859 |
| | | | | | Northern Cape 1162900 | |
| | | | | Cape Town | Western Cape 6016900 | |
| | | | | | Eastern Cape 6620100 | |
| | | | | | Free State 2753200 | |
| 7 - Zimbabwe | Lesotho | 2185159 | | | | 21,250,310 |
| | Namibia | 2568569 | | | | |
| | Botswana | 2343981 | | | | |
| | Zimbabwe | 16337760 | | | | |
| 8 - Zambia | Zambia | 17237931 | | | | 35,536,610 |
| | Malawi | 18298679 | | | | |
| 9 - N'Djamena | Chad | 14965482 | N'Djamena | | | 36,529,089 |
| | Niger | 21563607 | | | | |

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|----------|--|--------------------|
| 10 - Kinshasa | Congo Zaire - W | 4866243 | <u>Provinces</u> 1 - Kinshasa 10125000 2 - Kongo-Central 4522942 3 - Kwango 1994036 4 - Kwilu 5174718 | 26,682,939 |
| 11 - Mongala | Zaire - N | 82242685 | 5 - Mai-Ndombe 1768327 10 - Sankuru 1374239 11 - Maniema 2049300 14 - Ituri 4241236 15 - Haut-Uele 1920867 16 - Tshopo 2614630 17 - Bas-Uele 1093845 18 - Nord-Ubangi 1482076 19 - Mongala 1793564 20 - Sud-Ubangi 2744345 21 - Equateur 1626606 22 - Tshuapa 1316855 | 24,025,890 |
| 12 - Lomami | Zaire - S | | 6 - Kasai 3199891 7 - Kasai-Central 2976806 8 - Kasai-Oriental 5475398 9 - Lomami 2048839 23 - Tanganyika 2482001 24 - Haut-Lomami 2540127 25 - Lualaba 1677288 26 - Haut-Katanga 3960945 | 24,361,295 |
| 13 - Burundi | Zaire - E | | 12 - Kivu South 5772000 13 - Kivu North 5767945 | 35,636,012 |
| 14 - Mwanza | Rwanda | 12159586 | | |
| 15 - Dar es Salaam | Burundi | 11936481 | <u>Big Cities</u> | |
| 16 - Mombasa | Tanzania - N total = | | Mwanza | 28,438,764 |
| 17 - Nairobi | Tanzania - S 56877529 | | Dar es Salaam | 28,438,765 |
| 18 - Kampala | Kenya - E total = | | Mombasa | 30,039,955 |
| 19 - Addis Ababa | Kenya - W 48466928 | | Nairobi | 30,039,956 |
| | Uganda - E total = | | | |
| | Uganda - W 41652938 | | <u>Regions</u> | |
| | Ethiopia - W | | Addis Ababa 4300089 | Kampala 30,039,955 |
| | Ethiopia | | Special Enumerated Zones 159784 | 25,915,991 |
| | total = | | Benishangul-Gumuz 1388590 | |
| | 104344901 | | Gambela 545814 | <u>Provinces</u> |
| | Oromia - W | | Wellela West 1909536 | |
| | Oromia | | Ilubabar 1798102 | |
| | total = | | Wellela East 1715938 | |
| | 22865884 | | Jimma 3515515 | |
| | Oromia - C | | Shewa West 2911044 | |
| | | | Shewa North 2023918 | |
| | | | Arsi 3729744 | |
| | | | Shewa East 1917917 | |
| 20 - Borena | Ethiopia - S | | Borena 1360995 | 27,890,451 |
| | | | Bale 1983175 | |
| | | | Southern Nations 24546281 | |
| 21 - Amhara | Ethiopia - N | | Tigray 6971201 | 33,648,428 |
| | | | Amhara 26677227 | |
| 22 - Somalia | Ethiopia - E | | Oromia - E | |
| | | | Harerge West 2646661 | 34,675,269 |
| | | | Harerge East 3851624 | |
| | | | Somali 7280861 | |
| | | | Harari 296947 | |
| | | | Dire Dawa 547232 | |
| | | | Afar 2266694 | |
| | Somalia | 11391962 | | |
| | Djibouti | 911832 | | |
| | Eritrea | 5481906 | <u>Big Cities</u> | |
| 23 - Juba | Sudan South | 13096190 | Juba | 27,763,377 |
| | Central Africa | 5098826 | | |
| | Sudan - S | | Darfur 7500000 | |
| | Sudan | | Abyei 124390 | |
| | total = | | Kurdufan South 1111859 | |
| | 42166323 | | Blue Nile 832112 | |
| 24 - Dongola | Sudan - N | | [all other regions] | Dongola |
| 25 - Morocco | Morocco | 35241418 | <u>Governorates</u> | 35,241,418 |
| 26 - Cairo | Egypt - E | | 7 - Port Said 721802 | 32,360,491 |
| | Egypt | | 8 - Sinai North 456929 | |
| | total = | | 11 - Qalyubia 5528812 | |
| | 95215102 | | 12 - Sharqia 7022488 | |
| | | | 13 - Ismailia 1276247 | |
| | | | 16 - Cairo 10046816 | |
| | | | 17 - Suez 674439 | |
| | | | 18 - Sinai South 178202 | |
| | | | 23 - Red Sea 364963 | |
| | | | 25 - Qena 3297711 | |
| | | | 26 - Luxor 1242049 | |
| | | | 27 - Aswan 1550033 | |
| 27 - Alexandria | Egypt - N | | 2 - Alexandria 5210697 | 32,226,897 |
| | | | 3 - Beheira 6284930 | |
| | | | 4 - Kafr El Sheikh 3435498 | |
| | | | 5 - Dakahlia 6441655 | |
| | | | 6 - Damietta 1441054 | |
| | | | 9 - Gharbia 5145380 | |
| | | | 10 - Monufia 4267683 | |

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|-------------|------------|
| 28 - Giza | Egypt - W | 1 - Matruh 484933 14 - Giza 8213260 15 - Faiyum 3432679 19 - Beni Suef 3093393 20 - Minya 5583743 21 - New Valley 237801 22 - Asyut 4596773 24 - Sohag 4985120 | | 30,627,702 |
| 29 - Cameroon | Gabon 1801232 Guinea Equitorial 894464 Sao Tome and Principe 198481 Cameroon 24513689 | | | 27,407,866 |
| 30 - Tunisia | Libya 6408742 Tunisia 11494760 | <u>Provinces</u> 33 - Illizi 54490 30 - Ouargla 552539 11 - Tamanrasset 198691 39 - El Oued 673934 12 - Tebessa 657227 41 - Souk Ahras 440299 36 - El Taref 411783 40 - Khenchela 384268 4 - Oum El Bouaghi 644364 24 - Guelma 482261 23 - Annaba 640050 21 - Skikda 904195 25 - Constantine 943112 7 - Biskra 730262 5 - Batna 1128030 43 - Mila 768419 18 - Jijel 634412 19 - Setif 1496150 | | 29,647,988 |
| 31 - Algiers | Algeria - W | [all other provinces] | Algiers | 29,319,267 |
| 32 - Senegal | Senegal 16054275 Gambia 2120418 Cabo Verde 533468 Guinea-Bissau 1932871 Guinea 13290659 | | | 33,931,691 |
| 33 - Cote d'Ivoire | Sierra Leone 6732899 Liberia 4730437 Cote d'Ivoire 23815886 | | | 35,279,222 |
| 34 - Mali | Sahara Western 596021 Mali 18689966 Mauritania 4266448 | <u>Regions</u> Burkina Faso - W Burkina Faso Faso total = 19173322 | | 30,065,452 |
| 35 - Ouagadougou | Burkina Faso - E | Cascades 637279 Hauts-Bassin 1469604 Sud-Ouest 620767 Boucle de Mouhoun 1631321 Sahei 968442 Nord 1185604 Centre 2136581 Centre-Sud 722631 Plateau-Central 696372 Centre-Ouest 1348784 Centre-Nord 1375380 Centre-Est 1302449 Est 1416229 | Ouagadougou | 28,148,952 |
| 36 - Kano | Togo 7691915 Benin 11458611 Nigeria - N | <u>States</u> Bauchi 5516494 Jigawa 5914631 Kano 13110290 Katsina 7686501 Adamawa 4430706 Borno 7025241 Gombe 2789625 Yobe 3268591 Plateau 3768557 Benue 5042951 Nasarawa 2418677 Taraba 3187907 Kebbi 4304690 Niger 4683261 Sokoto 5031994 Zamfara 4550373 Kaduna 7192279 Kwara 2811070 Fed Cap Terr 2654234 | | 32,227,916 |
| 37 - Borno | Nigeria - E | Abia 3359878 Anambra 4807507 Akwa Iborn 6462206 Enugu 3874220 Imo 4665063 Ebonyi 2061851 Cross River 4431054 | | 31,932,255 |
| 38 - Kaduna | Nigeria - NW | Lagos 20810082 Ogun 4447205 Oyo 7845711 | | 31,227,901 |
| 39 - Anambra | Nigeria - SE | | | 29,661,779 |
| 40 - Lagos | Nigeria - SW | | | 33,102,998 |

| | | | | |
|----------|-------------|---------|---------|------------|
| 41 - Edo | Nigeria - S | Bayelsa | 2369154 | 33,683,068 |
| | | Delta | 4858892 | |
| | | Rivers | 6147608 | |
| | | Ekiti | 3245101 | |
| | | Ondo | 4078330 | |
| | | Osun | 4905409 | |
| | | Edo | 3815529 | |
| | | Kogi | 4263035 | |

Following are the details for the 20 delegations in the America North section:

| <u>Delegation</u> | <u>Nations</u> | <u>Population</u> | <u>States</u> | <u>Big Cities</u> | <u>Total Population</u> |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 - Honduras | Panama | 4051284 | | | 29,646,530 |
| | Costa Rica | 4905626 | | | |
| | Nicaragua | 6217796 | | | |
| | Honduras | 8304677 | | | |
| | El Salvador | 6167147 | | | |
| 2 - Yucatan | Cuba | 11390184 | | | 33,269,000 |
| | Guatemala | 17005497 | | | |
| | Belize | 374651 | | | |
| | Mexico - E | | Quintana Roo | 1501562 | |
| | | | Yucatan | 2097175 | |
| | | | Campeche | 899931 | |
| 3 - Puebla | Mexico - S | | Chiapas | 5217908 | 32,572,366 |
| | Mexico | | Tabasco | 2395272 | |
| | total = | | Oaxaca | 3967889 | |
| | 130222815 | | Guerrero | 3533251 | |
| | | | Puebla | 6168883 | |
| | | | Veracruz | 8112505 | |
| | | | Tlaxcala | 1272847 | |
| | | | Morelos | 1903811 | |
| 4 - Mexico City | Mexico - C | | Distrito Fed. | 8918653 | Mexico City |
| | | | Mexico | 16187608 | 30,401,967 |
| | | | Michoacan | 4584471 | |
| | | | Colima | 711235 | |
| 5 - Nuevo Leon | Mexico - NE | | Tamaulipas | 3441698 | 27,876,098 |
| | | | Nuevo Leon | 5119504 | |
| | | | San Luis Potosi | 2717820 | |
| | | | Queretaro | 2038372 | |
| | | | Hidalgo | 2858359 | |
| | | | Guanajuato | 5853677 | |
| | | | Coahuila | 2954915 | |
| | | | Zacatecas | 1579209 | |
| | | | Aguascalientes | 1312544 | |
| 6 - Sonora | Mexico - NW | | Chihuahua | 3556574 | 24,181,654 |
| | | | Durango | 1754754 | |
| | | | Baja California | 3315766 | |
| | | | Baja California Sur | 712029 | |
| | | | Sonora | 2850330 | |
| | | | Sinaloa | 2966321 | |
| | | | Nayarit | 1181050 | |
| | | | Jalisco | 7844830 | |
| 7 - Antilles | Haiti | 10983274 | | <u>more nations</u> | 32,180,457 |
| | Dominican Republic | 10766564 | | Dominica | 73353 |
| | Jamaica | 2813825 | | Cayman Islands | 61557 |
| | Trinidad and Tobago | 1369157 | | Bermuda | 61352 |
| | Guadeloupe | 472462 | | Saint Kitts and Nevis | 56780 |
| | Bahamas | 397164 | | Sint Maarten | 40117 |
| | Martinique | 396071 | | Turks and Caicos | 35442 |
| | Barbados | 285744 | | Virgin Islands British | 31200 |
| | Saint Lucia | 187768 | | Caribbean Netherlands | 25699 |
| | St. Vincent & Grenadines | 109895 | | Anguilla | 14906 |
| | Grenada | 107850 | | Saint Pierre and Miquelon | 6319 |
| | Antigua and Barbuda | 93659 | | Montserrat | 5179 |
| | America - PR | | Puerto Rico | 3679086 | |
| | | | Virgin Islands U.S. | 106574 | |
| 8 - Florida | America - SE | | Florida | 20271272 | 30,486,132 |
| | | | Georgia | 10214860 | |
| 9 - Texas | America - TX | | Texas | 27469114 | 27,469,114 |
| 10 - Arizona | America - SW | | Arizona | 6828065 | 31,487,638 |
| | | | New Mexico | 2085109 | |
| | America | | Nevada | 2890845 | |
| | total = | | Utah | 2995919 | |
| | 330259673 | | Colorado | 5456574 | |
| | | | California - E | | <u>Counties</u> |
| | | | California | | Imperial |
| | | | | | 180883 |
| | | | | | Riverside |
| | | | | | 2387741 |
| | | | | | total = |
| | | | | | San Bernardino |
| | | | | | 2140096 |
| | | | | | San Diego |
| | | | | | 3317749 |
| | | | | | Inyo |
| | | | | | 18144 |
| | | | | | Mono |
| | | | | | 13981 |
| | | | | | Orange |
| | | | | | 3172532 |
| 11 - California | America - W | | California - W | | [all other counties] |
| | | | Hawaii | 1431603 | 29,345,295 |
| 12 - Ohio | America - C | | Indiana | 6619680 | 29,258,494 |
| | | | Ohio | 11613423 | |
| | | | Tennessee | 6600299 | |
| | | | Kentucky | 4425092 | |

| | | | |
|-------------------|--|---|------------|
| 13 - Montana | America - NW | Washington 7170351 Oregon 4028977 Idaho 1654930 Montana 1032949 Wyoming 586107 North Dakota 765927 South Dakota 858469 Nebraska 1896190 Minnesota 5489594 Iowa 3123899 | 26,607,393 |
| 14 - New York | America - NY | Maine 1329328 New Hampshire 1330608 Vermont 626042 Massachusetts 6794422 Rhode Island 1056298 Connecticut 3590886 New York 19795791 | 34,523,375 |
| 15 - Illinois | America - N | Wisconsin 5771337 Michigan 9922576 Illinois 12859995 | 28,553,908 |
| 16 - Pennsylvania | America - NE | Pennsylvania 12802503 New Jersey 8958013 Maryland 6006401 Delaware 945934 | 28,712,851 |
| 17 - Louisiana | America - S | Kansas 2911641 Oklahoma 3911338 Missouri 6083672 Arkansas 2978204 Louisiana 4670724 Mississippi 2992333 Alabama 4858979 | 28,406,891 |
| 18 - Virginia | America - E | West Virginia 1844128 Virginia 8382993 North Carolina 10042802 South Carolina 4896146 | 25,166,069 |
| 19 - Yukon | America - AK | Alaska 738432 | 18,877,529 |
| 20 - Quebec | Canada - W total = Canada - E 36626083 Iceland 334303 Greenland 56239 | | 18,877,528 |

Following are the details for the 14 delegations in the America South section:

| Delegation | Nations | Population | Regions | Provinces | Total Population |
|---------------|------------------|------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| 1 - Peru | Peru | 32166473 | | | 32,166,473 |
| 2 - Venezuela | Venezuela | 31925705 | | | 33,799,560 |
| | Guyana | 774407 | | | |
| | Suriname | 552112 | | | |
| | Curacao | 159987 | | | |
| | Aruba | 104588 | | | |
| 3 - Patagonia | French Guiana | 282761 | | | |
| | Falkland Islands | 2919 | | | |
| | Argentina - S | | | Buenos Aires 15625084 | 34,432,563 |
| | | Argentina | | San Luis 432310 | |
| | | total = | | La Pampa 318951 | |
| | | 44272125 | | Mendoza 1738929 | |
| | | | | Neuquen 551266 | |
| | | | | Rio Negro 638645 | |
| | | | | Chubut 509108 | |
| | | | | Santa Cruz 273964 | |
| | | | | Tierra del Fuego 127205 | |
| | Chile - S | | Santiago 7387359 | | |
| | | Chile | O'Higgins 940763 | | |
| | | total = | Maule 1055282 | | |
| | | 18313495 | Bio Bio 2320944 | | |
| | | | Araucania 983343 | | |
| | | | Los Rios 402405 | | |
| | | | Los Lagos 848287 | | |
| | | | Aysen 104165 | | |
| | | | Magallanes 171634 | | |
| 4 - Cordoba | Chile - N | | Arica y Parinacota 236012 | | 31,612,853 |
| | | | Tarapaca 326066 | | |
| | | | Antofagasta 586596 | | |
| | | | Atacama 314902 | | |
| | | | Coquimbo 759992 | | |
| | | | Valparaiso 1875745 | | |
| | Argentina - N | | | [all other provinces, | |
| 5 - Bolivia | Uruguay | 3456877 | | incl. Cordoba] | |
| | Bolivia | 11052864 | | | 17,864,447 |
| | Paraguay | 6811583 | <u>States</u> | | |
| 6 - Ceara | Brazil - NE | | Maranhao 6714314 | | 37,620,936 |
| | | Brazil | Piaui 3160748 | | |
| | | total = | Ceara 8606005 | | |
| | | 211243220 | Rio Grande do Norte 3228198 | | |
| | | | Paraiba 3815171 | | |
| | | | Pernambuco 8931028 | | |
| | | | Alagoas 3165472 | | |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|---|--------------------------------|------------|
| 7 - Mato Grosso | Brazil - W | Acre 758796 Amazonas 4001667 Rondonia 1590011 Roraima 469524 Amapa 750912 Para 7792561 Tocantina 1496880 Mato Grosso 3305331 Federal District 3013144 Goias 6155998 Mato Grosso do Sul 2505088 | | 31,840,102 |
| 8 - Bahia | Brazil - E | Sergipe 2228489 Bahia 15203934 Espirito Santo 3885049 | | 21,317,472 |
| 9 - Rio de Janeiro | Brazil - SE | Minas Gerais 19855332 Rio de Janeiro 16231365 | | 36,086,697 |
| 10 - Santa Catarina | Brazil - S | Rio Grande do Sul 11286500 Santa Catarina 6634250 Parana 10997462 | | 28,918,212 |
| 11 - Sao Paulo do Leste | Brazil - SPL | | Big Cities | 22,423,265 |
| 12 - Sao Paulo do Oeste | Brazil - SPO | | Sao Paolo - E Sao Paolo - W | 22,423,265 |
| 13 - Ecuador | Ecuador | 16625776 | Departments | 32,149,216 |
| | Colombia - S | Amazonas 74541 Putumayo 337054 Narino 1701840 total = 49067981 Cauca 1354744 Caqueta 465477 Vaupes 42817 Guaviare 107934 Huila 1126314 Meta 924843 Guainia 40203 Vichada 68575 Tolima 1400203 Valle del Cauca 4560196 Choco 490327 Casanare 344027 Quindio 558934 Risaralda 941283 Caldas 984128 Bolívar 2070110 | Cartagena | 33,544,541 |
| 14 - Cartagena | Colombia - N | | [all other departments] | |

Following are the details for the 14 delegations in the Asia North section:

| Delegation | Nations | Population | Provinces | Big Cities | Total Population |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|--|--|------------------|
| 1 - Pyongyang | Korea North | 25405296 | | Pyongyang | 25,405,296 |
| 2 - Seoul | Korea South - N | | | Seoul 9989795 Incheon 2935314 | 27,084,589 |
| | Korea South | | | | |
| | | total = 50704971 | Gangwon 1548603 Gyeonggi 12610877 [all other provinces] | | |
| 3 - Daegu | Korea South - S | | | Daegu | 23,620,382 |
| 4 - Uzbekistan | Uzbekistan | 30690914 | | | 36,193,500 |
| | Turkmenistan | 5502586 | Regions | Prefectures | |
| 5 - Hokkaido | Japan - N | | Hokkaido 5383579 Tohoku 8972080 | | 30,788,032 |
| | | total = 126045211 | Kanto - N Kanto 42992359 total = 42992359 | Ibaraki 2917857 Tochigi 1974671 Gunma 1973476 Saitama 7261271 | |
| 6 - Tokyo | Japan - SE | | Chubu - N Kanto - SE | Niigata 2305098 Chiba 6224027 Tokyo 13513734 Kanagawa 9127323 Yamanashi 835165 | 33,401,430 |
| | | | Chubu - SE Chubu total = 21466155 | Shizuoka 3701181 [all other prefectures] | 31,631,628 |
| 7 - Osaka | Japan - C | | Kansai - C | Mie 1815827 Shiga 1413184 total = 2610140 Kyoto 2610140 Osaka 8838908 Nara 1365008 Wakayama 963850 | |
| 8 - Fukuoka | Japan - SW | | Kansai - SW Chugoku 7439987 Shikoku 3847120 Kyushu 14454861 | Hyogo 5536989 | 31,278,957 |
| 9 - Kazakhstan | Kazakhstan | 18064470 | | | 33,047,530 |
| | Kyrgyzstan | 6124945 | | | |
| | Tajikistan | 8858115 | | | |
| 10 - Siberia | Mongolia | 3051900 | Federal Districts | Big Cities | 28,598,100 |
| | Russia - E | | Far East 6291900 Siberia 19254300 | | |
| | Russia - C | total = 143375006 | Ural 12082700 North-West 13583800 | St. Petersburg | 25,666,500 |
| 11 - Ural | | | | | |
| 12 - Volga | Russia - S | | Volga 29900400 | | 29,900,400 |
| 13 - Moscow | Russia - W | | Central 38438600 | Moscow | 38,438,600 |

| | | | | |
|----------------|-------------|--|-----------|------------|
| 14 - Krasnodar | Russia - SW | South 16141100 North Caucasus 9496800 | Krasnodar | 25,637,900 |
|----------------|-------------|--|-----------|------------|

Following are the details for the 9 delegations in the Asia Southeast section:

| Delegation | Nations | Population | Provinces | Big Cities | Total Population |
|------------------------|--------------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|------------------|
| 1 - Bangkok | Thailand - S | total = | | Bangkok | 34,148,774 |
| 2 - Udonthani | Thailand - N | 68297547 | [incl. Udonthani] | | 34,148,773 |
| 3 - Cambodia | Cambodia | 16076370 | | | 23,113,891 |
| | Laos | 7037521 | <u>Admin. Regions</u> | | |
| 4 - Red River Delta | Vietnam - N | | Northwest 4446800 | | 32,729,300 |
| | | total = | Northeast 8568200 | | |
| | | 95414640 | Red River Delta 19714300 | | |
| 5 - Da Nang | Vietnam - C | | North Central 10472900 | Da Nang | 25,265,800 |
| | | | South Central Coast 9185000 | | |
| | | | Central Highlands 5607900 | | |
| 6 - Mekong River Delta | Vietnam - S | | Southeast 16127800 | | 33,718,200 |
| | | | Mekong River Delta 17590400 | | |
| 7 - Naypyidaw | Myanmar - N | total = | | | 27,418,241 |
| 8 - Yangon | Myanmar - S | 54836483 | | | 27,418,242 |
| 9 - Kuala Lumpur | Singapore | 5784538 | | | 30,784,538 |
| | Malaysia - W | 25000000 | Malaysia total = 31164177 | | |

Following are the details for the 15 delegations in the Oceania section:

| Delegation | Nations | Population | Islands | Provinces | Population | Big Cities | Total Population |
|-----------------|------------------|------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------|-------------|------------------|
| 1 - Borneo | Malaysia - E | 6164177 | | | | | 21,563,969 |
| | Brunei | 434448 | | | | | |
| | Indonesia - NC | | Borneo S | Kalimantan | 14965344 | | |
| 2 - Sulawesi | Indonesia - NE | | Sulawesi | [6 provinces] | 20061200 | | 20,061,200 |
| 3 - Medan | Indonesia - NW | | Sumatra NW | Aceh | 5096248 | | 26,941,990 |
| | | | Sumatra N | 13527937 | | Medan | |
| | | | Riau & Isl. | 8317805 | | | |
| 4 - Palembang | Indonesia - W | | Sumatra SE | Jambi | 3412459 | | 30,393,553 |
| | Indonesia | | Sumatra W | 5131882 | | | |
| | total = | | Bengkulu | 1828291 | | | |
| | 263510146 | | Sumatra S | 10675862 | | Palembang | |
| | | | Bangka-Belitung | 1372813 | | | |
| | | | Lampung | 7972246 | | | |
| 5 - Jakarta | Indonesia - SW | | Java W | Banten | 11834087 | | 21,441,874 |
| | | | | Jakarta | 9607787 | | |
| 6 - Sukabumi | Indonesia - WC | | Java WC | Java W - W | 23689694 | Sukabumi | 23,689,694 |
| 7 - Tasikmalaya | Indonesia - C | | Java C | Java W - E | 23689695 | Tasikmalaya | 23,689,695 |
| 8 - Semarang | Indonesia - EC | | Java EC | Java Central | 33753023 | Semarang | 37,347,313 |
| | | | | Yogyakarta | 3594290 | | |
| 9 - Surabaya | Indonesia - SE | | Java E | Java East | 38529481 | Surabaya | 38,529,481 |
| 10 - New Guinea | Indonesia - E | | Lesser | Bali | 4225384 | | 33,669,897 |
| | | | Sunda | Nusa Tenggara W | 4702389 | | |
| | | | | Nusa Tenggara E | 5070746 | | |
| | | | Maluku | Maluku | 1708190 | | |
| | | | | Maluku N | 1141561 | | |
| | | | New | Papua W | 877437 | | |
| | | | Guinea W | Papua | 3486432 | | |
| | Papua New Guinea | 7933841 | | | | | |
| | Fiji | 902547 | | <u>more nations</u> | | | |
| | Solomon Islands | 606215 | | American Samoa | 55653 | | |
| | French Polynesia | 288685 | | Northern Mariana | 55567 | | |
| | Vanuatu | 276331 | | Marshall Islands | 53132 | | |
| | New Caledonia | 269736 | | Cook Islands | 21069 | | |
| | Samoa | 195743 | | Wallis and Futuna | 13090 | | |
| | Guam | 174214 | | Nauru | 10301 | | |
| | Kiribati | 116405 | | Tuvalu | 9975 | | |
| | Tonga | 107797 | | Niue | 1614 | | |
| | Micronesia | 105566 | | Tokelau | 1300 | | |
| 11 - Australia | Australia | 24641662 | | | | | 29,246,533 |
| | New Zealand | 4604871 | <u>Regions</u> | | | | |
| 12 - Formosa | Taiwan | 23405309 | Formosa | | | | 30,153,443 |
| | Philippines - NW | | Cordillera | 1722006 | | | |
| | | | Ilocos | 5026128 | | | |
| 13 - Luzon | Philippines - N | | Cagayan | 3451410 | | | 27,546,840 |
| | | | Central Luzon | 11218177 | | | |
| | | | National Capital Region | 12877253 | | | |
| 14 - Quezon | Philippines - C | | Calabarzon | 14414774 | | Quezon | 32,092,520 |
| | Philippines | | Bicol | 5796989 | | | |
| | total = | | Mimaropa | 2963360 | | | |
| | 103796832 | | Visayas Eastern | 4440150 | | | |
| | | | Visayas Western | 4477247 | | | |
| 15 - Mindanao | Philippines - S | | Visayas Central | 6041903 | | | 34,591,809 |
| | | | Negros | 4414131 | | | |
| | | | Caraga | 2596709 | | | |
| | | | Northern Mindanao | 4689302 | | | |
| | | | Zamboanga | 3629783 | | | |
| | | | Davao | 4893318 | | | |
| | | | Soccsksargen | 4545276 | | | |
| | | | Muslim Mindanao | 3781387 | | | |

Following are the details for the 19 delegations in the Asia Southwest section:

| <u>Delegation</u> | <u>Nations</u> | <u>Population</u> | <u>Provinces & Territories</u> | <u>Big Cities</u> | <u>Total Population</u> |
|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---|--|-------------------------|
| 1 - Saudi Arabia | Saudi Arabia | 32742664 | | | 32,742,664 |
| 2 - Yemen | Yemen | 28119546 | | | 28,119,546 |
| 3 - Oman | Oman | 4741305 | | | 21,995,816 |
| | United Arab Emirates | 9397599 | | | |
| | Qatar | 2338085 | | | |
| | Bahrain | 1418895 | | | |
| | Kuwait | 4099932 | | | |
| 4 - Karachi | Pakistan - S | | Sindh 42400000 | Karachi | 42,400,000 |
| 5 - Khyber | Pakistan - NW | | Gilgit-Baltistan 1800000 Fed Tribal Areas 3176331 Khyber 28000000 | Gilgit Peshawar | |
| 6 - Rawalpindi | Pakistan - NE | | Islamabad Cap 1151868 | Islamabad | 35,164,580 |
| | Pakistan total = | 196744376 | Azad Kashmir 4567982 Punjab - N | Divisions Muzaffarabad 7 - Rawalpindi 10727822 9 - Sargodha 9115028 4 - Gujranwala 9601880 | |
| 7 - Lahore | Pakistan - E | | Punjab - E | 5 - Lahore 28637490 | 28,637,490 |
| 8 - Multan | Pakistan - SE | | Punjab - S | 8 - Sahiwal 5286388 3 - Faisalabad 14859094 total = 6 - Multan 10233702 102598768 | 35,245,366 |
| 9 - Balochistan | Pakistan - SW | | Punjab - W Balochistan 7914000 | 1 - Bahawalpur 4866182 2 - Dera G K 9271182 Quetta | 17,185,182 |
| 10 - Afghanistan | Afghanistan | 34169169 | <u>Regions</u> | | 34,169,169 |
| 11 - Bushehr | Iran - S | | Region 5 (E) 14382216 | | 28,576,095 |
| 12 - Tehran | Iran - C | total = 80945718 | Region 2 (S) 14193879 Region 1 (N) 25539653 Region 4 (W) 12844264 Region 3 (NW) 13985706 | | 38,383,917 |
| 13 - Tabriz | Iran - NW | | | | 26,991,073 |
| | Armenia | 3031670 | | | |
| | Azerbaijan | 9973697 | | | |
| 14 - Anatolia | Georgia | 3972532 | | | 29,385,808 |
| 15 - Marmara | Turkey - SE | | Anatolia 25413276 | | |
| | Turkey - N | total = | Black Sea 11886144 Marmara 15047402 | | 26,933,546 |
| 16 - Isparta | Turkey - S | 80417526 | Aegean 14117590 Mediterranean 13953115 [incl. Isparta province] | | 29,258,280 |
| 17 - Iraq | Cyprus | 1187575 | | | |
| 18 - Syria | Iraq | 38654287 | | | 38,654,287 |
| | Syria | 18906907 | | | 24,946,184 |
| | Lebanon | 6039277 | | | |
| 19 - Jordan | Jordan | 7876703 | | | 21,128,176 |
| | Palestine | 4928225 | | | |
| | Israel | 8323248 | | | |

Following are the details for the 20 delegations in the Europe section:

| <u>Delegation</u> | <u>Nations</u> | <u>Population</u> | <u>Provinces</u> | <u>Regions</u> | <u>Total Population</u> |
|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------|--|---|-------------------------|
| 1 - Hebrides | Ireland | 4749153 | | Hebrides | 35,765,140 |
| | Isle of Man | 89045 | | | |
| | Faeroe Islands | 48335 | | | |
| | United Kingdom - W | | Ireland N 1870541 Scotland 5404700 Wales 3063456 | | |
| | United Kingdom total = | 65511098 | England - W England total = 54786300 | North East 2597000 North West 7052000 West Midlands 5602000 South West 5289000 | |
| 2 - London | United Kingdom - E | | England - E | E of England 5847000 London 8665000 South East 8635000 East Midlands 4533000 Yorkshire/Humber 5284000 | 32,964,000 |
| 3 - Scandinavia | Norway | 5330800 | | | 26,873,600 |
| | Sweden | 9920624 | | Scandinavia | |
| | Finland | 5541274 | | | |
| | Estonia | 1305755 | | | |
| | Latvia | 1944565 | | | |
| | Lithuania | 2830582 | | | |
| 4 - Kiev | Belarus | 9458535 | | | 26,911,548 |
| | Ukraine - N | | <u>Oblasts</u> | | |
| | Ukraine total = | 44405055 | Volyn 1038223 Rivne 1152576 Zhytomyr 1283201 Kiev 1719602 Chernihiv 1104241 Sumy 1166765 Lviv 2545634 Poltava 1493668 Zakarpattia 1246323 Ivano-Frankivsk 1380770 | | |

| | | | | | |
|------------------|--|---|---|--|------------|
| | | | Ternopil 1086694 Khmelnyskyi 1331534 Chernivtsi 903782 Vinnytsia 1646250 Cherkasy 1291135 Kirovohrad 1014809 Dnipropetrovsk 3344073 Kharkiv 2755177 Luhansk 2300412 Odessa 2387636 Mykolaiv 1186452 Kherson 1091151 Crimea 1966801 Zaporizhia 1805431 Donetsk 4448031 | | |
| 5 - Odessa | Ukraine - S | | | | 27,645,748 |
| 6 - Romania | Moldova 4054640 Romania 19237513 Serbia 8776940 | | | | 28,014,453 |
| 7 - Ionia | Bulgaria 7045259 Macedonia 2083308 Greece 10892931 Albania 2911428 | | Ionia | | 22,932,926 |
| 8 - Carpathia | Montenegro 626250 Bosnia and Herzegovina 3792759 Croatia 4209815 Slovenia 2071252 Hungary 9787905 Austria 8592400 | | Carpathia | | 20,487,981 |
| 9 - Bohemia | Liechtenstein 38022 Czech Republic 10555130 Slovakia 5432157 Poland 38563573 | | Bohemia | | 24,617,709 |
| 10 - Poland | Denmark 5711837 | Federal States | | | 38,563,573 |
| 11 - Berlin | Germany - NE Germany total = 80636124 | Schleswig-Holstein 2806500 Hamburg 1734300 Mecklenburg-Vorpommern 1600300 Berlin 3375200 Saxony-Anhalt 2259400 Brandenburg 2449500 Saxony 4050200 Thuringia 2170500 | | | 26,157,737 |
| 12 - Bavaria | Germany - S | Bavaria 12519600 Baden-Wuerttemberg 10569100 | | | 31,542,783 |
| 13 - Westphalia | Switzerland 8454083 Germany - W | Saarland 994300 Rhineland-Palatinate 3990300 Hesse 6016500 North Rhine / Westphalia 17554300 | | | 29,139,503 |
| 14 - Netherlands | Luxembourg 584103 Germany - NW | Lower Saxony 7779000 Bremen 654800 | | | 36,910,475 |
| 15 - Paris | Netherlands 17032845 Belgium 11443830 Channel Islands 165235 | Regions | Big Cities | | 30,257,909 |
| 16 - Auvergne | France - N France total = 64938716 | Grand Est 5554645 Hauts-de-France 5973098 Normandy 3322757 Brittany 3237097 Ile-de-France 12005077 Bourgogne 2816814 Centre-Loire 2538000 Loire 3553353 Nouvelle-Aquitaine 5879144 Auvergne 7695264 Occitanie 5626858 Provence 4935576 | Paris | | 33,083,019 |
| 17 - Lombardy | Monaco 38010 France - SS Italy - N Italy total = 59797978 | Corsica 326898 Liguria 1583263 Piedmont 4244467 Aosta 128298 Lombardy 10002615 Trentino 1055934 Veneto 4927596 Friuli-Venezia Giulia 1227122 Emilia-Romagna 4450508 Tuscany 3752654 | | | 31,699,355 |
| 18 - Rome | San Marino 32104 Italy - S | Marche 1550796 Umbria 894762 Lazio 5892 Abruzzo 1331574 Molise 313348 Apulia 4090105 Campania 5861529 Sardinia 1663286 Basilicata 576619 Calabria 1976631 | Rome | | 29,696,581 |

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|----------|-------------------------------|---------|------------|
| | | | Sicily | 5092080 | |
| | Malta | 420521 | | | |
| | Holy See | 801 | | | |
| 19 - Valencia | Andorra | 68728 | | | 27,658,785 |
| | Spain - E | | <u>Autonomous Communities</u> | | |
| | Spain | | Catalonia | 7522596 | |
| | total = | | Balearic Islands | 1106049 | |
| | 46070146 | | Valencia | 4980689 | |
| | | | Murcia | 1470069 | |
| | | | Andalusia | 8402305 | |
| | Gibraltar | 32472 | | | |
| | Spain - C | | Castilla La Mancha | 2121888 | |
| | | | Aragon | 1317847 | |
| | | | Navarre | 636142 | |
| 20 - Iberia | Spain - W | | La Rioja | 308968 | 27,257,365 |
| | | | Basque | 2164311 | |
| | | | Cantabria | 593121 | |
| | | | Asturias | 1061756 | |
| | | | Galicia | 2718525 | |
| | | | Castile y Leon | 2558463 | |
| | | | Madrid | 6489680 | Iberia |
| | | | Extremadura | 1097744 | |
| | Portugal | 10264797 | | | |

During this process, we considered that we could save some time if we cut short the assignment of delegations to the area-based house to just the total number needed for each of the 10 areas designated for the population-based house, on the idea that they can be arranged internally in many different ways, and possibly should be assigned by the actual delegates based upon their closer personal knowledge of the geography and climate of each small area.

We found that the total land area of all the continents (including Antarctica) is 149,428,500 square kilometers, so it occurred to us that 150 would be a very good number of delegates for the 'House of Territories', both because it is on the other side of the then-current number of delegations in the House of Nations, and primarily because each delegation in the House of Territories would correspond with an easily-memorable 1 million sqkm of area, equivalent to a square region of 1000 km to each side. This meant 14 delegations for Antarctica, 30 for Africa, 44 for Asia, 10 for Europe, 25 for America North, 9 for Australia, and 18 for America South.

We next researched the competition criteria more deeply. They wanted a general model for decision-making, rather than specific solutions, one which could be implemented within the foreseeable future, and which would be acceptable to major states and the international community. We must not reshape intranational political systems, and there must be minimum limitation to the sovereignty of nation-states.

Format requirements included: Must consist of 3 parts. First part was the Abstract, max 1000 words, to summarize our design, "including the institutions, regulations, decision-making paths and control mechanisms it involves, as well as how key individuals and other decision-making bodies are to be appointed". Second part was the Description, max 5500 words, must be divided into subsections with clear headings, text must "clearly define the functions of the various components, their areas of responsibility and the extent of their decision-making mandate", and also "describe how the model is meant to manage both current and emerging challenges and risks". Third part was the Argumentation, max 2750 words, presenting a convincing argument as to how the model meets each of 8 assessment criteria, viz.:

- (1) Core Values, good of all humankind, respect for equal value of all human beings
- (2) Decision-Making Capacity, "must generally be possible without crippling delays that prevent the challenges from being adequately addressed", incl. veto authority
- (3) Effectiveness, "must be capable of handling the global challenges and risks and include means to ensure implementation of decisions"

- (4) Resources and Financing, "must have sufficient human and material resources at its disposal, and these resources must be financed in an equitable manner"
- (5) Trust and Insight, "transparency and considerable insight into power structures and decision-making"
- (6) Flexibility, "must contain mechanism that allows for revisions and improvements to be made to its structure and components"
- (7) Protection Against the Abuse of Power, "control system must be in place to take action if the organization should overstep its mandate, e.g. by unduly interfering with the internal affairs of nation-states or favouring the special interests of individuals, groups, organizations, states or groups of states"
- (8) Accountability, "[model] performs the tasks it has been charged with, and ... must include the power to hold the decision-makers accountable for their actions"

We found it pretty neat that they had already pretty much done our outline for us, just now needed to fill in. How tough could that be at this advanced stage?

Focused on actual composition next, deciding to start from the end and work backward, since they were giving me all those criteria which explicitly needed to be satisfied in Part III, which was easiest to get out of the way now, saving for towards the end the bit about looking up the history of the U.N. Charter for the Introduction.

Our draft of Part III for Argumentation explicitly and clearly covered all their talking points, and came in at 2714 words out of a max of 2750. We were very happy.

Having budgeted our time sufficiently well, we managed after all to assign specific delegations in the House of Territories, assigning names to all delegations based on existing territorial descriptions, and then looking up land areas for the 100+ largest countries and sorting them by continent. Process took one solid day.

We have specially arranged all 150 areas for this report so that you can travel the World in order, beginning with the 24 delegations in the America North section:

| Delegation | Regions | M SqKm | Total Area | Delegation | Regions | M SqKm | Total Area |
|-------------------|----------------|--------|------------|-------------------|---------------|--------|------------|
| 1 - Seward | Alaska - W | 0.85 | 0.85 | 15 - Wyoming | America - NWC | 0.925 | 0.925 |
| 2 - Yukon | Alaska - E | 0.85 | 0.85 | 16 - Wisconsin | America - NEC | 0.925 | 0.925 |
| 3 - MacKenzie | NW Territories | 1.2 | 1.2 | 17 - Pennsylvania | America - NE | 0.925 | 0.925 |
| 4 - Keewatin | Nunavut - SW | 0.95 | 0.95 | 18 - Carolina | America - SE | 0.925 | 0.925 |
| 5 - Baffin | Nunavut - NE | 0.95 | 0.95 | 19 - Ozark | America - SC | 0.925 | 0.925 |
| 6 - Thule | Greenland - N | 1.15 | 1.15 | 20 - Santa Fe | America - SW | 0.925 | 0.925 |
| 7 - Skjoldungen | Greenland - S | 1.05 | 1.15 | 21 - Nevada* | America - W | 0.925 | 0.925 |
| | Iceland | 0.1 | | 22 - Mazatlan | Mexico - NW | 0.95 | 0.95 |
| 8 - Quebec | Quebec | 1.35 | 1.35 | 23 - Mexico City | Mexico - SE | 0.95 | 0.95 |
| 9 - Ontario | Ontario | 0.9 | 0.9 | 24 - Caribbean | Guatemala | 0.1 | 0.4 |
| 10 - Manitoba | Manitoba | 0.65 | 0.65 | | Honduras | 0.1 | |
| 11 - Saskatchewan | Saskatchewan | 0.6 | 0.6 | | Nicaragua | 0.1 | |
| 12 - Alberta | Alberta | 0.65 | 0.65 | | Cuba | 0.1 | |
| 13 - Vancouver | Br. Columbia | 0.9 | 0.9 | | | | |
| 14 - Oregon | America - NW | 0.925 | 0.925 | | | | |

* With all the nuclear testing there, they need a rep at the table.

Following are the details for the 18 delegations in the America South section:

| Delegation | Regions | M SqKm | Total Area | Delegation | Regions | M SqKm | Total Area |
|-----------------|-------------|--------|------------|---------------------|---------------|--------|------------|
| 1 - Venezuela | Venezuela | 0.9 | 0.9 | 10 - Meio-Norte | Maranhao etc. | | 0.455 |
| 2 - Colombia | Colombia | 1.0 | 1.0 | 11 - Sertao | Brazil - EC | 1.105 | 1.105 |
| 3 - Quito | Ecuador | 0.25 | 0.775 | 12 - Brasilia | Brazil - C | 0.7 | 0.7 |
| | Peru - N | 0.525 | | 13 - Minas Gerais | Brazil - SE | 0.9 | 0.9 |
| 4 - Lima | Peru - S | 0.775 | 0.775 | 14 - Santa Catarina | Brazil - S | 0.6 | 0.6 |
| 5 - Bolivia | Bolivia | 1.1 | 1.1 | 15 - El Chaco | Argentina - N | 0.8 | 1.2 |
| 6 - Mato Grosso | Brazil - WC | 0.9 | 0.9 | | Paraguay | 0.4 | |
| 7 - Amazonas | Brazil - NW | 1.62 | 1.62 | 16 - Atacama | Chile - N | 0.6 | 0.6 |
| 8 - Suriname | Brazil - N | 0.63 | 0.98 | 17 - Buenos Aires | Argentina - C | 0.9 | 1.1 |
| | Guyana | 0.2 | | | Uruguay | 0.2 | |
| | Suriname | 0.15 | | 18 - Patagonia | Argentina - S | 1.0 | 1.1 |
| 9 - Para | Brazil - NC | 1.62 | 1.62 | | Chile - S | 0.1 | |

Following are the details for the 14 delegations in the Antarctica section:

| Delegation | Location | Delegation | Location |
|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 - Palmer | peninsula near Chile | 8 - Wilkes | land S of Perth |
| 2 - Ellsworth | land near Bellingshausen Sea | 9 - Mirny | station S of India |
| 3 - Byrd | land S of Los Angeles | 10 - Enderby | peninsula S of Madagascar |
| 4 - Rockefeller | plateau S of Tahiti | 11 - Queen Maud | land S of Cape Town |
| 5 - Ross | International Date Line | 12 - Meridian | Prime Meridian |
| 6 - Oates | coast S of New Zealand | 13 - Shackleton | base near Weddell Sea |
| 7 - Adelie | South Magnetic Pole | 14 - Filchner | ice shelf S of Rio de Janeiro |

Following are the details for the 30 delegations in the Africa section:

| Delegation | Nations | M SqKm | Total Area | Delegation | Nations | M SqKm | Total Area |
|---------------------|--------------|--------|------------|-----------------|--------------|--------|------------|
| 1 - South Africa | South Africa | 1.2 | 1.2 | 18 - Guinea | Benin | 0.1 | 1.25 |
| 2 - Namibia | Namibia | 0.8 | 0.8 | | Ghana | 0.2 | |
| 3 - Kalahari | Botswana | 0.6 | 1.0 | | Burkina Faso | 0.3 | |
| | Zimbabwe | 0.4 | | | Ivory Coast | 0.3 | |
| 4 - Mozambique | Mozambique | 0.8 | 0.8 | | Liberia | 0.1 | |
| 5 - Madagascar | Madagascar | 0.6 | 0.6 | | Guinea | 0.25 | |
| 6 - Tanzania | Tanzania | 0.9 | 0.9 | 19 - Mauritania | Senegal | 0.2 | 1.5 |
| 7 - Zambia | Malawi | 0.1 | 0.8 | | W Sahara | 0.3 | |
| | Zambia | 0.7 | | | Mauritania | 1.0 | |
| 8 - Angola | Angola | 1.25 | 1.25 | 20 - Mali | Mali | 1.2 | 1.2 |
| 9 - Kananga | Zaire - S | 1.15 | 1.15 | 21 - Niger | Niger | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| 10 - Rwenzori | Zaire - N | 1.15 | 1.15 | 22 - Chad | Chad | 1.25 | 1.25 |
| 11 - Nairobi | Uganda | 0.2 | 0.8 | 23 - Darfur | Sudan - SW | 0.95 | 0.95 |
| | Kenya | 0.6 | | 24 - Kassala | Eritrea | 0.1 | 1.05 |
| 12 - Somalia | Somalia | 0.6 | 0.6 | | Sudan - NE | 0.95 | |
| 13 - Ethiopia | Ethiopia | 1.0 | 1.0 | 25 - Egypt | Egypt | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| 14 - South Sudan | S Sudan | 0.6 | 0.6 | 26 - Kufra | Libya - E | 0.875 | 0.875 |
| 15 - Central Africa | C Africa | 0.6 | 0.6 | 27 - Marzua | Libya - W | 0.875 | 0.875 |
| 16 - Ovem | Congo | 0.35 | 1.1 | 28 - Ahaggar | Algeria - SE | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| | Gabon | 0.25 | | 29 - Reggane | Algeria - SW | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| | Cameroon | 0.5 | | 30 - Atlas | Tunisia | 0.15 | 1.0 |
| 17 - Nigeria | Nigeria | 0.9 | 0.9 | | Algeria - N | 0.4 | |
| | | | | | Morocco | 0.45 | |

Following are the details for the 6 delegations in the Europe section:

| Delegation | Nations | M SqKm | Total Area | Delegation | Nations | M SqKm | Total Area |
|-----------------|----------------|--------|------------|--------------|----------|--------|------------|
| 1 - Iberia | Portugal | 0.1 | 0.6 | 4 - Ukraine | Belarus | 0.2 | 0.8 |
| | Spain | 0.5 | | | Ukraine | 0.6 | |
| 2 - Normandy | France | 0.65 | 0.9 | 5 - Lusatia | Romania | 0.2 | 0.95 |
| | United Kingdom | 0.25 | | | Hungary | 0.1 | |
| 3 - Scandinavia | Norway | 0.3 | 1.0 | | Poland | 0.3 | |
| | Sweden | 0.4 | | | Germany | 0.35 | |
| | Finland | 0.3 | | 6 - Adriatic | Italy | 0.3 | 0.5 |
| | | | | | Greece | 0.1 | |
| | | | | | Bulgaria | 0.1 | |

Following are the details for the 9 delegations in the Asia Southwest section:

| Delegation | Nations | M SqKm | Total Area | Delegation | Nations | M SqKm | Total Area |
|-------------|---------------------------|--------|------------|-----------------|-------------|--------|------------|
| 1 - Turkey | Turkey | 1.0 | 1.0 | 5 - Yemen | Arabia - S | 1.0 | 1.6 |
| 2 - Elburz | Iran - N | 0.9 | 0.9 | | Yemen | 0.6 | |
| 3 - Syria | Iraq | 0.5 | 0.7 | 6 - Oman | Arabia - E | 0.8 | 1.2 |
| | Syria | 0.2 | | | Oman | 0.4 | |
| | Jordan, Israel, Palestine | | | 7 - Shiraz | Iran - S | 0.9 | 0.9 |
| 4 - Sakakah | Arabia - NW | 1.6 | 1.6 | 8 - Afghanistan | Afghanistan | 0.8 | 0.8 |
| | | | | 9 - Pakistan | Pakistan | 1.1 | 1.1 |

Following are the details for the 3 delegations in the India section:

| Delegation | Nations | M SqKm | Total Area | Delegation | Nations | M SqKm | Total Area |
|---------------|-----------|--------|------------|----------------|------------|--------|------------|
| 1 - Delhi | India - N | 1.083 | 1.083 | 3 - Bangladesh | India - E | 0.834 | 1.084 |
| 2 - Hyderabad | India - S | 1.083 | 1.083 | | Nepal | 0.15 | |
| | | | | | Bangladesh | 0.1 | |

Following are the details for the 3 delegations in the Asia Southeast section:

| Delegation | Nations | M SqKm | Total Area | Delegation | Nations | M SqKm | Total Area |
|---------------|----------|--------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------|------------|
| 1 - Myanmar | Myanmar | 0.65 | 0.65 | 3 - Thailand | Thailand | 0.5 | 0.63 |
| 2 - Indochina | Laos | 0.2 | 0.7 | | Malaysia - W | 0.13 | |
| | Vietnam | 0.3 | | | | | |
| | Cambodia | 0.2 | | | | | |

Following are the details for the 11 delegations in the Oceania section:

| Delegation | Regions | M SqKm | Total Area | Delegation | Regions | M SqKm | Total Area |
|----------------|-----------------|--------|------------|---------------|------------------|--------|------------|
| 1 - Sunda | Indonesia - W | 1.35 | 1.35 | 7 - Adelaide | S Australia | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| 2 - New Guinea | Indonesia - E | 0.45 | 1.2 | 8 - Sydney | Victoria | | 1.0 |
| | Philippines | 0.3 | | | New S Wales | | |
| | Papua N.G. | 0.45 | | 9 - Brisbane | Queensland - S | 0.85 | |
| 3 - Darwin | N Territory | 1.35 | 1.35 | 10 - Croydon | Queensland - N | 0.85 | |
| 4 - Fitzroy | W Australia - N | 0.84 | 0.84 | 11 - Auckland | New Zealand | 0.3 | |
| 5 - Onslow | W Australia - W | 0.84 | 0.84 | | French Polynesia | | |
| 6 - Perth | W Australia - S | 0.84 | 0.84 | | Kiribati etc. | | |

Following are the details for the 11 delegations in the China section:

| Delegation | Regions | M SqKm | Total Area | Delegation | Regions | M SqKm | Total Area |
|----------------|------------------|--------|------------|-----------------|--------------|--------|------------|
| 1 - Manchuria | Liaoning | 0.148 | 0.79 | 5 - Guangdong | Guangdong | 0.18 | 0.888 |
| | Jilin | 0.187 | | | Hunan | 0.212 | |
| | Heilongjiang | 0.455 | | | Guangxi | 0.238 | |
| 2 - Nei Menggu | Mongolia - Inner | 1.2 | 1.2 | | Guizhou | 0.176 | |
| 3 - Shanxi | Ningxia | 0.066 | 0.942 | | Chongqing | 0.082 | |
| | Shaanxi | 0.206 | | 6 - Yunnan | Yunnan | 0.394 | 0.88 |
| | Shanxi | 0.157 | | | Sichuan | 0.486 | |
| | Henan | 0.167 | | 7 - Qinghai | Gansu | 0.426 | 1.214 |
| | Hebei | 0.189 | | | Qinghai | 0.722 | |
| | Shandong | 0.157 | | 8 - Xizang | Tibet | 1.228 | 1.228 |
| 4 - Hubei | Jiangsu | 0.103 | 0.821 | 9 - Xinjiang | Xinjiang | 1.665 | 1.665 |
| | Zhejiang | 0.102 | | 10 - Uliastay | Mongolia - W | 0.775 | 0.775 |
| | Anhui | 0.139 | | 11 - Ulan Bator | Mongolia - E | 0.775 | 0.775 |
| | Hubei | 0.186 | | | | | |
| | Jiangxi | 0.167 | | | | | |
| | Fujian | 0.124 | | | | | |

Following are the details for the 21 delegations in the Asia North section:

| Delegation | Nations | M SqKm | Total Area | Delegation | Nations | M SqKm | Total Area |
|-------------------|----------------|---------|------------|------------------|--------------|---------|------------|
| 1 - Zabaykalsk | Russia - SEC | 1.01875 | 1.01875 | 11 - Moscow | Russia - CW | 1.01875 | 1.01875 |
| 2 - Irkutsk | Russia - NEC | 1.01875 | 1.01875 | 12 - Karelia | Russia - WNW | 1.01875 | 1.01875 |
| 3 - Altai | Russia - SWC | 1.01875 | 1.01875 | 13 - Komi | Russia - ENW | 1.01875 | 1.01875 |
| 4 - Omsk | Russia - NWC | 1.01875 | 1.01875 | 14 - Yamalia | Russia - NC | 1.01875 | 1.01875 |
| 5 - Oskemen | Kazakhstan - E | 0.9 | 0.9 | 15 - Krasnoyarsk | Russia - C | 1.01875 | 1.01875 |
| 6 - Samarkand | Kyrgyzstan | 0.2 | 1.25 | 16 - Yakutsk | Russia - WNE | 1.01875 | 1.01875 |
| | Tajikistan | 0.15 | | 17 - Khabarovsk | Russia - SE | 1.01875 | 1.01875 |
| | Turkmenistan | 0.5 | | 18 - Kyushu | N Korea | 0.1 | 0.6 |
| | Uzbekistan | 0.4 | | | S Korea | 0.1 | |
| 7 - Karagandy | Kazakhstan - C | 0.9 | 0.9 | | Japan | 0.4 | |
| 8 - Aktobe | Kazakhstan - W | 0.9 | 0.9 | 19 - Kamchatka | Russia - CE | 1.01875 | 1.01875 |
| 9 - Bashkortostan | Russia - ESW | 1.01875 | 1.01875 | 20 - Magadan | Russia - CNE | 1.01875 | 1.01875 |
| 10 - Rostov | Russia - WSW | 1.01875 | 1.01875 | 21 - Chukotka | Russia - ENE | 1.01875 | 1.01875 |

We took a break toward the end of this compilation to add Abstract language about why we have the third house, pretty schmaltzy but we sincerely meant every word.

We used our regular Monday-meeting timeslot on 22-May-2017 to advance the 'Swedish project' further. It did not count as a formal A2E SIG session.

Specifically, after moving some sections around in the draft entry for reasons of clarity and word count, we spent most of the time looking up the histories of the League of Nations and of the United Nations, to refresh our recollection of why neither actually prevented any further war. Summary of our research follows:

League of Nations depended upon the 'Great Powers' to contribute military support when needed, but they were often reluctant to do so. Nations like America had more of an isolationist philosophy back then, but by 1917 were all too eager to send their troops into combat for the purpose (or sometimes on the pretense) of helping other countries far away.

Germany and other nations eventually withdrew from the League, meaning that it was more of a voluntary association than an authoritative legislative body. In contrast, withdrawing from the Earth Congress can be taken as a sign of potential

aggression against the rest of the World, and so we would immediately begin preparing for armed intervention. Many nations (we presume) would enjoy being able to assist in such preventive efforts with legal justification, instead of independently and without proper consent of the international community.

Also, the League of Nations tried to achieve peace through disarmament, but we are not recommending that strategy, at least not to a full extent.

Also, the League of Nations required unanimous vote of the Executive Council (and sometimes even of the entire assembly) in order to achieve a resolution, so they seldom accomplished anything, and gave rise to a general perception of indecision. We would require only a simple majority if the resolution is within the house's mission, and it would be subject to veto by the other houses if it is really awful.

Also, membership in the League was restricted against recent aggressors and Communist regimes, but the Earth Congress would include Everybody.

United Nations rules of procedure required a 2/3 majority for "important questions", but these explicitly included "budgetary questions", which should require only a simple majority, as well as admission of new members to the General Assembly and to certain councils, which probably also should require only a simple majority.

Except for budgetary matters, resolutions were not binding on the members, bad.

General Assembly apparently was not entitled even to make recommendations on matters of "peace and security" which were under consideration by the Security Council. Assembly should always be able to overrule any Committee, because it represents a larger membership with a broader perspective and a more diverse set of interests at stake.

U.N. would send in peacekeeping forces in regions where there had been conflict, so that focus was more on keeping peace than counter-attacking an aggressor. No wonder it kept happening!

Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted way back in 1948, drafted by a committee headed by Eleanor Roosevelt.

General Assembly established the 'Office of Internal Oversight Services' in 1994, as an efficiency watchdog, which the houses in our model can still have, but the Executive Council overseeing all three houses can do so also.

According to the United Nations Charter, Chapter I, Article 1, the purposes of the U.N. included first "to maintain international peace and security" and "to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace".

We next drafted the remainder of the Abstract language, beginning with references to the above history, and segmenting Part I into three sections very similar to how we originally envisioned the three parts. Unlike the first draft of Part III, the first draft of Part I came in over the word budget, at 1214 words as compared with 1000 max, so we had some trimming and/or some further reassignment into Part II to do.

Added and deleted some further language in all Parts over the next three days.

We approved the 15th draft at 1906 on 25-May-2017, with a total of 8756 words:

<begin quote>

HRG PLAN For GLOBAL GOVERNANCE 2017

PART I - ABSTRACT

Section I-A - Why We Need a Plan

We still have war. It has now been more than 70 years since the Second World War ended and we enacted the United Nations Charter, which was intended to “maintain international peace and security”, but the reality is that we still have war.

We also still have the threat of war. Nations which have not yet crossed any international borders with military force are still carrying out internal testings and other military developments, and issuing public declarations through news agencies and electronic media that they intend to attack certain other nations unless their demands are satisfied. This environment creates unjustified stress not only to the nations being threatened, but also to the peoples of the rest of the world, who worry that any such military conflict could damage their economic health, kill or injure loved ones who are living or fighting in other nations, or escalate to cross their own international borders.

The history shows that both the United Nations and its predecessor the League of Nations allowed many acts of international aggression to go unpunished. When they did intervene at all, the focus was usually on mutual disarmament and ‘peacekeeping’, instead of on identifying and punishing the original aggressors. As a result, numerous nations have felt free to cross internationally-recognized borders with military force, or to threaten such action.

We have always had the opportunity since 1920 to prevent all war, and now we need to actually do it, because our weapons have become more destructive and widespread than ever before, and because with our advanced communication technology we now are much more of a global community than we ever had a chance to be before, and because we have other problems of a global scale which need to be examined and solved without the distraction of managing ongoing threats to our international security.

Section I-B - Summary of Plan

The problems of the world fall into 3 main categories: problems between sovereign nations, problems affecting large numbers of people, and problems affecting the planet itself. While the United Nations has attempted in good faith to solve all these problems, the clear reality is that no one assembly can do it all. In trying to do too much all by itself, the United Nations has achieved some success, but has also failed to solve all the world’s problems, so we need to do the job better.

We therefore need a separate assembly to focus on each of the 3 main categories of global problems, each with a different type of constituency, as follows:

(1) The first assembly (called here the ‘House of Nations’) would be basically the same as the current United Nations, but would focus on making sure that no nation ever crosses an international border with military force.

(2) The second assembly (called here the ‘House of Provinces’) would consist of a number of delegations (recommending 250 here) of approximately-equal population sizes. Its primary job would be to share information on the specific problems facing different population centers (such as hunger, poverty, disease, homelessness, and illiteracy), and to work with local governments to develop and implement solutions to those problems.

(3) The third assembly (called here the ‘House of Territories’) would consist of a number of delegations (recommending 150 here) of approximately-equal geographic areas. Its primary job would be to share information on the specific problems facing different areas of the planet (such as environmental pollution, climate change, agricultural underproduction, and species depletion), and to work with local governments to develop and implement solutions to those problems.

Each of the three houses would have real legislative and enforcement authority to take quick and decisive action when needed, instead of being only a diplomatic and advisory commission like the previous two international oversight organizations. However, we should never allow any one of the houses to become an all-powerful ‘one-world government’, so the three houses would be organized together into a single body (called here the ‘Earth Congress’), and the decisions of each house would be subject to veto by the other two houses. An ‘Executive Council’ would exercise administrative and supervisory authority over the three houses of the Earth Congress.

The delegates of each house would elect their own Secretary and other officers, along with representatives to the Executive Council, who in turn would elect a Secretary-General to supervise the entire Earth Congress. Further details of elections and other voting procedures are presented in Subsection II-E-3 below.

PART II - DESCRIPTION

Section II-A - Missions of the Houses

Subsection II-A-1 - Mission of the Nation-Based House (House of Nations)

The first house has the sole mission to maintain the international peace, taking decisive action as appropriate to punish any nation of any size which crosses an internationally-recognized border with military force, or which threatens to do so. As part of that mission, this house will objectively adjudicate disputes between neighboring nations as needed, and identify the proper peaceful solutions.

Because the mission of this house involves evaluating the actions of sovereign nations, and possibly punishing them accordingly, the assembly should have the perspectives of all currently-recognized sovereign nations as to which specific actions are or are not appropriate. Broader perspective is better, so each currently-recognized sovereign nation shall have one vote in the assembly, regardless of population size or geographic area.

Subsection II-A-2 - Mission of the Population-Based House (House of Provinces)

The second house has the sole mission to serve and assist all peoples of the Earth, examining all the problems which affect large populations, and identifying achievable solutions which will improve the overall quality of life for all people everywhere, regardless of national affiliation, ethnic background, political ideology, economic philosophy, social status, religious belief, sexual identity, or any other variable. We are all people, and we are all here. With more of us populating the planet now than ever before, and with our overall population density continuing to rise, we need to do a better job of working together as a single global species to reduce the suffering which many millions of our members are currently experiencing, and which many more of us may experience if things get much worse.

Because the mission of this house is to address the challenges facing large populations, the assembly should have the perspectives of all the populated areas of the world as to their current challenges and solutions and resources and ideas. This house therefore will include one delegation from each area of our planet containing a certain range of population, so that on average each delegation will represent an approximately-equal population size.

Subsection II-A-3 - Mission of the Area-Based House (House of Territories)

The third house has the sole mission to take care of the Earth itself, keeping it in condition to continue to support on a sustainable and renewable basis not only Humanity but our entire diverse and interactive ecosystem. We humans are the most powerful species on the planet, but with great power comes great responsibility, and we do not morally deserve our position of global power if we do not continually use it to exercise our proper stewardship of this planetary home of ours, including by taking care of all those animal species who sometimes need protection or other assistance from us. (We are particularly concerned about the Tiger and the Wolf and the Elephant, but there are others.) People have different beliefs on how and when the Earth came to exist, but in any case we must all agree that this habitable and fertile planet, with its dazzling variety of animals and vegetables and minerals, is a stupendously rich and precious gift, one which we do not morally deserve to keep if we fail to take proper care of it, both for now and for all future generations of all beings who live upon it.

There are some elements of global monitoring which we can accomplish with scouts and sensors and satellites, but there is nothing like having somebody who has personally lived in an area for a long time (especially a remote area) telling us when some significant

change occurs in temperature patterns, water levels, air quality, agricultural production, species population, or some other long-term environmental condition, before it spreads to become a regional or global problem. We therefore need to have a permanent legislative body in place, representing the interests of the entire planet as a single global community, monitoring what is happening everywhere, and recommending (or directly engineering) solutions to any problems which it justly perceives as requiring attention at the global scale.

Because the mission of this house is to take care of the Earth, the assembly shall include delegations from each region of our planetary land mass (especially including Antarctica), with each delegation representing an approximately-equal geographic area.

Section II-B - Structures of the Houses

Subsection II-B-1 - Structure of the Nation-Based House (House of Nations)

The structure of the House of Nations should be basically the same as it is in the current United Nations, with each nation receiving a voting delegation in the assembly if it has been recognized as justly sovereign by the House of Nations.

Sovereign status shall require that the nation is both politically and economically independent from all other nations on the planet, and shall also require that all international borders are clearly defined.

Subsection II-B-2 - Structure of the Population-Based House (House of Provinces)

Number of Delegations. We should have close to 200 delegations in the population-based house, as in the current United Nations, so that on average each delegate in each house is representing approximately the same number of people. However, the current world population of 7.5 billion would mean that 200 delegates would each be representing 37.5 million people, which intuitively seems too much for a population-based house. We also need a rounder number as an average, to divide quickly into a national or regional population to determine the number of seats which it should have. We feel that an average of 30 million satisfies both these conditions. This means a house of 250 delegates.

In future years, as the world's population continues to grow, it may be necessary either to increase the number of delegations beyond the current 250, or else to accept that each delegation should represent an average of 40 million people instead of 30 million, or possibly both. This would be a matter for the House of Provinces to evaluate and decide on an ongoing basis.

Structure of Delegations. Delegations generally should be compact because the issues which affect them are often localized. They also should follow existing political boundaries so that we do not need to invent new ones, and so that all assignments are easily clear to everyone. Nations should remain undivided if possible, and otherwise

provinces/states should remain undivided if possible, and otherwise we allocate specifically by districts/counties, so delegate selection will need to be by diverse methods. Delegations are named for either large nations or large provinces or large cities contained within them.

Assignment of Delegations. Here is a proposed listing of the 250 delegations -- each with approximately 30 million of population -- which would currently constitute the House of Provinces, organized according to areas of the world:

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| <u>Africa (41)</u> Addis Ababa (west Ethiopia) Alexandria (north Egypt) Algiers (west Algeria) Amhara (north Ethiopia) Anambra (southeast Nigeria) Angola Borena (south Ethiopia) Borno (east Nigeria) Burundi (incl. Rwanda, Kivu) Cairo (east Egypt) Cameroon (including Gabon) Cape Town (west South Africa) Dar es Salaam (south Tanzania) Dongola (north Sudan) Edo (south Nigeria) Ghana Giza (west Egypt) Ivory Coast (incl. Sierra Leone, Liberia) Juba (south Sudan, Central Africa) Kaduna (northwest Nigeria) Kampala (west Uganda) Kano (north Nigeria) Kinshasa (including Congo) Lagos (southwest Nigeria) Lomami (south Zaire) Madagascar Mali (& Mauritania, w. Burkina Faso) Mombasa (east Kenya) Mongala (north Zaire) Morocco Mozambique Mwanza (north Tanzania) Nairobi (west Kenya, east Uganda) N'Djamena (Chad, Niger) Ouagadougou (including Benin, Togo) Pretoria (east South Africa) Senegal (incl. Guinea, Gambia) Somalia (incl. Eritrea, east Ethiopia) Tunisia (incl. Libya, east Algeria) Zambia (including Malawi) Zimbabwe (incl. Botswana, Namibia) | <u>America - South (14)</u> Bahia (east Brazil) Bolivia (including Paraguay) Cartagena (north Colombia) Ceara (northeast Brazil) Cordoba (including Uruguay) Ecuador (including south Colombia) Mato Grosso (west Brazil) Patagonia (south Argentina, s. Chile) Peru Rio de Janeiro (southeast Brazil) Santa Catarina (south Brazil) Sao Paulo do Leste (east Sao Paulo) Sao Paulo do Oeste (west Sao Paulo) Venezuela <u>Asia - North (14)</u> Daegu (south South Korea) Fukuoka (southwest Japan) Hokkaido (north Japan) Kazakhstan (& Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan) Krasnodar (southwest Russia) Moscow Osaka (central Japan) Pyongyang (North Korea) Seoul (north South Korea) Siberia (including Mongolia) Tokyo (southeast Japan) Ural (including northwest Russia) Uzbekistan (including Turkmenistan) Volga <u>Asia - Southeast (9)</u> Bangkok (south Thailand) Cambodia (including Laos) Da Nang (central Vietnam) Kuala Lumpur (west Malaysia) Mekong River Delta (south Vietnam) Naypyidaw (north Myanmar) Red River Delta (north Vietnam) Udon Thani (north Thailand) Yangon (south Myanmar) | <u>China (46)</u> Beijing (including Tianjin) Changsha (north Hunan) Chengdu (central Sichuan) Chongqing Dali Bai (west Yunnan) Dalian (south Liaoning) Fujian Gansu (including Ningxia) Ganzhou (south Jiangxi) Guangzhou (west Guangdong) Guilin (east Guangxi) Guizhou Hainan (south Guangdong) Hangzhou (north Zhejiang) Hefei (south Anhui) Heilongjiang Jieyang (east Guangdong) Jilin Jinan (north Shandong) Jiujiang (north Jiangxi) Kunming (east Yunnan) Liangshan Yi (west Sichuan) Guizhou Linyi (south Shandong) Nanchong (east Sichuan) Nanjing (south Jiangsu) Nanning (west Guangxi) Nanyang (west Henan) Nei Menggu (inner Mongolia) Puyang (north Henan) Qingdao (east Shandong) Shanghai Shanxi Shaoyang (south Hunan) Shenyang (north Liaoning) Shenzhen (including Hong Kong) Shijiazhuang (south Hebei) Shiyuan (west Hubei) Suzhou (north Anhui) Wenzhou (south Zhejiang) Wuhan (east Hubei) Xi'an (Shaanxi) Xinjiang (incl. Qinghai, Xizang/Tibet) Xinyang (south Henan) Yuzhou (north Jiangsu) Yancheng (central Jiangsu) Zhangjiakou (north Hebei) | <u>India (52)</u> Ahmedabad (west Gujarat) Amravati (east Maharashtra) Assam Bangalore (south Karnataka) Bankura (central West Bengal) Belagavi (north Karnataka) Bhadrak (east Odisha) Champaran (north Bihar) Chennai (north Tamil Nadu) Chhattisgarh Chittagong (southeast Bangladesh) Delhi Dhaka (central Bangladesh) Faizabad (northeast Uttar Pradesh) Ganjam (west Odisha) Gaya (west Bihar) Godavari (east Andhra Pradesh) Gorakhpur (east Uttar Pradesh) Haryana Indore (west Madhya) Jabalpur (east Madhya) Jaipur (east Rajasthan) Jharkhand Jodhpur (west Rajasthan) Kanpur (southwest Uttar Pradesh) Kashmir (north India) Kerala Khulna (southwest Bangladesh) Kolkata (south West Bengal) Konkan (west Maharashtra) Lucknow (central Uttar Pradesh) Meerut (northwest Uttar Pradesh) Mirzapur (southeast Uttar Pradesh) Moradabad (north Uttar Pradesh) Murshidabad (north West Bengal) Namakkal (west Tamil Nadu) Nashik (north Maharashtra) Nepal Pune (south Maharashtra) Punjab Purnia (east Bihar) Rajshahi (northwest Bangladesh) Rangpur (including east India) Rayalaseema (west Andhra Pradesh) Samastipur (south Bihar) Sri Lanka Surat (east Gujarat) Sylhet (northeast Bangladesh) Telangana Thanjavur (east Tamil Nadu) Tirunelveli (south Tamil Nadu) Udaipur (south Rajasthan) |
| <u>America - North (20)</u> Antilles (excluding Cuba) Arizona (southwest America) California (west America) Florida (southeast America) Honduras (including through Panama) Illinois (north America) Louisiana (south America) Mexico City (central Mexico) Montana (northwest America) New York (including New England) Nuevo Leon (northeast Mexico) Ohio (central America) Pennsylvania (northeast America) Puebla (south Mexico) Quebec (east Canada) Sonora (northwest Mexico) Texas Virginia (east America) Yucatan (including Guatemala, Cuba) islands Yukon (Alaska, west Canada) | <u>Asia - Southwest (19)</u> Afghanistan Anatolia (southeast Turkey) Balochistan (southwest Pakistan) Bushehr (south Iran) Iraq Isparta (south Turkey) Jordan (incl. Israel, Palestine) Karachi (south Pakistan) Khyber (northwest Pakistan) Lahore (east Pakistan) Marmara (north Turkey) Multan (southeast Pakistan) Oman (including through Kuwait) Rawalpindi (northeast Pakistan) Saudi Arabia Syria (including Lebanon) Tabriz (incl. Azerbaijan, Armenia) Tehran (central Iran) Yemen | <u>Europe (20)</u> Auvergne (south France) Bavaria (Switzerland, south Germany) Berlin (Denmark, northeast Germany) Bohemia (Czechia, Austria, Slovakia) Carpathia (Hungary, Croatia, et al.) Hebrides (Ireland, w. United Kingdom) Holland (incl. Belgium, Lower Saxony) Iberia (Portugal, northwest Spain) Ionia (Greece, Bulgaria, et al.) Kiev (Belarus, north Ukraine) Lombardy (north Italy) London (east England) Odessa (Moldova, south Ukraine) Paris (north France) Poland Romania (including Serbia) Rome (south Italy) Scandinavia (including Baltic states) Valencia (southeast Spain) Westphalia (west Germany) | <u>Oceania (15)</u> Australia (including New Zealand) Borneo Formosa (including northwest Luzon) Jakarta (west Java) Luzon (north Philippines) Medan (north Sumatra) Mindanao (south Philippines) New Guinea (incl. Bali and other) Palembang (south Sumatra) Quezon (central Philippines) Semarang (central Java) Sukabumi (west West Java) Sulawesi Surabaya (east Java) Tasikmalaya (east West Java) |

Additional details of the provincial assignments are available on request.

Subsection II-B-3 - Structure of the Area-Based House (House of Territories)

Number of Delegations. The total land area of the world covers about 150 million square kilometers. That makes it easy to have 150 delegations in the house, each covering about one million square kilometers, which is easy to divide into a region to determine its appropriate number of delegates.

Structure of Delegations. Structure and nomenclature are basically the same as in the population-based house, except for Antarctica, which is a critically important part of our ecosystem, and which will often give us signals that dangerous things are happening with global temperatures, sea levels, or the Earth's magnetic field. We want to be able to monitor Antarctica from all angles, so the various sectors are named for the different lands and stations located around the perimeter.

Assignment of Delegations. Here is a proposed summary of the 150 delegations -- each with approximately 1 million square kilometers of land area -- which would currently constitute the House of Territories, organized according to the areas of the world:

Africa (30)

Ahaggar (southeast Algeria)
Angola
Atlas (Morocco, Tunisia, north Algeria)
Central Africa
Chad
Darfur (southwest Sudan)
Egypt
Ethiopia
Guinea (incl. Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Ghana)
Kalahari (Botswana, Zimbabwe)
Kananga (south Zaire)
Kassala (Eritrea, northeast Sudan)
Kufra (east Libya)
Madagascar
Mali
Marzua (west Libya)
Mauritania (incl. Western Sahara, Senegal)
Mozambique
Nairobi (Kenya, Uganda)
Namibia
Niger
Nigeria
Ovem (Cameroon, Congo, Gabon)
Reggane (southwest Algeria)
Rwenzori (north Zaire)
Somalia
South Africa
South Sudan
Tanzania
Zambia (including Malawi)

America - North (24)

Alberta
Baffin (northeast Nunavut)
Caribbean (Central America, Cuba, Antilles islands)
Carolina (southeast America)
Keewatin (southwest Nunavut)
Mackenzie (Northwest Territories)
Manitoba
Mazatlan (northwest Mexico)
Mexico City (southeast Mexico)
Nevada (west America)
Ontario
Oregon (northwest America)
Ozark (southeast-central America)
Pennsylvania (northeast America)
Quebec
Santa Fe (southwest-central America)
Saskatchewan
Seward (west Alaska)
Skjoldungen (south Greenland)
Thule (north Greenland)

America - South (18)

Amazonas (northwest Brazil)
Atacama (north Chile)
Bolivia
Brasilia (central Brazil)
Buenos Aires (Uruguay, central Argentina)
Colombia
El Chaco (Paraguay, north Argentina)
Lima (south Peru)
Mato Grosso (west-central Brazil)
Meio-Norte (northeast Brazil)
Minas Gerais (southeast Brazil)
Para (north-central Brazil)
Patagonia (south Chile, south Argentina)
Quito (Ecuador, north Peru)
Santa Catarina (south Brazil)
Sertao (east-central Brazil)
Suriname (including Guyana, north Brazil)
Venezuela

Antarctica (14)

Adelie (South Magnetic Pole)
Byrd (land south of Los Angeles)
Ellsworth (land near Bellingshausen Sea)
Enderby (peninsula south of Madagascar)
Filchner (ice shelf south of Rio de Janeiro)
Meridian (Prime Meridian)
Mirny (station south of India)
Oates (coast south of New Zealand)
Palmer (peninsula south of Chile)
Queen Maud (land south of Cape Town)
Rockefeller (plateau south of Tahiti)
Ross (International Date Line)
Shackleton (base near Weddell Sea)
Wilkes (land south of Perth)

Asia - North (21)

Aktobe (west Kazakhstan)
Altai (southwest-central Russia)
Bashkortostan (east-southwest Russia)
Chukotka (east-northeast Russia)
Irkutsk (northeast-central Russia)
Kamchatka (central-east Russia)
Karagandy (central Kazakhstan)
Karelia (west-northwest Russia)
Khabarovsk (southeast Russia)
Komi (east-northwest Russia)
Krasnoyarsk (central Russia)
Kyushu (Japan, Korea)
Magadan (central-northeast Russia)
Moscow (central-west Russia)
Omsk (northwest-central Russia)
Oskemen (east Kazakhstan)

Asia - Southeast (3)

Indochina (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia)
Myanmar
Thailand (including West Malaysia)

Asia - Southwest (9)

Afghanistan
Elburz (north Iran)
Oman (including east Saudi Arabia)
Pakistan
Sakakah (northwest Saudi Arabia)
Shiraz (south Iran)
Syria (including Iraq)
Turkey
Yemen (including south Saudi Arabia)

China (11)

Guangdong (southeast China)
Hubei (southeast-central China)
Manchuria (northeast China)
Nei Menggu (inner Mongolia)
Qinghai (west-central China)
Shanxi (northeast-central China)
Ulan Bator (east Mongolia)
Uliastay (west Mongolia)
Xinjiang (northwest China)
Xizang (southwest China, Tibet)
Yunnan (south-central China)

Europe (6)

Adriatic (Italy, Greece, Bulgaria)
Iberia (Spain, Portugal)
Lusatia (Germany, Poland, Romania, Hungary)
Normandy (France, United Kingdom)
Scandinavia (Sweden, Finland, Norway)
Ukraine (including Belarus)

India (3)

Bangladesh (including Nepal, east India)
Delhi (north India)
Hyderabad (south India)

Oceania (11)

Adelaide (south Australia)
Auckland (New Zealand, Kiribati, Polynesia, etc.)
Brisbane (east Australia)
Croydon (northeast Australia)
Darwin (north Australia)
Fitzroy (northwest Australia)
New Guinea (incl. Papua, Philippines, east Indonesia)
Onslow (west Australia)
Perth (southwest Australia)
Sunda (Borneo, Sumatra, Java)

Vancouver (southwestern Canada)
Wisconsin (northeast-central America)
Wyoming (northwest-central America)
Yukon (east Alaska)

Rostov (west-southwest Russia)
Samarkand (Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan)
Yakutsk (west-northeast Russia)
Yamalia (north-central Russia)
Zabaykalsk (southeast-central Russia)

Sydney (southeast Australia)

Additional details of the geographical assignments are available on request.

Section II-C - Committees and Duties of the Houses

As with most legislative assemblies, it would be helpful for smaller numbers of delegates who possess the applicable interest and expertise to be formed into ‘committees’ which can examine certain types of problems in greater depth than the full assembly could, and evaluate any proposed solutions, reporting their recommendations up to the full assembly for further consideration.

The initial standard rules for each house shall be that any delegate may volunteer for any committee, and that no delegate shall be required to join a committee. However, if any house discovers through experience that certain committees are becoming too large or too small to be effective, then it may develop rules to either limit committee sizes, or else require delegates to join a certain minimum number of committees, or both.

Any committee which finds that it has too many different kinds of tasks to be effective may create subcommittees at its own discretion, provided that the full assembly does not overrule such action.

Any committee or subcommittee generally may develop its own operating procedures and select its own officers, except when specifically directed otherwise.

Subsection II-C-1 - Committees and Duties of All Houses

Each of the three houses shall include the following standard committees:

Finance. Communicates with national governments to negotiate and collect the subsidies required to fund the house’s overhead operations; manages and disburses all funds as required; develops and maintains budgets to allocate available funding for maximum effectiveness; provides periodic public reports on financial activity and position.

Rules. Develops procedures for conducting house business, including for debates, committee referrals, motion approval, and officer elections; evaluates proposals for improving operating rules according to experience; submits recommendations for rule improvement to the full assembly for consideration and approval.

Elections. Manages the actual election of house officers (and committee members if needed) according to the established rules; provides public reports of elections conducted.

Subsection II-C-2 - Committees and Duties of the Nation-Based House (House of Nations)

In addition to the standard committees, the House of Nations shall include the following special committees, in support of its mission to maintain peaceful relations among all nations of the Earth:

Recognition. Evaluates whether a proposed new nation is sufficiently independent to be justly recognized as sovereign, and whether any existing nations have become so dependent upon other nations that they should have their recognitions reversed.

Borders. Maintains official record of the borders of all nations; adjudicates any disputes between nations regarding the proper locations of any borders; evaluates proposals to reassign existing borders.

Defense. Monitors deployment of all military forces worldwide; issues warnings to any nation which is openly or secretly threatening to attack any other nation; organizes counterattacks when any nation crosses a border with military force, to supplement any defensive actions by the nation being attacked. May take direct action without waiting for approval from the full assembly, but the full assembly shall have the authority to overrule any action. Organization of counterattacks shall include defining the specific objective(s) of each operation, identifying specific military units to participate, and empowering a commander to assume tactical control of the operation. Commander is not required to be from the nation being attacked, but should have advanced knowledge about local topography, local climate, local language, and the tactical capabilities of all the participating military units. Committee does not appoint an overall 'commander-in-chief', because we do not want any one individual having authority or control over all the armed forces of the world.

Discipline. Evaluates the specific actions of any nation which has unilaterally crossed a border with military force, or which has otherwise violated international law; recommends specific disciplinary measures to the full assembly for consideration and approval, possibly including temporary suspension of voting privileges in one house or all three, economic sanctions, arrest and trial of individual participants in the illegal actions, and/or permanent dissolution of the offending nation.

In addition to the above duties, the House of Nations shall also be generally responsible for facilitating economic trade, recreational travel, scientific exploration, cultural exchange, athletic competition, and other peaceful interaction among the nations of the world.

Subsection II-C-3 - Committees and Duties of the Population-Based House (House of Provinces)

In addition to the standard committees, the House of Provinces shall include the following special committees, in support of its mission to serve and assist all peoples of the Earth:

Services. Identifies the regions of the world where the shortages of basic human services (food, clean water, shelter, sewage) are currently the most severe; coordinates with local governments and/or charitable organizations and/or corporate institutions to engineer solutions.

Health. Ensures that the people of each delegation have access to a reasonable standard of medical care, either internally or from visiting doctors; identifies and controls any epidemics.

Education. Ensures that the people of each delegation have access to at least a basic educational training, either internally or from visiting teachers; reports conditions to local governments for additional response.

Population. Monitors population levels and rates of increase, both regionally and worldwide; assesses whether any concentration of population ever becomes or is projected to become too dense to allow an adequate standard of human life even with governmental assistance; recommends strategies for population mitigation/redistribution; considers renumbering and/or restructuring delegations of the House of Provinces according to evolving population patterns.

Evacuation. Maintains at least one embassy office in each major city of the world, to help evacuate any individual or group who is being unjustly victimized by local government. It may not be logical to have a ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights’, because if the rights really were universal than a declaration should not have been necessary, so it is not our place to say whether the internal actions of a sovereign nation are right or wrong, but we can help to evacuate people if they feel that they are being unjustly victimized.

Terrorism. Protects all populated areas from all acts and threats of terrorism and other violence inflicted by non-governmental entities; evaluates root causes of certain terrorist acts, and recommends changes to other governmental bodies as applicable, remembering that just because a terrorist’s actions are immoral does not necessarily mean that his cause is immoral.

Subsection II-C-4 - Committees and Duties of the Area-Based House (House of Territories)

In addition to the standard committees, the House of Territories shall include the following special committees, in support of its mission to take care of the Earth:

Environment. Monitors local and regional and global conditions in the air, in the water, and on land; identifies root causes of any problems; works with local governments on remediation as applicable.

Agriculture. Monitors agricultural output in all regions of the planet; provides information to local governments, along with recommendations for strategic adjustments as applicable; assesses whenever the total agricultural output of the world is insufficient to feed all the people of the world, and determines whether we can grow more food or whether we need fewer people or both. Communicates with the Services and Population Committees of the House of Provinces on joint solutions.

Wildlife. Monitors population levels and distributions of all endangered and threatened animal species; provides protection to important animal species where possible; investigates and prosecutes hunting of endangered and threatened species; works with local governments on other remediation as applicable.

Space. Monitors the outer space for radiation, meteors, or other extraterrestrial influences which could impact our life and health here on Earth; arranges for responses to external threats as appropriate; assists local governments and private organizations with astronomical observation and exploration.

Section II-D - Locations of the Houses

Generally, the headquarters offices of the three houses and the Executive Council should be located in different areas of the world, both to maximize our diversity and control over the entire planet, and also to prevent any one military or terrorist attack from debilitating the entire Earth Congress.

Subsection II-D-1 - Location of the Nation-Based House (House of Nations)

Primary recommendation is to leave the headquarters of the House of Nations in the same building where the United Nations currently operates, in New York City, New York, America. It would be inefficient to locate and develop a new location if we do not really need one, and staying in the same location -- where all the agency offices and documents and computer systems already exist -- would facilitate the administrative and emotional transition from the previous structure to the new structure.

However, we should also consider the fact that America has recently and repeatedly initiated military actions upon other nations without advance international approval, which would be a direct and serious violation of our new international covenant. If they should continue to do so after the new organization is in place, then at some point it may be necessary to impose sanctions -- and possibly even initiate military counterattacks -- against the host nation, which could disrupt headquarters operations and possibly endanger the lives of the delegates.

This matter probably therefore should be negotiated with the American government. If we have their solemn commitment that they will forever obey our new covenant, and never again initiate a military action against another nation without advance international approval, then we can consider leaving the headquarters of the House of Nations there, which certainly would be much easier.

If the American government does not provide their solemn commitment of no further unilateral military actions, then secondary suggestion would be to consider the city of Jerusalem, one reason being to be 'closer to the action' and to respond quickly to any further military conflict in that area. Another reason would be that control of the city itself has been disputed for so many years that it might be better to declare that nobody really owns it, and that it should instead be a neutral 'international city of peace' which would be under direct administrative control of the international government.

Subsection II-D-2 - Location of the Population-Based House (House of Provinces)

This headquarters should be located where the greatest numbers of delegates can assemble most easily, and where all delegates can most easily observe the human conditions which need to be improved. Our heaviest populations currently are in China and India, so the headquarters probably should be near them. It also should be in a nation which does not have severe travel restrictions, or recent violent conflict.

Therefore suggesting either Dhaka in Bangladesh, Yangon in Myanmar, or Bangkok in Thailand.

Subsection II-D-3 - Location of the Area-Based House (House of Territories)

There are several large land areas in the world which should be monitored continually for any significant changes, but few of them have as much impact worldwide as the Amazon rainforest. Delegates and information from those areas should be able to reach the assembly easily, so the headquarters of the House of Territories should be in or near Brazil.

Specific possibilities include Brasilia, La Paz (Bolivia), Caracas (Venezuela), and Sao Paulo.

Subsection II-D-4 - Location of the Executive Council

There are two main options here.

Primary recommendation is to base the Executive Council in Europe, partly because the International Court of Justice is already located in The Hague, Netherlands, and also because Europe was the principal theater of the two World Wars which generated global pleas for eternal peace. If we want to keep the Executive Council in a separate city from the Court of Justice, then Stockholm is another strong candidate, because it is where the Nobel Peace Prize is awarded, and is also the headquarters of the Global Challenges

Foundation. We might also consider Geneva, because Switzerland has historically been a neutral nation, and because several international accords have been formulated there.

Secondary recommendation is to base the Executive Council in Africa, because it is a large and important continent which does not already have representation at the executive levels of the Earth Congress, and because again Europe already has significant representation in global leadership. Lagos in Nigeria is a particularly large and prosperous city, and arguably the central heart of the African continent, so that would be best. Cities on the Mediterranean coast are too close to Europe to truly represent Africa.

Section II-E - Voting Procedures

Subsection II-E-1 - Standard Motions

Each house generally may approve, by simple majority of delegates present and voting, any action consistent with its missions, with no separate approval generally required from either of the other houses.

Subsection II-E-2 - Committee Referrals

There shall not be any ‘steering committee’ to decide which other committee shall receive any pending motion for further evaluation. Instead, the full assembly may approve by simple majority a subsidiary motion to refer/commit a particular proposal to a particular committee for evaluation.

The motion to refer/commit may specify a date by which the committee is expected to submit its report back up to the full assembly, or it may allow the committee as much time as it feels that it needs.

Assemblies may also empower certain committees to take certain actions directly, on either a one-time or an ongoing basis, instead of simply reporting their recommendations back to the full assemblies.

Subsection II-E-3 - Officer Elections

Each house shall periodically elect from among its delegates a Secretary to oversee that house, and any other officers which it may designate.

Each house shall also elect a number of delegates (recommending 5 from each house) to serve as members of the Executive Council. The members of the Executive Council shall elect from that body a Secretary-General to oversee the entire Earth Congress.

The terms for elected positions probably should be two years, but could agree to one year.

A delegate who has been elected to serve as either a house officer or a member of the Executive Council may decide to keep both positions concurrently, or to relinquish the position of delegate to a successor.

There shall be no limitations on the number of terms for which any elected officer may serve.

Political parties shall not have any formal or informal involvement in officer elections or any other house business.

Subsection II-E-4 - Veto Provisions

If an assembly has authorized a committee to take a particular action or range of actions, then the assembly may approve a motion by a 3/5 majority to reverse/veto any such committee action.

Each main motion approved by any house shall be reported to the Executive Council and the other two houses. That motion may be reversed if and only if each of the other two houses separately approves a veto motion by a 3/5 majority of delegates present and voting.

Any previous house action, including for the election of a house officer or committee member or member of the Executive Council, and for the adoption of any procedural rule, and for the designation of a delegation boundary, may be reversed by a 2/3 majority of the entire assembly.

Subsection II-E-5 - Charter Amendment

The charter of the Earth Congress may be amended through approval of a resolution by a 3/4 majority of the entire assembly in each of the three houses.

Section II-F - Prospects for International Acceptance

We may experience some initial reluctance from nations like America and Russia, who have recent histories of taking unilateral military actions. However, unlike the United Nations and its predecessor the League of Nations, we are not asking any nation to disarm. To the contrary, we expect to need the armed forces of the 'great powers' to maintain international security, so they still will have plenty of opportunity to put those forces into active use, this time always with international approval. They will be authorized to make their own decisions about disarmament and resource reallocation on their own timetables, so hopefully that will make them happier about this model than they might be about some alternatives.

Smaller military powers such as Iraq and North Korea may be disappointed that they will not be allowed to use their big shiny tanks and missiles, but we cannot please everybody,

so they will simply need to fall in line with the rest of us, or else suffer the consequences for continuing to threaten The Peace.

Populated nations like China and India will now have proportional voices in a permanent assembly with a mission to solve the problems affecting populated communities, so that should make them very happy.

Nations with large geographies such as Canada and Brazil also will now have proportional voices, but in a separate assembly with a mission to solve geographic issues, so they too will have greater influence over global decision-making than they currently have.

Nations with small populations and/or geographies and/or military forces can be expected to love this model, because they will be far better protected from attack than they are now.

Finally, the model should receive general civic acceptance from the entire world, because of increased peace, improved environmental protection, greater focus on human problems, and the permanent discontinuation of a single legislative assembly having unchecked authority over the entire world.

PART III - ARGUMENTATION

This model satisfies all the criteria established by the Global Challenges Foundation, as follows:

(1) Core Values

The only individuals who would suffer to any degree from this model are those who continue to believe that nations should be allowed and encouraged to wage war, and those who would profit (either financially or politically or both) from such a strategy.

Even those individuals would still also benefit from this model, however, because all humanity benefits when we are able to devote more of our global resources toward environmental protection, and because we will be able to do that after we once finally decide as a global community that we will no longer tolerate either the actuality or the threat of violent international conflict.

All the populated areas of the world (especially the most heavily and densely populated) would benefit from our model, because they will finally have a voice of their own in a permanent forum which can continually focus on the ongoing challenges facing large populations.

The equal value of all human beings is recognized and respected by our creation of a permanent global assembly in which each delegation represents an approximately-equal number of people living within a common geographic vicinity, so each delegate in the

assembly theoretically has the same weight and influence as any other delegate. This is different from the General Assembly of the current United Nations, where some delegations such as China and India may perceive (perhaps correctly) that they have greater actual influence over the others because they represent larger populations, and where other delegations such as Vanuatu or Saint Kitts & Nevis may perceive (perhaps correctly) that they have greater proportional influence over the others because they still each have one formal vote even though they represent much smaller populations. It also is different from current reality because all populated areas of the world will have equal representation in the population-based house regardless of their political or economic or military influence.

(2) Decision-Making Capacity

This model allows that each of the three houses in the Earth Congress will have immediate authority to decide and implement any global or regional action which falls within its proper mission, without needing to wait for approval from either another house or a chief executive or both.

This is different from some other 2-house and 3-house legislatures, which require all houses to approve any motion with exactly the same language in order for it to be enacted, and which sometimes also require the approval of a chief executive.

In this model, the other houses of the Earth Congress will have veto authority under certain conditions, but we will not need to wait for them to explicitly approve any action.

(3) Effectiveness

There are four big ways in which the Earth Congress in this model would be much better able to handle our global challenges and risks than either the current United Nations or our combined national governments can:

(a) Each of the three houses can focus better on fewer types of global and regional issues, instead of one assembly trying to do everything by itself.

(b) The delegates in each of the three houses will be selected by different types of constituencies (that is, representing either national governments or population centers or geographic areas), based on their advanced knowledge of the different types of issues which generally face those different types of constituencies, as well as the specific issues facing their specific delegations. Ambassadors to the current United Nations are selected for their diplomatic expertise, which is important, but they cannot reasonably be expected to also know about economics and agriculture and biochemistry and climatology and civil engineering, so it would be better to gather experts in those areas into separate assemblies where they can examine those different types of issues with greater authority.

(c) By directly representing each of these different types of constituencies, each delegate in each house will have greater access to the local resources which can be used

to solve various local and regional problems. Some solutions cannot be implemented if we must go through each national government in order to do every single little thing, or else the implementation must take a long time because of the numerous administrative requirements which national governments tend to impose upon everything.

(d) Because all of our delegations in the population-based and area-based houses still follow current political boundaries, each delegate will have only a small and definite number of nations and/or provinces and/or districts to represent, and so it will be easier to work with existing local governments to discover and examine and solve any local or regional problems, as contrasted with trying to create all-new local boundaries to create new provinces and districts which do not already exist.

Because there will be a separate permanent assembly to discuss population-related issues, and another separate permanent assembly to discuss geography-related issues, we will have places and times to require each local delegate to report to the full assembly on the progress of any directive received from the full assembly, as a means to ensure implementation of the assembly's decisions. If the delegate fails to report progress to the satisfaction of the full assembly, then the assembly will have the option to report the problem to the national and local governments who arranged for the delegate's selection, to the people whom the delegate sought to represent, and to the other two houses of the Earth Congress. With our advanced global communication abilities, allowing us to share information and plan common strategies much more quickly and easily than ever before, any delegate who is negatively reported to those other entities can expect to have a very poor quality of any remaining life, so there will be an ongoing motivation for all delegates to try to succeed in all their assignments.

(4) Resources and Financing

We already will have more resources available for global collaboration as a result of our global prohibition of any further violent conflict between nations, because nations will not need to waste nearly as many resources as they previously did on military maintenance and development and mobilization.

We can also require that each delegation in each house will somehow provide the necessary financing for its delegate and any appropriate staff to participate in the assembly at the house's headquarters, along with a proportional share of the assembly's overhead costs, so the financing will be provided in an equitable manner. If any delegations do not do so, then they will be sacrificing the opportunity to lend their voices to the global conversation, and they incur the risk of additional sanctions being imposed by the Earth Congress against those delegations and their corresponding national and provincial governments.

In particular, we expect that there will continue to be ample military support available to enforce our new global no-war policy, and any other decisions which the Earth Congress may lawfully decide. We cannot morally expect peaceful and neutral nations like Sweden and Switzerland to mobilize military forces if they do not wish to do so.

However, nations like America and Russia with long and recent histories of military action can be expected to be very eager for the opportunity of putting the long hours of training and exercises by their armies and navies and air forces into practical use. If nobody is willing to lend any military support to stop a particular policy violation, then the violation probably is not actually that bad, and probably should simply be allowed.

(5) Trust and Insight

It is hoped that all readers will be very pleased not only with the overall concept of a 3-house global congress, and with the specific assignment of delegations in the population-based and area-based houses, and with the proposed global prohibitions of international war and environmental poisoning, but also with the internal structures of the three houses, and the procedural relationships among them. If the value of these ideas is not immediately evident from inspection, then the following additional points are offered in the hope of establishing the insight into power structures and decision-making which has gone into them:

The corresponding author has been an avid student of parliamentary law for many years, and for many years has been the Chairman of the Bylaws Committee of a very large social organization, defending the group's parliamentary structures and processes to critics when applicable, and helping to improve them when necessary.

Also, the corresponding author has been working for several years now to develop an agenda which includes solutions to all the political, economic, and social problems of a national and global nature, including legislative structures and processes.

Specifically, the records of the corresponding author show that the concept of a three-house global congress was formally decided as far back as 28-Jan-1998. The concept was also adopted for application to the legislatures of large nations on 25-Sep-2006. So, we have been carrying these ideas around with us for a very long time now, in the hope of someday having or creating an opportunity to bring them to the international stage.

This model will improve trust and transparency over our current structure, which as we know contains only one house, and only one delegate for each nation. We often hear press conferences and broadcast speeches from our elected leaders, and we sometimes have 'town hall' meetings with our local legislators to hear and discuss the issues of the day. However, we seldom hear anything from our ambassadors to the United Nations, who apparently communicate only with the national leaderships and not with the people, who usually have no participation in the selection or evaluation of the ambassadors.

By contrast, this model includes a house which is specifically designed for delegates to represent groups of people living in common geographic areas. Regardless of how those delegates are selected or evaluated, at some point those delegates must communicate with the local populations in order to learn about the local issues for reporting to the full assembly.

There also should be a standard expectation that each delegate in the House of Provinces will report back to the people in the delegation on a regular basis, either through local meetings or through a website or both. This expectation may be stated when the plan is announced to the world, and then it will be in each person's mind forever, leading to the ill treatment of any delegate who fails to satisfy the expectation.

(6) Flexibility

The structures and processes which will help us today may possibly work against us tomorrow, and so this model contains mechanisms that allow for revisions and improvements to be made to its structure and components.

Specifically, this model allows for the charter to be amended by the Earth Congress without completely abolishing it, according to experience and the evolving needs of our global society.

Also, just as the House of Nations (previously known as the 'United Nations') has always retained the authority to create new delegations, discontinue old ones, and agree upon revised international boundaries, each of the other two houses of our Earth Congress is empowered in this model to make whatever internal rearrangements to its internal structures and processes that it may ever agree upon by a sufficiently high majority. These may include changing the number of delegations constituting the house, changing the average size of the population group or geographic area which the delegates shall represent, and the reassignment of delegation boundaries.

(7) Protection Against the Abuse of Power

This is one of the best elements of this model. We do not ever want to have a one-world government, and we do not ever wish to violate the sovereignty of any nation to govern its purely internal affairs, but we do need an 'international oversight organization' with enough power to legislate and enforce global policies such as no-war and no-poisoning-of-the-environment. Any entity with that much power can fall into the temptation of abusing it, either by overstepping its mandate or else by allowing special interests to unfairly influence its decisions. If that ever happens, then the constituency would have no alternative government available, because the entity in power would have a monopoly over decision-making authority.

This model solves those potential problems by:

- (a) segmenting our Earth Congress into three separate houses, each with specific defined issues to manage, so that no one entity has total control over everything; and,
- (b) allowing each decision of each house to be vetoed by a sufficiently high majority of each of the other two houses, whenever they mutually agree that the action taken would somehow injure humanity or the Earth more than it would help, or that it is inappropriate for some other reason.

(8) Accountability

This model holds decision-makers accountable for their actions by providing different roads to power, and by providing different venues where the actions of those in power may be criticized and overturned.

As it stands currently, we have only one 'international oversight organization' with only one house, which is able at all times to do as much or as little as it wants, because there is no real competent authority to overrule any of their actions or inactions. The delegates are usually selected by the leaders of national governments, who do not always represent the voices and interests of their people. As a result, wars have still been allowed to happen, along with large-scale poverty and disease and environmental pollution.

In this model, there are three separate assemblies which will carry legislative authority over the entire Earth, but each assembly will be limited to a few specific areas of global policy. Any decision reached by any of the three assemblies is subject to veto by the other two, so no one assembly will have unlimited power even over its few specific areas. If an individual who wishes to help with global management does not have enough social or political or financial influence to be appointed as a national representative in the House of Nations, then it still may be possible to merit access to global authority through one of the other two houses, by earning the attention of either large numbers of people in small areas, or small numbers of people in large areas. We therefore will have greater diversity and more accurate representation among the three houses combined.

Each house with its unique type of constituency will have authority not only to directly conduct the affairs assigned to it, but also to oversee the actions and inactions of the other houses, and will be in a position to report specifically to its constituency and generally through the social media whenever it perceives that one of the other houses is in any way failing to achieve its assigned mission.

In this way, everybody within the Earth Congress will be overseeing everybody else, with no one house having any more authority than any other, so the three houses will work together as a cohesive and harmonious team to take care of the Earth and its people, and there will be The Peace.

NUNC FIAT PAX IN TERRA

<end quote> [We made some cosmetic changes later.]

Next step was to get the doc submitted on the website for the Global Challenges Foundation, hopefully by the original target date of 25-May-2017, but we ran into a whole morass of technical problems. Main problem was that they wouldn't accept any attachments; text needed to be imported into their fields (which automatically checked for word count), and then formatted by hand, so it took extra time to add all our underlines and italics. Some sections needed to be typed in entirely by hand (and then formatted by hand), because the paste options wouldn't always work. Save options were very sporadic; we often needed to enter things multiple times.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, we completed submission at 2124 on 25-May-2017.

Saved the World, check.

We were not done yet, though: It occurred to us a couple of days later that we could expand our model to include a standard committee for oversight of the other two houses. Because we still had a few months to go until the extended submission deadline, and because we still had 135 words to spare in Part II, we decided to add that language to our proposal as previously submitted.

However, when we logged back in to our account in order to make the adjustment, we observed a marking that our proposal was incomplete. We checked further and saw that Parts II and III had disappeared, on which we had worked so hard.

I still needed to do a lot of work as GLAAM Treasurer and RG Treasurer, so it was not until the following Monday evening when I again had time to reaccess their website and reconstruct the submission as amended, so that was another non-Session. Their website was again very fickle and finicky, but we eventually managed to extract a green check mark instead of an orange question mark, so we appeared finally to be in good shape!!! We made a few more adjustments shortly after, all still in place.

In the meantime, we received a newsletter from the GCF reporting that 11,800 people from 183 countries had registered for the competition.

Question 31 (continued)

If there is an i.o.o., then how should its enforcing arm be staffed?

Our work for the Swedish competition in May 2017 resulted in a further modification to our Answer 31, for we were now assessing participation in global military enforcement as less of a requirement and more of an opportunity. For, some nations clearly like having large militaries, and taxing their citizens many currency units to maintain them, and giving their forces as much opportunity to apply their training in the field as they legally can. We therefore should identify those nations which are willing to make some portion of their forces available for global enforcement, and then select specific units from those forces to participate in any action which needs to be undertaken anywhere in the World.

Question 2 (continued)

Should we look only at isolated topics, or should we construct a 'whole agenda' covering everything?

At the beginning of Session 200 (June 2017), we read into the record a statement on p.56 of the October 2013 issue of the *Mensa Bulletin*, where Bjorn Liljeqvist, serving at that time as Mensa's International Director of Development, was quoted to have postulated: "Anyone may have a vision of what society should be, and dream of the road to get there, but there is simply no way a master plan can be imposed top-down, detailing everything." Watch us, baby.

Oughta make the guy look pretty silly if/when we once pull it off, and showed that we probably did not have that sort of thing around anywhere yet, 20+ years after we first started to look, in the reference room of the Pasadena Public Library.

Question 361a (continued)

Generally, who owns or can own The Land?

We reviewed discussion in Session 200 on the previously-addressed possibilities.

Possibility #1 (that either the Earth owns itself or else no one owns it) seemed unlikely. If the Earth came into existence through purely mechanistic means, then no conscious entity could claim or exercise any right of ownership. If it was created by one or more Transcendental Beings, then Possibility #2 or #3 would apply.

Possibility #2 (that the Earth belongs to the Transcendental Being who created it) seemed unlikely, by the previous argument that no clear-and-uncontroverted claim of ownership has reached our collective attention in recent human memory.

Possibility #3 (that the Earth previously belonged to the Transcendental Being who created it, but later was given to Human Beings to "replenish" and "subdue") is at least supported by an increment of literary evidence, although even the strictest Biblical fundamentalists acknowledge that the Book of Genesis (being one of the five 'Books of Moses') was compiled several hundred years after the events described in it allegedly occurred, so it is distinctly possible that the narrative somehow morphed along the way. The fundamentalists will tell you that the Book of Genesis was basically 'dictated' to Moses and his assistants during his lifetime, but there is no independent evidence to support that assertion, and we know from the example of Joseph Smith of the Latter-Day Saints that simply claiming that a certain book was divinely dictated to you does not mean that it actually was.

Even if that did actually happen, though, then the Earth was given to us humans because we already were the most advanced and net-powerful species on the planet, whether by Evolution or by Design, so the conditional gift was based directly upon our position of collective strength. If another species had been more powerful (as the *T. Rex* apparently was during the Cretaceous Period), then they would have been given control (or assumed it themselves), to speak more in favor of Possibility #4.

However, we hesitated to agree with Possibility #4 (that the Earth belongs to its conquerors), because it seems to send the signal that right of ownership comes from physical conquest, which would mean that the bullies have a fair right to Everything, which on a philosophical level we simply cannot accept. Nevertheless, this has been our apparent history for millions of years, including within recent centuries of Human interaction. At this point, then, we felt inclined to consider this Question in two separate parts, being who has control versus who has ownership. In other words, we can ask separately who does own the Earth or who should own it.

On the first element, again we must acknowledge the reality that many countries (including America) have gone to those groups with the largest armies and the fastest horses and the most powerful weapons. That will continue to be the case if we will it so, or if we disagree with the concept but fail to do anything about it.

That brings us to the second element: Here is where we get to say (if we wish) that maybe the previous 'conquest rule' applied in earlier years, but can be overridden if our collective intellect ever once advances to the point that we can create a new rule which operates to our collective advantage.

We have already done this to a certain extent, as far back as the Roman Empire (if not earlier), by designating that certain clearly-delineated plots of land were to be sold or even given away for free (as in the Homestead Act of 1862) to those individuals and families who demonstrated that they could and would utilize them effectively, or that they deserved them in some other way. It therefore appears that Possibility #4 may have prevailed earlier, but that we have since supplanted it.

Possibility #5 (that portions of the Earth belong to those who have applied the first constructive labor upon them, then to be deeded to other entities according to mutually-agreeable terms) was the most philosophically tantalizing to us, and it actually was the position which our SIG preliminarily adopted in our Session 11 back in 1997. We initially considered it a 'natural right', then later concluded that there were no 'natural rights', then changed our collective minds and found that there were some 'natural rights', although this one did not make it to our revised list (although 'property voluntarily created' did). This did not necessarily mean that it is not a 'natural right', and it also did not mean that it is not a 'civil right'. It just meant that we now needed to examine the possibility more closely.

The condition of 'constructive labor' would need to include building a home somewhere (right?), because homefulness is an economic commodity: When you create a home that somebody else can live in, both immediately and after you eventually vacate it, then you are contributing to our collective economic wealth. But, do all such homes qualify? When a bird builds a nest in a tree, does it then own the tree? When a beaver builds a dam in a river, does it then own the river? When a nomadic tribe pitches tents in a desert or on a prairie, does it then own that land? If someone cuts down a bunch of trees in order to build a city, has he then assumed ownership of that property, and with it the retroactive right to destroy those trees, even if it means a net-destructive impact upon the Planet?

There does appear to be a certain level of 'finders keepers' here: Humans started out occupying a very small amount of land, but basically had effective 'ownership' (at least 'control') of the entire land as a result of our superior ability to occupy and utilize it. It then became a matter of spreading out to actually explore and occupy the Planet. As we got to each new spot, we either spread over it for nomads, or else basically took possession of it by building fixed homes and farms and civic facilities.

That process stopped when we reached the point where all habitable land areas of the Planet were explored and mapped and assigned to this 'tribe' or that 'nation'. The equation changed at that point: From then forward, all parcels of land 'belonged' primarily to different Tribes and Nations, and then secondarily to any individuals or corporations to whom the land was lawfully deeded by the tribal and national governments. That's basically how it is today.

We therefore concluded that the Question of who generally owns the Earth needed to be addressed in stages, viz.:

(a) Prior to the appearance (however and whenever it happened) of Humans on the planet, different areas of the world effectively 'belonged' to those species and specimens which had the greatest ability to exert physical control over them, until they either deceased or moved on to other areas.

(b) At the time when Humans appeared, we basically assumed (or perhaps were divinely granted) the authority to 'fill the Earth and subdue it', because we

were the most net-powerful species then in existence. However, that authority can not extend to being able to destroy the Earth at will, in the same way as you might discard a paper napkin when you're finished with it. It would be philosophically illogical to allow any species to 'own' a planet if it is going to wipe the planet out and kill all other planetary species in addition to itself. We humans therefore may have 'authority' as a species, but not full 'ownership'.

(c) This means that -- even after the advent of Humans -- the Earth must actually belong to all beings who live upon it, because we are all stakeholders, and we all contribute to the ecosystem in one way or another. It was the same before Humans showed up, and even during the prevalence of *T. Rex*, because numerous other species and specimens were then 'allowed' to thrive on the planet, as long as they stayed out of *T. Rex*'s way. In fact, *T. Rex* could not have survived at all without the other species being around to maintain the ecosystem upon which *T. Rex* depended. Then, of course, as individual *T. Rex* specimens deceased, their bodies were in many cases consumed by other 'lesser' living beings which continued to maintain the ecosystem as a result. Notwithstanding their relative power levels, then, all the species constituting the ecosystem at any given time needed one another in order to keep the ecosystem going. We are all partners, then, and we all share in the ownership of the Planet.

(d) That is the case even now that we humans have asserted dominion over the Planet, by exploring and mapping all areas of the world, and settling many of them. We still need the other species (including the Birds and the Bees and the Fish and the Plants and the Bacteria) in order to continue to survive ourselves, and as the dominators we therefore have a responsibility -- not just on moral grounds but also for self-preservation -- to use our higher powers to keep the Planet healthy.

(e) Therefore, even with different areas of our land mass assigned by global recognition to different 'nations', yet the Earth actually 'belongs' to all living beings collectively, so the primary assignment of different land masses to different 'nations', and their secondary assignment of internal land areas to different provinces/states and districts/counties, and their tertiary assignment of specific land tracts to certain individuals and families and corporations, are actually 'civil rights' of principal control over those areas, on the condition (either implicit or explicit) that each such subject should exercise said control in a manner which is not net-destructive to the overall global society.

In other words, there are no real 'owners' of any particular piece of property, only 'renters', so it is reasonable that we should expect to pay something in 'property taxes' on an ongoing basis, as a periodic fee for being allowed to use a particular piece of land in our own way instead of how 'The State' might prefer to dictate.

This approach again allows for the Individual control which we generally prefer to have in America (as noted in Answer 361), and also for the degree of State control (including through both regulation and taxation) which is needed in order to make sure that we are all generally operating in Society's collective interests.

To sum up everything, then: The Earth is owned collectively by all beings who live upon it. Human Beings claim (through either evolution or divine assignment, same result) principal dominion over what happens on the planet, but only on the condition that our actions are not net-destructive of the planet and its collective ownership. Our general dominion of the land can be parceled out to specific Nations and Tribes

and Provinces and Districts and Cities and Neighborhoods and Individuals, in exchange for a periodic payment of valuable consideration to the next-higher level of Human Society, upon the same general condition that each renter's actions are not net-destructive of the property. Any agricultural or intellectual commodities which an individual creates belong to that individual until ownership is once duly deeded under agreeable terms to another entity, which can successively deed ownership to additional other entities.

Added that evening: In general, for nations like America, where we generally prefer to privatize land management over having everything be run by The State, the base rate of 'property tax' should be somewhat higher than what we think that we could get on a net basis (that is, gross income minus gross expense) if we were to exercise the property ourselves, and somewhat less than what the individual renter thinks that he can net-get under his own control, since he is so convinced that he can manage the property better than The State, which maybe he can, but in any case we will not give up the land unless we derive more from the transaction than we would have net-gotten had we retained direct control. Maybe he just wants it for the pure pleasure, but in any case that land was assigned for control (not ownership) to the Nation, so that we can use it for the betterment of the local human and non-human population, and we are going to cede control of it only to whoever is going to give us more in net-resources for it (regardless of what he aims to do with it, as long as it is not net-destructive of the Planet) than we would have generated with it ourselves. However, the level of Property Tax can be reduced for the higher level not needing to deal directly with administering those territories.

Added later: And no, the bird does not come to 'own' the tree simply by building a nest in the tree, he owns only the nest which he built. The tree existed long before the bird, and probably will exist long afterward. It probably owns its own life if it grew principally through its own effort, or it could be said to belong to an individual human who planted the tree and cultivated it to maturity, as a mother effectively 'owns' the life of her child until he grows into adulthood and self-ownership.

Question 362

If control were left solely with individuals, how could we prevent unscrupulous persons or groups from taking unfair advantage of others by theft, coercion, extortion, etc.?

Noted in Session 201 (June 2017): Yes, this is one of the reasons (there are others) why governments must continue to exist [sorry, anarchists and libertarians...], and why they must continue to wield some level of operating authority over any territory, even if it has been deeded to private individuals, as we like to have happen in America. You do not get to purchase right-of-control over a piece of property, and then invite people onto your property, and then kill or rape or otherwise assault or otherwise victimize them. Rule of Law must continue to extend over private property (subject only to the conditions of Answer 18.5), unless you have been duly recognized as a sovereign nation by the prevailing 'international oversight organization'. Otherwise, if you are strongly suspected of having committed a sufficiently-serious 'bad act' on your property, or if you have committed it elsewhere but then retreated to your property, then local law-enforcement authorities still get to cross your property lines and take you into custody for due process of law.

Question 363

Given a system of individual economic control, with government supervising people's actions and protecting individuals from violence and other unfair practices, what generally are the best means of production and distribution?

Noted in Session 201: "Wow, that's a very vague Question."

Blessedly, we did not need to start entirely from scratch on this one, because we already had many factories and roads and distribution centers in place in many areas of the globe. However, they do not exist everywhere, and even where they do exist it may be possible to engineer improvements.

We found it to be okay to drop in notes from our 'Black Book' of preliminary ideas compiled back in the 1990's, then to supplement with the subsequent Questions:

Start with basics. The first need that we all have (other than air and water, which [usually] can be had with little or no real effort) is for food. As discussed earlier, it is theoretically possible for each person/family to grow his/their own food. However, some people will be more successful than others, owing to variations in skill, mechanical resources, and arability. Also, it is unlikely that any one individual -- or even an entire family working together -- can produce and process enough different kinds of food throughout the year to make for a varied and healthy diet; we have seen that productivity can be increased through cooperation and trade: You make coffee, and I'll make milk; we exchange some coffee for some milk, and we can both have coffee with milk, whereas we might not both have enjoyed such had we attempted to produce both by ourselves. This barter system can also include services such as massaging, haircuts, transportation, repair, cooking, security, garbage collection, entertainment, etc., which do not produce any food or other physical commodities, but which yet enhance the quality of life of others; individuals providing such services can get away with producing less [food] or no food, but can receive food or other commodities or other services in exchange for their work.

Question 364

What are the production limitations of a straight barter system, and how can we improve upon it while still emphasizing individual control?

This was largely discussed as part of Answer 360, but the 'Black Book' offered some additional notes, which we updated to the conditions prevailing in Session 201, viz.:

Due to local climate and soil conditions, multiple individuals producing food in the same locality are likely to produce similar foods, so that there's not [always] that much to trade. To obtain foods or other commodities produced a large distance away, it often would be necessary either to travel to every such place with one's own goods to trade (highly impractical [, especially if you specialize in growing pumpkins]), or to have all people from all over the world bring their goods to a central market to trade (also impractical), or to give some of your goods in advance to a broker who travels back and forth and gives you a little bit of everything each time he swings by (potentially

doable, but it is unlikely that broker is going to have everything that you want, including all foods, appliances, clothes, tools, furniture, cars, etc.).

[Added later: We now have the technology widely available for online ordering, but the system probably would not work very well if all that you had to offer in payment were physical commodities like pumpkins, or personal services like massaging.]

As discussed in Answer 360, we theoretically could allow individual propertyholders (we don't get to call them 'property owners' anymore) to decide for themselves what agricultural commodities they wish to produce, but that approach would lead to an inefficient market, and likely shortages in certain popular commodities. Better to have a central agency at least tracking the goods which are being produced, so that growers can make strategic decisions without needing to work for entire seasons growing certain crops and then finding out through trial-and-error whether or not their crops will yield a price which exceeds the cost of production.

We do not approve of the practice of paying people to refrain from growing certain commodities, because that would create an incentive for people to perform no work at all, which would be economically illogical. Even if we have an overabundance of corn, and if you still want to raise corn and try to sell it, knowing that your sales price would need to be very low if you could successfully get anyone to buy at all, then that's on you. What we do want to do is to provide you with the information which you will need to make good strategic decisions for yourself, especially to emphasize the production of commodities which are currently in shorter supply.

Agricultural commodities therefore should belong to individual growers and not The State (as previously described), to be sold to other entities for their fair market value (if The State were to attempt to purchase the crops for direct distribution, then it probably would screw up the price calculation, due to insufficient information on current demand, so better to leave it open to the free market), but growers should report all their sales to the applicable governmental agencies, so that they can track production on a season-to-season basis for each commodity, and then report that information back to the growers for future strategic planning.

Same goes for any non-agricultural commodities, and for any personal services such as massaging or legal counseling: We would like to know on an ongoing basis how many aggregate hours are being invested in different kinds of professional services, and how those aggregate levels are either rising or falling or cycling on a year-to-year basis, so that potential service providers can have a better idea of which professions have the greatest needs, before they waste their resources on education and training for professions which already have an overabundance of practitioners.

Now, we cannot very easily force growers and service providers to report their economic output if they don't want to, and it currently happens that a lot of personal services (prostitution being a key example) are being provided without any governmental reporting, but maybe we can somehow work it into the economic infrastructure that bills are submitted to the central agency instead of directly to the clients, and then the clients pay the bills through the central agency, which then would be able to keep track of how much money everybody has, as well as the quantities of all commodities produced and services provided. This could replace the current system, where private funds are held in banks, and exchanged among individuals through the issuance of paper checks. [Third Pass: We should admit in

text that this prospect may at first sound very scary to those who oppose Big Government, and that we are not yet saying that it is a definite, only a maybe.]

Whether we do anything like this or not, growers and service providers would still have the practical option to keep their economic output partly or completely secret. We can talk about the 'honor system', but we can't really depend upon it, because (as discussed in Answer 17) we expect that some people will always try to take unfair advantage of the socioeconomic structure, no matter how fair and equitable it ever is. However, we hope that all such would-be non-reporters would realize that it is to their economic advantage to have reliable advance information available on recent economic production, and that our aggregate information is only as reliable as the sum of our individual reports: The more that people refrain from reporting their individual production accurately, the more unreliable our aggregate reporting will be, and the more likely it will be that individual growers and service providers will make strategic decisions which will work to their own economic disadvantage. It therefore is in everybody's economic interest to report their output figures accurately, neither inflating them nor deflating them for any reason.

Question 365

What is a more efficient method of distributing all produce everywhere, so that everybody everywhere has their choice of stuff to get?

That now brings us to Distribution. This was a very big current problem as of Session 201, because we had heard for many years about agricultural commodities needing to be dumped into harbors because they could not reach market before spoiling. The phenomenon was referenced in the 1970 Moody Blues song "How Is It We Are Here?", viz.: "While a starving frightened world / Fills the sea with grain."

There are two basic aspects of the problem to be considered: One is the physical infrastructure needed to connect people with resources. The other is the economic system which will provide incentives for people and governments to make it happen.

Again, fortunately, a lot of the physical infrastructure is already in place. We have many roads and trucks and harbors and ships and warehouses which allow food and other physical commodities to be moved from growers to processors and then to retailers and then to consumers. There are certain regions of the World which are too densely populated to allow new roads and plants and warehouses to be built even if the economic incentives were in place, so those regions will need to consider strategies for population mitigation and/or redistribution, because otherwise they're simply getting in their own way, and we can't do anything about that.

Once those population solutions happen, the applicable national governments will need to invest in physical infrastructure as other Nations have done, or else they will need to acknowledge that they are not economically independent enough to retain their positions as sovereign Nations, and they will need to consider mergers with other Nations, same as corporations need to do in America when they once become unsuccessful enough.

In any case, here in America (being the central focus of this particular Project), we do already have extensive mechanisms in place for getting agricultural commodities from the growers to the plants where they can be processed and packaged, and from

there to the stores all over the country where people can buy them, so lack of physical infrastructure is not the reason why we still have hungry people in America.

We next need to look more closely at our economic infrastructure, to include allowing government to purchase commodities at cut-rate prices for direct distribution if growers cannot get the prices which they are demanding from the private sector, and then to provide those foods to our hungrier populations at little or no price, possibly in exchange for work performed. Once there is no more hunger in America, we may be able to ship any excess food to other Nations, but we will need to consider the prospect of spoilage and the extra costs needed to keep food in good condition during shipping, so again (as suggested in Answer 358) part of the solution may be to ship people over here instead of food over there. For, if we actually do have so much food over here that we do not actually need so much of our land to be devoted to agriculture, then maybe some of that land can/should be converted into living space for additional immigrants.

Question 364 (continued)

What are the production limitations of a straight barter system, and how can we improve upon it while still emphasizing individual control?

Added at beginning of Session 202 (June 2017): If you deflate your quantities, then everybody thinks that we are producing less of your crop than we actually are, so they will move into your market, increasing the aggregate quantity, lowering demand, and reducing the unit prices which you can get on your crop. Conversely, if you inflate your quantities, then everyone will think that the unit prices will be lower than they currently are, so you will not be able to command the same unit prices from other customers that you previously did.

Question 365 (continued)

What is a more efficient method of distributing all produce everywhere, so that everybody everywhere has their choice of stuff to get?

As long as we have obese people in America, and/or individuals who are credited with far more wealth than they could ever possibly spend for themselves and their immediate families, we cannot accept that we do not have enough food in this country. We therefore need either to accept/embrace the huge disparity between rich and poor in this country, or else to relieve it at least to some partial degree.

Our SIG's position as of Session 202 was that we should not be accepting (let alone embracing) the huge disparity between rich and poor, because that would violate one of our basic axiomatic attributes of a good/healthy economy (cf. Answer 358), and because we want our economy to be good/healthy (cf. Answer 355), so we therefore need to do something about the disparity problem.

We can attack the problem from two directions: We can make the rich a little less rich, or we can make the poor a little less poor, or perhaps both concurrently.

On the 'rich' end, we do want individuals and their families to be able to enjoy a higher standard of living if they have worked and/or invested toward the improvement of our aggregate economic output, because otherwise the motivation for such work/investment will decrease (cf. Answer 360), as will the total amount of

such work/investment, and with it our overall economic health. However, at some point it becomes economically illogical to allow individuals to accumulate additional wealth without limit, because that takes too much away from the people whom that work/investment was intended to serve (cf. Answer 358 again), so we will need some mechanism to 'tax the rich' in such a way that their wealth does not get too high relative to that of the people whom they are supposed to be serving. We will examine these possibilities more closely in Section II-C.

On the 'poor' end, we can use the additional financing coming from increased taxation of the super-rich to build more centers where poorer people can get more meals and a decent place to sleep and bathe until they can more completely get their own personal acts together, as described in Subsubsection I-D-1-h.

However, another factor which we have identified as attending a good/healthy economy is that people should have incentives to improve their standards of living by working for it, so we should not be seeking in these centers to provide all the food and all the other comforts of life which anyone could ever possibly want. We can get them the basics for survival, enough to at least keep them off the streets, so that they are not intimidating or otherwise disturbing innocent pedestrians, but there should be opportunities to improve their standards of living through work.

These orientation centers [later 'help centers'] therefore should include offices for employment referral, which should emphasize the industries of agriculture, infrastructure, and transportation: If you are working at a place which grows or packages or transports foods, then you should be able to take a little extra home with you each night, in addition to your nominal salary. If you are working on highway construction/maintenance, or construction/maintenance of orientation centers, or other improvements to our distribution infrastructure, then you should receive a salary which is substantial enough to provide for you a standard of living which is significantly higher than what you would enjoy if you were simply accepting bread and soup at the orientation centers.

The places where these various jobs exist should have facilities nearby where workers can rest and sleep between working days, so in that sense we are moving more people to where the food is, instead of concentrating all the poor people in the urban population centers and trying to get a sufficient quantity of food there to feed the multitudes.

Government agencies should exist to make sure that this stuff all happens, but okay to outsource the day-to-day operations to private companies if that appears more net-effective at any given time and place.

Question 366

Wouldn't a single distribution network have the ability to control prices as they liked?

Yes, which is why the network of orientation centers should be a supplemental program only, where excess foods go which the growers can't sell for their preferred prices, or which do get sold to regular markets but which sit around for a certain period of time without getting sold to regular consumers.

Primary method of distribution still is in the transport of large quantities of agricultural products from growers to processing plants in exchange for a valuable consideration, and then the sale of the processed-and-packaged foods to private consumer markets for another valuable consideration, and then the sale of the processed-and-packaged foods to end-consumers for another valuable consideration. The individuals who are able and willing to pay the higher prices should have first choice of products and freshness, with the excess foods getting sold for lower prices -- or given away for free -- if they have been passed over by the richer consumers before they have had a chance to completely spoil.

Question 367

But, where does the local dropoff center of the chosen network get the power to issue credit?

As the 'black book' says, this is where we need to introduce the concept of money as the 'medium of exchange':

If credit were only theoretical, and there were no limits on it, then networks could offer higher and higher amounts of credit in exchange for goods, causing the aggregate amount of credit to rise sharply; if retail prices of goods were to remain stable in such an environment, there would be a run on such goods, since there would be far more credit than goods to buy; consequently, prices of goods would need to go up with the rise in aggregate credit. By itself, this is not bad, except that it requires more and more zeroes to get anything accomplished, *and* that it is difficult to tell in an unstable market what the relative values of all goods and services are.

Added in Session 202: We cannot reasonably expect an individual to buy a car with only pumpkins, so he needs first to exchange his pumpkins for a certain amount of credit, and then use that credit to buy his car.

Credit therefore comes from having previously produced some commodity or provided some service, such that it can be used later to purchase other goods and services when desired.

Question 368

How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

If we were to allow growers and other employers to issue new credit for themselves, at whatever rates they felt like, then they would designate wage rates which are arbitrarily or infinitely high, in order to attract the desired quality of labor, but then the value of such credit would be meaningless, and it would be no actual credit at all. It is important (and another axiomatic attribute of a good/healthy economy) that wages should be assessed at approximately the same level for the same type of work performed, and that prices should be assessed at approximately the same level for the same type of commodity produced.

Now, we could have all these rates set by some governmental agency, which has been attempted by different Nations at different times, but that approach suffers from the fact that these third parties who are neither buyers nor sellers do not really

have a solid basis for determining accurately what these prices should be, except possibly by reliance upon previous free-market mechanisms.

Besides, the price for each commodity or service will need to fluctuate over time, according to the changing levels of supply and demand. Government can maybe monitor and control supply, but can it monitor and control demand?

The most effective way of determining how intensely people want things is to see how much they are willing to pay for them, given a limited credit supply. This is especially true of computers and other electrical appliances which can become obsolescent over time with improving technologies, but it can also apply to certain agricultural products such as tobacco or lima beans, or certain mineral products such as gold or crude oil, when buyers in the market collectively find that they are not as interested in the products as they once were.

Again, however, this approach works only if the aggregate amount of credit remains relatively stable, such that the amount of credit needed to buy a pumpkin today will also buy a pumpkin twenty years from now, if the supply of and demand for pumpkins remain relatively stable over that time period. Same for any other product or service which can be expected to retain its extrinsic value over time. Individual wages and prices can and should fluctuate somewhat according to evolving supply and demand, but the aggregate amount of credit needs to remain relatively stable, so that individual wages and prices can be allowed to find their true relative values, and we can avoid runaway hyper-inflation, which we have observed in other nations before (Germany in the 1920's being a key example, along with Mexico at nearly any point in its history), and which we continue to observe to some extent in America.

The total amount of credit can rise if the population rises and more services therefore are being performed, and/or if there are more goods being produced, and/or if the quality of the goods is going up, but it should not rise beyond a proper proportional level: If the total amount of credit is ever allowed to exceed that proper proportional level, then we have an environment of inflation, where a given quantity of credit has decreasing purchasing power over time, as we saw in America as of Session 202, when Pennies used to have meaning and buy things, but now homeless people will not even take the time to bend down and pick them up for free.

Another problem which has come to exist in America is that the decreasing value of the Dollar is making it difficult to process mortgages and annuities and insurance policies and other long-term debt instruments accurately, because such pricing depends on either the value of the Dollar remaining the same over time (which it currently is not), or else our being able to predict accurately what the value of the Dollar is going to be at each year of the contract (which has also proven to be non-trivial). If we want to be able to execute such long-term contracts going forward, with all parties to the contracts getting exactly what they deserve out of the transactions, no more and no less, then the purchasing power of your basic unit of credit should remain relatively stable over time, meaning that the aggregate amount of credit should increase by only a proper proportional level.

To return to the original language of the Question, there are two basic approaches for keeping the credit supply stable: One is to try to assess what the aggregate quantity should be, based upon current population levels, agricultural supplies, housing inventories, and quantities of any modern conveniences. However, with

these rates and quantities and technologies continually evolving, it may be non-trivial for 'The State' to figure out the right formula to apply at any given time.

Other basic approach is to focus on those commodities and services which can be expected to be desired by all people of all wealth levels at all times of history, and to try to keep those rates stable, allowing the aggregate level to do whatever it will, as long as the purchasing power of the base unit remains relatively stable.

This is what the Consumer Price Index (CPI) seeks to do, but of course we have allowed it to increase over time, so either there's something wrong with the formula, or else the formula is right but we are messing up the management of the factor in some other way, so we should look at that more closely.

We considered between Sessions that maybe we need a base definition for a 'dollar', same as we have base definitions of a second, a calorie, and certain other units of measurement. In particular, we liked the idea of defining a 'dollar' as the amount needed to purchase one day's worth of reasonably-balanced food for one individual at a retail distribution center. Then, if you're earning a dollar a day then at least you're eating, although you will need additional wages if you expect shelter and clothing and transportation and other human amenities.

Question 482

Shall customers of restaurants and certain other establishments be expected or required to tip in most/all instances?

Noted between Sessions in June 2017 that we were very disturbed that businesses such as Domino's (and previously Denny's) would ask for a tip when I am driving all the way there to pick up a take-out order, makes me not want to do business with them. Uber was also going to start asking for tips [and did], when one of the most attractive qualities about them always had been that the concept of tipping never once entered the conversations. Phooey to all. We much prefer a straight contract where I know in advance exactly what I'm getting into, and where the vendor has priced the product/service to cover all their costs of doing business, such that every sale is a victory at the listed price, without anyone ever begging for any extra.

Question 368 (continued)

How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

At the beginning of Session 203 (June 2017), we qualified our note such that we may not need the Dollar to be equivalent to exactly one day of minimal eating. Rather, the rate for one day of minimal eating could be expressed in terms of a set number of Dollars, maybe 10, maybe 100, or maybe as little as 1, to be determined.

Meanwhile, we found that the 1965 book "Preface to Econometrics" (by Michael J. Brennan, professor of economics at Brown University) did not mention the CPI, for it had been invented later, so we looked online for additional background.

We started our online research with Wikipedia, even though we realized that the source was not completely reliable. Article got into heavy statistical terminology which most ordinary adults (and even some professional mathematicians) would not be able to understand, so we need a simpler standard for that reason alone.

We noted with interest, however, that insurance and other financial services could be included in the CPI, which seemed counter-intuitive to us, because we thought from the index name that we were talking about consumption not financial investments.

The article did mention in fairly simple language that different price variations were weighted according to different formulas which may be somewhat arbitrary.

We had a major disagreement with the Wikipedia assertion that "Everyone agrees that repairs and maintenance expenditure of owner-occupied dwellings should be covered in a Consumer Price Index...". We found that this factor can vary too widely according to both material availability and the average urgency of the desired repairs. My paying the listed price to fix my air-conditioning may depend on my current funds availability, so it is not a valid factor to tell us how prices are moving generally. Besides, from an accounting standpoint, such 'leasehold improvements' are actually assets which get depreciated over a long period of time (usually 15 years), so again they do not tell us very much about current consumption.

Everyone needs to eat, though, and you will need to eat a certain amount of food each day, regardless of how much available funding you have, and regardless of what is happening with other areas of our economy. In order to have a more reliable 'apples-to-apples' comparison of price environments at different times within a given region, better to rely on only those factors which remain fairly constant over time.

Rent also varies too much over time to be useful in a Consumer Price Index, being too susceptible to changes in housing inventories and population distributions. Fuel costs also vary according to shifting demands resulting from improved technologies.

It seemed to us that the only really reliable factor is Food, because the amount required to feed the average person in a minimally-healthy manner remains nearly constant over time, whereas everything else appears subject to very wide variations.

Health-care costs depend directly upon the success of any governmental efforts to regulate prices for what is an effective monopoly, because when you need to have a gangrenous appendix removed you don't have a whole lot of time available for comparison shopping, and besides your insurance plan might not even allow it.

America had used several CPI's. Weighting factors for CPI-U (urban consumers) and CPI-W (urban wage earners and clerical workers) were held constant for 24 months, and updated in January of even-numbered years. Weights for C-CPI-U (chained CPI for urban consumers) were updated monthly, but produced indices which were 0.25-0.30 percentage points lower than standard CPI measurements.

Question 369

Shall one aggregate credit amount be determined for the entire world, or shall separate amounts be determined for individual nations, or some third thing?

We certainly were tempted as of Session 203 to consider actively a harmonization of all national economies into a single global structure, and that might possibly end up needing to happen someday. For the present, however, we were continuing to advocate keeping the systems separate, for multiple reasons:

(1) It appeared on the face to violate our core principle (cf. Answer 19) that we generally should not have a one-world government, except insofar as we need it for the management of certain specific issues (such as Peace Enforcement) which history has shown cannot be adequately managed by the collection of Nations operating independently.

(2) Conditions are too far disparate in different Nations (especially when they are located on different Continents) for the same index formulas to apply equally everywhere. For a simple example, if it were to be decided that the average price of sandwiches at Burger King should be a factor in helping to assess our aggregate food pricing, then we could not apply it in all areas of the world, because not all areas of the world yet had any Burger King outlets, let alone enough of them to have a significant impact on the overall index in each locality.

(3) If we ever once go there, and decide for any reason that it's not working out, then it would be non-trivial and potentially problematic to try to reverse the decision. For example, the United Kingdom had attempted before June 2017 to 'Brexit' from the Euro, and even the dialogue on the topic had caused significant disruptions in economic management throughout Europe.

(4) It probably would be easier simply to collect price information solely from within a given Nation, and then to control the aggregate credit supply accordingly within that Nation alone, than to try to do so for the entire World.

(5) We already had major vulnerabilities in our accounting systems from 'ransomware' and other types of computer viruses which are propagated by sociopathic individuals who get no pleasure out of life other than by demonstrating to themselves that they have the technical power to make life difficult for others. If we keep the systems separate, then at least some areas of the World can continue to operate if others get infected. If we were to place all our electronic eggs in one basket, then the entire World could be hit at once, and we did not care to contemplate the possibility any further than that.

We could see carrying some continental currencies like the Euro, potentially useful if you have a lot of small Nations grouped together in a small geographic space, such that there might be a lot of travel and tourism and trade within that Region, but we felt that larger nations like America probably are better off with their own national currencies and credit measurements.

Question 370

Given that we will not attempt to carry a single currency for the entire world, should there still be such a thing as an International Monetary Fund, and if so then why?

According to the 1985 book "Principles of Economics" (by Thomas J. Hailstones, then professor of economics at Xavier University in Cincinnati), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was established in 1944 "in an attempt to stabilize exchange rates" following the "demise of the gold standard in the 1930s", and "to provide temporary assistance to nations with deficit balances of payments."

It is in the interest of each Nation or Region using a given currency to keep the nominal purchasing power of its base currency unit as stable as it practically can, so that all producers and consumers and financial institutions and governmental agencies will know exactly what they currently have to work with, and what they are likely to have to work with if they once proceed with this or that financial transaction. If all Nations and Regions successfully keep their currency values stable, then exchange rates would also remain relatively stable, and so stabilization of exchange rates would not be a reason to maintain an IMF.

Besides, even if an IMF were maintained for this purpose, then not only would it appear to violate our Answer 369 that different Nations and Regions should have their own currencies without creating a one-world economic structure, but it also would appear to falsify the value of the currency unit of any Nation/Region which 'borrows' from the Fund, especially if the advance is never repaid.

We generally could see as of Session 203 needing more affluent Nations to help less affluent Nations along from time to time, especially if the latter have recently suffered large natural catastrophes, or were excessively victimized by external military attack before the international community successfully intervened. Except for very short-term needs resulting from disasters which were not really their fault, most such assistance should be less oriented toward retail consumption, and more oriented toward infrastructure investment, to develop the means for the affected Nations to increase their own agricultural outputs, and to facilitate the distribution of agricultural products from producers to consumers.

If a given Nation's needs are so chronic that it is continually dependent upon other Nations for its ongoing livelihood, then it probably should not continue to be recognized by the prevailing 'international oversight organization' as an independent Nation, and its territory probably should be reassigned to one or more neighboring Nations who have the political and administrative and economic systems in place to make more efficient use of that area's economic potential.

Okay therefore to have an insurance-type fund available for short-term disaster relief, and to charge premiums to different Nations according to their respective economic power. Okay also to have a separate fund available for longer-term financial advances such as for infrastructure improvements, with the understanding that any such advances are eventually to be repaid to the fund when the improvements have once yielded their economic increases.

If any Nation needs any further aid, or if it defaults on its loans from the international fund, then it should be considered for dissolution by the international oversight organization.

Question 371

Which agency of the American government shall monitor and control the credit supply for America?

Notwithstanding our original statement in Answer 137 that one of the nine Departments in the federal Executive Branch should be 'Treasury', we disliked that term as of Session 203, partly because it incorrectly implies that we have one or more physical vaults containing all our physical wealth (which might have been the case under the gold standard, but not in our current or model economic

environment), and largely because it does not sufficiently describe everything which is going on in that agency. Therefore preferring the term 'Finance'.

We had a Bureau set up for 'Currency & Banking', but we may or may not end up with a Banking function similar to what we have had in the past, so now thinking it better to just call it 'Currency', with the primary mission to monitor and control the aggregate amount of credit available for circulation within the Nation, in such a way that the amount of credit needed to provide a minimally-reasonable quantity and variety of food for one individual remains relatively constant.

Budget Office of the Administrative Services Department will use information obtained from the Currency Bureau to help determine how much credit it has available each year to pay for any services or entitlements or other expenditures on behalf of the Federal Government.

Question 372

By what mechanism shall the relative value of a good or service be determined?

As discussed prior to Session 203, we felt it best to have a finite-but-flexible supply of credit, so that both individuals and governments are motivated to conserve, and so that the price of that most basic of economic necessities (i.e., feeding an individual human for a day) remains relatively stable, and so that the evolving values of all other goods and services can find their true values relative to that standard.

Question 373

Given that many goods (particularly food items) are consumed shortly after production, and also given that a large part of the economy comprises human services which cost nothing other than time to provide, shall the total credit amount be a fixed figure, or shall it fluctuate with population, or shall it fluctuate with the total amount of material wealth currently in existence, or shall some other means be used to determine it?

This also has been addressed above: Total amount shall be allowed to fluctuate in such a way that the price of feeding an individual for a day remains relatively stable. Different factors can cause the total amount of credit to rise and fall, including population levels, agricultural variations, consumption rates, government spending, taxation, natural disasters, foreign aid, infrastructure investment, etc.

It is not important that we try to maintain a money supply of exactly 1 Trillion Dollars, or exactly 5 Trillion Dollars, or exactly 100 Dollars per person, or any other exact figure. What is important is that the nominal purchasing power of our base currency unit remains relatively stable and predictable over time.

Question 374

However we determine the aggregate amount of credit, how shall it be initially apportioned among the different segments of the economy?

Read during Session 204 (July 2017) the notes in the 'black book':

If we were starting from scratch, it would probably be best to assign each individual an equal starting amount (like the \$1500 in Monopoly), and let them go to work. Given, though, that many people have already accumulated wealth by reason of their previous contributions to society, it might be unfair to simply invalidate what they've done to this point, and just start over. On the other hand, this is a bit of a revolution. Also to be considered is that individuals wanting to take their initial funds and try to make it on their own will need a plot of land (unlike Monopoly, where you get just a token); if doing an initial redistribution of money and/or wealth, would need to assign or auction tracts of land to individuals, for subsequent purchase and sale to one another, at their discretion. Anyway, we may consider converting existing dollars to some other system of credit units, or we could keep currency basically as is, and simply make sure that we update the rules for maintaining a stable money supply. Another point is that we intend to devolve a lot of government functions to private industry, but if we strip all individuals of their initial wealth, then we would have to strip all private companies, as well, requiring them to start over, which would totally collapse the economy, to say nothing of the power of the Fed to do what it still has to.

Agreed in Session 204 that we do not want to totally strip down existing individuals to the initial individual average, and corporations to zero, because that would bring our economy to a complete halt, and unjustly penalize both individuals and corporations who really have made significant contributions of effort to our society.

However, we did recognize that many individuals (and possibly some corporations) have more wealth currently than they actually deserve, as a result of tax breaks and other 'gamings' of the system, and that in some cases even those who have exactly what they deserve still could not possibly spend it all within their lifetimes or even within the lifetimes of their kids and grandkids.

On the other hand, we don't want to spend a whole lot of time trying to make subjective judgments about how much each individual deserves to have, for the same reasons that we don't want to try to evaluate the production potential and consumption needs of individual households under a Socio-Communist system, being that it would be an unproductive usage of time, and that we probably wouldn't have the analytical skills and collective patience to get it right anyway.

Instead, best to consider that one of our axiomatic factors of a good-or-healthy economy is a non-excessive disparity between rich and poor, and that one of the ways by which we achieve that goal is to make the rich less rich, even if they truly deserved all of their riches, which again we feel is unlikely, because it is hard to accept that people truly deserve all their riches if their hoarding is causing massive hunger and poverty.

Therefore, insofar as we need any additional amount of credit in circulation in order to stabilize our base currency unit, and/or for transitional goals of feeding/educating our poor and improving our infrastructure, we should be taking first from those who have the most, so that the fiscal distance between the richest person and the poorest person will be shortened. Specifically, we should tax from the richest individual/corporation until his/its total wealth reduces to that of the second-richest individual/corporation, and then we tax them equally until their totals reach that of the third-richest individual/corporation, etc. If we were instead to tax the top N

individuals/corporations proportionately, then the total wealth of the richest individual/corporation would reduce by a smaller amount, so the disparity between rich and poor would similarly reduce by less, so that would be an inferior approach.

[Added later: One argument against this approach is that the rich do not deserve to have any of their wealth taken away just to help the poor; to that we counter-argue that the rich did not deserve all that wealth to start with. Another argument against this approach is that giving Dollars away to the poor tends to encourage laziness; our answer is that we can institute measures which inhibit benefits for able-bodied non-elderly adults who are provided with paying work but who refuse to perform it, but that we have a moral obligation to take care of our elderly and orphans and sick and disabled, or else we have no business going around the rest of the World telling everyone how morally superior we are, and that they therefore should adopt all our political and economic practices.]

This approach means that we will need to maintain a public record of the total net wealth (that's Assets-minus-Liabilities) of each individual and corporation claiming domicile within this Nation. We hear some such figures quoted through various sources (including *Forbes* and *Fortune*), but these are often based on tax returns upon which we may not be able to rely completely. Besides, if we start taxing on the basis of net wealth, then a lot of those folks will have a stronger motivation than ever to try to shelter some of their assets from public declaration, so we will need a separate system which does not depend on truthful declaration by the subjects.

Again, we don't want to be excessive in our attacks upon private bank accounts, generally because doing anything to excess is unfair by definition, and specifically because we don't want elected officials feeling free to spend as much as they like with the knowledge that the super-rich will pay for it all. We still want some constraints on our spending, if not for the sake of fairness to the super-rich (who still have some inherent Rights, don't they?), then at least in furtherance of our other axiom, that we should work for sustainability in our aggregate consumption patterns. Super-rich individuals therefore have a motivation to provide financial support to those candidates who if elected will work sincerely to limit government spending while still providing a minimal obligation of care to the poor.

Question 375

Once we decide how we are allocating credit, shall some portion of it (or all of it) be distributed in the form of physical currency?

We were intensely tempted in Session 204 to aim for that 'cashless society' which we had been hearing about since the 1960's, and we easily envisioned having a government agency basically serving as an omnibus bank, keeping track automatically of everyone's incomes (including from gambling) and expenditures (including for prostitution) and tax contributions and long-term debts, and utilizing fingerprints or face-recognition technology in order to improve security over our current debit cards with PIN's.

Adding to the temptation was that getting out of Cash would make it much harder to engage in bribery, blackmail, mugging, street begging, counterfeiting, and other illicit transactions.

Also adding to the temptation was that getting rid of Cash would discourage tipping, which no one liked who attended Session 204, on the grounds that you have agreed to purchase some product or service at a certain advertised rate, and then someone comes along and asks you for more money, and that screws everything up, whether you agree to the request or not.

However, there are some tipping opportunities which we may want to retain, including for club dancers who will provide you with a better experience if you once tempt them with a sufficient number of bills.

Buying concessions from walking purveyors at the ballpark would also be more difficult without Cash, but not impossible.

Basically, if you're going into some venue like a stadium or a dance club where you are going to want to provide variable amounts of compensation for spot sales or services, then you should be able to purchase vouchers from that venue upon entry, provide the individual purveyors with whatever numbers of vouchers you agree to, and then they can cash them in with their employers at the end of their workdays. Meanwhile, you get refunded when you leave the place for any vouchers which you don't use, possibly minus a transaction fee for their trouble.

With that condition, we tentatively concluded -- pending cogent counterargument from individuals not in attendance during Session 204 -- that a cashless society actually would be net-beneficial for us, so we did want to be phasing out our physical currency, once we have all the infrastructures in place for automatic recording of all sales transactions everywhere.

Question 376

If some or all of the credit amount is funded by a physical money supply, then some of the money will tend to get lost, worn away, or destroyed: How shall it be replaced, so that the aggregate money supply remains stable?

N/A if we do away with Cash, as recommended in Session 204.

Until we actually do it, though, we can treat any Cash withdrawal from a private bank as an unreported expense, and apply any sales-tax rate directly to it. Conversely, we can also provide sales-tax credit upon any Cash deposit. Then, if any currency erodes or is lost/destroyed, then there would be no accounting effect, because we have already written it off as an end-consumer expense, and not tracking it as part of our aggregate credit supply, which would be used indirectly to determine our government spending and tax rates and other economic variables.

Question 19.5 (continued)

How do (or should) we feel about War?

At the national convention of American Mensa conducted in Hollywood FL during July 2017, we had occasion to witness an extremely cool presentation by 98-year-old Ben Ferencz, who at age 27 had helped to prosecute the Nuremberg trials. We packaged the key points of his presentation as an amendment to A19.5 in the Third Pass.

Most of the presentation was the story of his journey from a poor immigrant child through scholarship at law school, to eventually be selected as a war-crimes investigator and prosecutor. Ended with very powerful message that War is not glorious, and that it is a waste of precious resources which could be used instead to help people. The very large audience totally dug the story and the message.

While he acknowledged the existence of an International Court of Justice, he yet also blasted the current global-governance system for failing to enforce its own policies, and allowing War to still happen. Leaders send young people off to fight and die, he told us, until at some point they get tired of it and at least one side declares victory, then they take a rest for a while and begin the process all over again; that's our system, and don't let anyone else tell us differently.

"War makes criminals out of otherwise decent people."

He specifically called upon our organization of intellectually-gifted individuals to go out there and make it happen that we have no more War; couldn't help but feel that he was speaking to the author and our work with the Global Challenges Foundation and the Answers To Everything SIG.

Question 377

Shall banks be owned and operated by a governmental entity, or by private interests?

We were very tempted in Session 205 (July 2017) to nationalize all banks into a single Federal agency, but there are both upsides and downsides.

Upsides include:

- that citizens would not need to generate bank profits through account fees and loan interest, for something which is an essential civil function;
- that we could process tax contributions, student-loan repayments, and other required transactions directly, instead of waiting for some private bank to agree to do it; and,
- that we could exercise direct authority over interest rates and loan inventories, instead of leaving it up to the private sector, which basically operates as a collusive monopoly which has a financial interest in maintaining a nation of net-debtors.

Downsides include:

- that citizens would have no option if they can't get a loan from the Fed, or can get a loan but don't like the interest rate;
- that it would create additional work for government when we are trying to reduce our public workload; and,
- that a single network would be too vulnerable to computer hacking.

We do want to maintain an ongoing governmental record of the net wealth of each individual, so that we can see who needs to have their wealth taxed in order to

supplement whatever we can get from property and sales taxes (although only the top N individuals would need to be revealed to the public, where N may vary with time and economic evolution and collective attitude). However, it may not be necessary to combine all private banks into a single public entity in order to do this: As long as each account held in a private bank is associated with a particular individual or corporation (including estates and any other entities carrying either a Social Security Number or equivalent, which everyone should need to have in order to open a bank account), and as long as all those bank balances are continually uploaded to the central authority (which must continually consolidate the balances of all accounts pertaining to the same individual), then we can leave that system basically as it is, in order to reduce governmental work, facilitate the transition to our new model, and provide citizens with choices.

Okay for the private banks to charge fees to cover the infrastructure of maintaining everyone's balances, the amounts and conditions of such fees to be left to the free market in order to maximize appropriateness.

But behold, another big thing which banks do is to provide loans to individuals and corporations: How do we want to deal with that?

First aspect of the question to consider was whether we still want to have loans at all. We were very tempted to say no, no more loans, earn your money through work and then live within your means. Moderator lived that way for many years, and had personally concluded that it is a good way to mitigate spending. However, there are several legitimate and important functions which would be undesirably curtailed if we completely did away with debt: These include student and home loans for individuals, and equipment and inventory financing for businesses. In addition, we spoke earlier here about providing assistance to individuals and regions in case of disaster, and generally about investing in infrastructure in order to improve a region's economic productivity, both of which functions also would be undesirably curtailed if we depended upon everybody paying for everything up front.

And then there's the whole concept of maintaining a public debt, which Hailstones claimed to be an essential ingredient of a good-or-healthy economy, although we vigorously disagreed. As much as we disliked the concept of a public debt, though (how can we legitimately expect/demand other people to live within their means if our own government is unable/unwilling to do so itself?), we supposed that we must yet at least allow for the theoretical possibility, because we don't want government payroll to be stopped, nor any other essential governmental operations curtailed, simply because we have temporarily run out of cash. [Reconsidered later.]

We therefore were continuing to allow individuals and corporations and governments to carry debt, pending cogent counterargument. How we collectively manage our debts was the subject of the next Question.

Question 378

Shall banks have sole authority to issue loans, or shall other private firms do it, shall government do it, or some combination?

As discussed extensively in Andre Michael Eggelletion's book "Thieves in the Temple" (which we had only skimmed by this point, but read completely in 2019-20, as detailed later in this report), we disliked as of Session 205 the fact that most banks

were then organized into a 'Federal Reserve System', which was managed by a 'Federal Reserve Board' comprising a few self-selected private individuals. These individuals acted as a collusive monopoly to set interest rates according to what worked best for them, instead of allowing the free market to decide interest rates according to evolving economic conditions.

However, we also didn't want any governmental agency at any level to be in the business of issuing loans, because that would be another public function which maybe could be handled privately at least as effectively, and because it would involve the government making value judgments about what the money is wanted for, about the borrower's credit history, and about the borrower's expected propensity for paying the loan back. We probably would be either too stingy or too generous, so best to have these decisions made by entities who actually have a financial incentive to issue some loans in consideration of an appropriate interest rate, and also a financial incentive not to be reckless in their lending.

This left either banks or non-bank lenders or some combination.

We supposed that we could have private firms in place who are specifically in the business of lending money for an appropriate profit, with the understanding that they will be on the hook for covering the balances of any loans which are defaulted by the borrowers. Where would they get that kind of capital, though, if not from bank deposits? Well, private lenders have been in business since Shylock's time, and they can grow or fail like any other business, so it is a conceivable way to go, even in our modern environment. We would just need to be aware that lenders who agree to underwrite higher risks can be legitimately expected to charge higher interest rates in order to cover their higher defaults, so borrowers are advised to shop around, so that all lenders are motivated to remain competitive.

If we were to go entirely with non-bank lenders, then what would the banks do with all their deposits? Well, it must be remembered that -- in contrast to the non-bank lenders -- the money is not theirs, but instead belongs to the depositors. However, we suppose that a certain portion of it can be allocated to a reserve for issuing loans for profit, as a way of keeping themselves in business if deposit fees prove to be insufficient. If they do so, though, then the loans must be priced in such a way that the bank never runs out of cash and becomes insolvent (which has happened), so any such activity on their part would need to be closely regulated by the Federal government, in order to make sure that all depositors who previously earned legitimate credit through work maintain that credit amount, one way or another.

Under these conditions, we were prepared to allow both banks and non-bank firms to issue loans to individuals and corporations.

Question 379

Given that the Federal government shall not be in the business of issuing loans, shall any agency of the Federal government have any say in determining interest rates?

As discussed in Answer 378, the Federal government (not the Federal Reserve Board) should be in a position to establish minimum and/or maximum interest rates which banks may charge to their borrowers, as a means of protecting the assets which belong to their depositors.

As of Session 205, we generally did not want any regulation of interest rates charged by non-bank entities, who are putting up their own capital entirely. We recognized that we would like to prevent 'usury', *i.e.* the charging of excessive interest rates, but interest rates become excessive only when the free market says so. In a free market, anyone who charges an excessive interest rate will not get any business, and will be forced to lower rates in order to remain competitive.

The important thing is that we always have competition, which keeps all fees and interest rates at a reasonable and appropriate level, and which gives at least some people at least some alternatives.

Question 380

To recapitulate, what is the basic form of our preferred economic structure?

We summarized the basic elements of our model during Session 206 (July 2017) within five main categories, as follows:

Land Management

Our model system combines elements of Capitalism and Socialism, and is based principally on the premise that The Land does not belong to any Monarch or 'The State' or the Conquerors or the Laborers or the Capital Investors, nor even to Humanity collectively, but rather to all the creatures who live upon it, because we all contribute to the ecosystem in various ways, and therefore are stakeholders in it.

The Land rests in the primary custody of Humanity, being currently the most net-powerful species living upon it. We may (and do) by global agreement designate that custodies of specific portions of The Land are allocated for direct administration to certain 'nations' of people, who generally may do within their borders anything which does not adversely impact life or health or property outside those borders, and who generally owe some manner of periodic payment to the global collective for the privilege of self-administration.

Nations may further parse their lands into 'provinces', 'districts', and other administrative subdivisions as they see fit, which subdivisions similarly owe a periodic payment of some kind to the higher levels in consideration of the privilege of direct administration. The lowest administrative division may lease specific tracts of land to individuals and/or corporations (calling them 'incorps' collectively) in consideration of a periodic 'property tax'. Such 'incorps' may be called 'property holders' accurately, but 'property owners' only loosely, because they actually are renting the land from the community.

Production and Distribution

Those 'incorps' who control any huge tracts of land, and who possess the necessary skills and resources, should devote some/all of their land to agricultural and/or industrial production, in order to help provide food and other care for all Humanity. Such production should be monitored by national (and possibly global) authorities, with the totals reported back to the individual producers in order to help them with their strategic planning.

Producers may sell their crops and other products to willing buyers, in return for a compensation commensurate with the relative value of the product and the amount of effort required to create it. Products which are not purchased by independent buyers may be purchased by governments at cut-rate prices in order to provide supplemental care to the poorer populations.

Buyers (including governments) may sell elements of their purchases to other entities who will package and distribute the products as needed, until they finally reach markets where they may be purchased by individual consumers.

Currency

In order to obviate the transportation of large numbers of physical pumpkins whenever you wish to purchase some product or service, we allow you to earn credits in exchange for work, and then to use those credits to make your purchases. Credits may be created by nations or by geographically-affiliated groups of nations, but not by the global authority.

Issuing governments may decide whether to create and release new credit units on the basis of work or on the basis of existence, or in some combination, but in any case the aggregate supply of credit should be controlled in such a way that the relative purchasing power of each unit of credit remains approximately the same over time. Specifically, we are suggesting that each currency unit be defined in terms of how much it costs to provide a minimally-acceptable level of feeding for one person for one day, because the relative values of all other goods and services can change very drastically over time. In other words, it should always cost N 'flubbits' to feed a person for one day, where we generally prefer for simplicity that $N = 1$, but where N can be defined differently by different governments according to local conditions as needed.

Credit transfers shall be recorded electronically, such that the national government always knows exactly how much credit is retained by each 'indcorp' at each moment. Credits shall not be circulated in the form of physical currency, except that entertainment venues may sell a certain number of vouchers for a certain number of credits to a customer upon entrance, after which the customer may pay vouchers to individual purveyors within the venue, and then cash in any remaining vouchers upon exit for a reasonable transaction fee, the paid vouchers being redeemable by the individual purveyors for electronic credit at the end of their workdays, and having no circulatory value after that.

Banking

Credit transfers shall be recorded by private banking organizations, who may charge fees to some/all of their depositors in order to remain in operation. All transactions shall be promptly and automatically uploaded to the national government, which will combine all account balances in order to track on an ongoing basis the net wealth of each 'indcorp'.

Banks may lend depositor funds, according to interest rates which are regulated by the national government in order to protect depositor assets. Non-bank entities may lend their private capital at interest rates which they decide according to market tolerance.

Taxation

The individuals who work for national and local governments deserve to be compensated for their time and effort, even if they are not directly producing any tangible goods. Their compensation can come in the form of new credit units if and only if the relative purchasing power of the base credit unit remains approximately the same. Insofar as new credit issuance would cause the purchasing power of the base credit unit to diminish, compensation to government workers should come by recycling the excess units previously issued to other 'incorps'.

Such 'taxation' can come in multiple forms, to be examined more closely in Section II-C, but one backup measure which we envision is for any supplemental taxation to come from those who currently have the greatest net wealth. For, we do believe in the Capitalist principle that people should be able to benefit according to the amounts and relative values of their efforts and investments, so that we all have incentives to maximize our economic outputs, but we also believe in the Socialist principle that wealth should not be concentrated too heavily among a few individuals at the expense of the overall society. We therefore may need occasionally to 'tax the rich' in order to maintain societal functionality and currency stability, and also in order to help prevent the disparity between rich and poor to become so severe that it may someday result in new civil unrest.

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Further on the 'Swedish project' to submit an original model of global governance for a large cash prize, we observed in July 2017 that our previous submission was missing the Europe and Asia Southwest sections in the delegation listings for the population-based house, so we went online at this time to add those elements in, as well as to make a few cosmetic corrections to other language. Profile otherwise remained green-for-go, so that was good.

However, we now observed that Part Two was now 85 words over the 5500-word limit after the additions, so we trimmed other material to fit, focusing on Subsections II-E-2, II-E-4, II-D-4, II-C-2, and II-C-1, ending up at exactly 5500 words.

SECTION II-B: GOVERNMENT SPENDING

We had established by this point that we need some degree of government, basically to protect everybody's rights and to provide a system to facilitate economic production and distribution. With that:

Question 381

Is it better for a larger portion of our collective resources to be devoted to government operations, or for government operations to require the minimum amount of resources; or, does it even matter?

To rephrase more basically: Do we want big government or small government?

We reviewed in Session 207 (July 2017) the notes in the 'black book' of preliminary ideas from 20 years earlier, and found a flaw in the introductory paragraph of Section II-B (specifically in the opening phrase "Given that maximum possible amount of work done by private individuals and industries, in order to maximize

efficiency and the incentive to produce”), because we had not established by this point that we should maximize Individual control over production and distribution, but rather that we should have a hybrid of Individual and State control.

Non-author panelist (first in 15 months) noted that big governments trying to control policy over wide areas would often lead to conflict with smaller governments which disagree with the larger policies. Moderator offered historical example of slavery.

Panelist also suggested that having larger governments would mean that individuals would not need to do as many things, including not needing to select health insurers. Moderator noted that some people like to have decisions made for them, and that others like to decide things for themselves. This probably will continue to be the case going forward, as it has gone in the past and present.

That being the apparent case, maybe the Answer to this Question (and generally an ‘Answer to Everything’) is that we should encourage Variety, and allow different cities and counties and states and nations to decide for themselves how big their governments are, and how much they will need in taxation to fund those operations. Then, people could move to other places where the size of the government is more to their liking, or else they could work with others to enact changes in their current governments if the local populations possess enough collective desire to do so.

We weren’t entirely sure that this is the correct Answer; was our best for the time.

Question 382

For those jurisdictions which prefer smaller governments, what if the government is able to provide jobs for people who would otherwise find it a challenge to be gainfully employed?

[Noted in Third Pass that this Question may not be applicable if we successfully arrange in Section II-E for there to be no such thing as ‘unemployment’ at all. However, on the assumption that some may still eventually exist somewhere:]

Moderator found another problem in the ‘black book’ during Session 207, for it referred to production regulation as “relatively unproductive work”, whereas we had recently determined that monitoring production for reporting back to growers is very important work. We definitely will need some number of people performing that function within the government sector.

Non-author panelist asked what might happen if we have smaller governments with more unemployed people who are motivated to leave agriculture in order to work for higher wages in the government. Answer is that growers would then be motivated to increase their wages, whether we have a minimum wage or not.

Question 381 (continued)

Is it better for a larger portion of our collective resources to be devoted to government operations, or for government operations to require the minimum amount of resources; or, does it even matter?

Panelist asked about if you have different systems with different tax rates, and you want to travel to different areas. If a jurisdiction like Florida which depends on

tourism wants to attract tourism, then they will be motivated to minimize their sales-tax rates, and therefore the size of their government.

But, what happens if you get sick or injured in a different jurisdiction which does not subsidize health care as much as they do in your home area? That's a more complex topic which probably should be addressed when we look more closely at health care later. However, for now, we were still leaning toward having States decide their own levels of health coverage, and we therefore would need systems in place where someone who is universally covered in her State of residence continues to be covered while traveling in States which do not carry such coverage, because the State of residence would somehow reimburse the State where the care is provided.

Question 382 (continued)

For those jurisdictions which prefer smaller governments, what if the government is able to provide jobs for people who would otherwise find it a challenge to be gainfully employed?

Generally, agreed in discussion that we should not create government jobs simply for the purpose of providing employment, both because it's wasteful generally, and also because government could instead subsidize cross-training Education at community colleges as needed, to make it easier for people to obtain good productive jobs.

Question 383

But, what about the economic theory which has it that continued government spending is good, to stimulate the economy?

We focused in Session 208 (August 2017) on the following paragraph appearing on p.299 of the Hailstones book referenced in Answer 370, viz.:

"A **deficit budget** [bolding theirs] exists when the government spends more than the amount it receives in taxes. A deficit budget will generally increase the level of economic activity or will be inflationary, depending upon the status of employment in the economy. If the government borrows idle funds or money created by banks, the total effective demand of the economy will be increased. The increase occurs because the total spending by the government is greater than the amount of spendable funds given up by firms and individuals through taxation. Therefore, the level of economic activity will increase if the economy is at less than full employment, and inflation will occur if the economy is at full employment. It is for this reason that a deficit budget is frequently referred to as a fiscal stimulus. The fiscal stimulus, however, will be offset to some extent if the government borrows funds that individuals and businesses might otherwise spend on consumption and investment."

The paragraph appears to claim that deficit spending will increase economic activity if we have unemployment, or will be inflationary if we have full employment. We found the premises leading up to the "Therefore" statement to be insufficiently supported, but more than anything else the conclusion was suspect by inspection of recent history, where deficit spending had allowed inflation even with unemployment.

We were not convinced that any artificial mechanisms are ever needed to 'stimulate the economy': People always need food, and most will want periodic replacement of their wardrobe because of erosion and/or changing fashions and/or body evolution. Those with more affluence will periodically want replacements and upgrades of their various items of equipment, along with larger houses to accommodate their larger inventories and growing families. If we ever reach a point where everybody is happy with everything that they have, with only the slightest investment needed for ongoing agricultural production, then we should declare victory and be happy. Conversely, if -- as is usually the case -- we have a situation where people tend to want significantly more than what they've got, then that simple fact is enough of a mechanism to stimulate higher employment and higher economic production and higher consumer spending. [Third Pass insert: "..., if that's what we want"]

If we ever have a situation where aggregate demands are unsatisfied because agricultural growers and/or other economic producers are allowing their lands to sit idle (presumably because they feel that they have enough 'stuff' already to hold them for the rest of their lives, and therefore don't feel like working anymore), then at some point the national government will need to exercise its right of 'eminent domain', and either compel them to produce at previous levels, or else seize their lands and auction them to whoever promises to make the best use of them. Such purchases may be financed by private lenders, on the condition of government-forced repayment of the loans off the top of new sales.

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The 'black book' of preliminary ideas from the mid-1990's suggested a resolution for our consideration at this point, reading: "While certain Government expenditures are necessary, and some others potentially justifiable, we generally want to minimize Government spending, so that private individuals and businesses can retain the maximum amount of their resources, for greater investment, savings, and growth." We were not prepared to adopt this resolution in Session 208. Moving on, then:

Question 384

How shall we determine what level of government spending is appropriate in any given period?

As established in Answer 381 [and assuming the stable credit supply recommended in Answer 368], different jurisdictions at different levels should be making and updating this decision on an ongoing basis. We experience continual changes in demographic distribution, technological advancement, economic production, and other factors which could influence the feelings of an individual voter or a collective jurisdiction as to how much government should be spending on various programs.

We also have ample opportunities to observe what works and what doesn't work within other jurisdictions of the same bureaucratic levels, as well as within our own.

We felt in Session 208 that each jurisdiction therefore should poll itself periodically, to see how much it collectively wants to spend on government operations, relative to recent levels. It would then be the job of that jurisdiction's legislature to enact specific budgets to reflect those aggregate sentiments, and the job of that jurisdiction's executive branch to administer the budget as enacted.

Question 385

Are there any additional mechanisms or incentives which we can concoct to allow or encourage governments to regulate spending?

We found in Session 209 (August 2017) that there are two phases of this Question to consider, being how to regulate the Budget and how to regulate spending relative to the Budget. [Third Pass: We will separate these Questions in the final packaging.]

On the first element, if a Legislature could pass whatever budget it wanted, regardless of popular preference, then the poll recommended in Answer 384 would be useless, and the action of the Legislature would tend to increase the perception of disconnectedness between the Government and the Public, which would be a bad thing for the civil peace.

We therefore should have some kind of provision whereby the Legislature must budget within a certain range based upon the official poll, unless it has sufficient reason to budget outside of that range, the validity of which reasoning can be confirmed by achieving a sufficient supermajority on the Motion to Adopt. [In other words, if you are going to stray further from the public preference when creating your budget, then you had better make sure to have good reason for doing so, which you would need to demonstrate by getting more than the usual number of votes.]

Primary recommendation -- if only to make the concept more understandable by the general population, and therefore hopefully more acceptable to them -- is to allow a 10% variation on Income and a 10% variation on Expenses, relative to the most recent official poll of the local electorate, to be approved by a simple majority of the Legislature. A variance of 10-20% shall require a 3/5 majority, a variance of 20-30% shall require a 2/3 majority, a variance of 30-40% shall require a 3/4 majority, and any more shall require 4/5. OK to modify the variance ranges and/or specific voting requirements according to more detailed analysis or actual experience, but the main idea is to make it harder to vary further from the expressed public preference, but still possible if the need is urgent enough.

On the second element, as with any large corporation, every Expense incurred by any government should be allocated to a particular 'cost center' (i.e., a bureaucratic unit of the organization which incurs expenses in the course of its operations), and each 'cost center' should be under the control of a particular manager. It then is each manager's responsibility to keep her expenses to within a particular percentage of the budgetary allocation, or else to explain any large variances, with her job being in jeopardy if the explanation is not satisfactory. Moderator shared his experience from working in a large corporation, in which management typically requested explanations of any variances of more than 5%, and did very well as a result, so that seemed like a good benchmark to apply to government, although individual jurisdictions may find from deeper analysis and/or actual experience that a different percentage threshold would be net-better for them.

As described in Section I-D, we felt that the United States Vice-President (as well as any corresponding official at a more local level) should be actively involved as a Chief Operating Officer, and act as a 'watchdog' to control spending in all areas of the Executive Branch. If she fails to do so to the satisfaction of the electorate, then she risks losing her current job and/or any prospects for future employment.

More specifically, we envision that the U.S. Vice-President should participate with the President and the entire Cabinet in a weekly meeting on Monday morning (primary suggestion is 0930, being late enough to have a leisurely breakfast but early enough to wrap up by lunch), and then spend each of the 9 remaining timeslots of the week (Tuesday-Friday mornings, Monday-Friday afternoons, latter probably starting at 1330 to allow time for lunch) in one-on-one meetings with the 9 department heads (probably best to do Foreign Relations on Monday afternoon, so that the department head can travel after the day of the Cabinet meeting if needed, Administration being best for Friday afternoon because it's mentally easiest), to focus not only on current issues concerning those Departments, but also on how closely their spending is meeting their budgetary targets, and the reasons for any significant variances. If time permits (and a responsible VP would see that it does), then each one-on-one session could be followed by a meeting (probably starting at 1115 and 1515, after a break) with both the Department head and all the Bureau chiefs, who could present more specific reports to the VP on any current issues, and on how they are individually progressing with expense regulation. On a weekly basis (could be either after the Cabinet meeting or after the final one-on-one on Friday afternoon or some other time of week, depending on what appears to work best with experience), the VP should hold press conferences to update the Public on the state of the Government's expenses and other financial matters, so that members of the Press can ask questions to clarify and/or challenge any reported results. VP's office should also arrange periodically for that information to be presented on a Government website, so that the Public can absorb the material at their own convenience.

But, if we allow any shortage in Expenses over ordinary Income to be covered by taxing the wealth of the richest 'indcorps', as suggested in Answer 374, then what is to prevent all non-rich citizens from voting for infinite Expenses in the official polls, so that all the excess can come from the super-rich? That would be a problem, so we cannot allow it, and so that's a third element of the Question to consider. It's one thing to ask/require the super-rich to fund any excess of legitimate Expenses over otherwise-available Incomes, on the premise that they have already diverted an excess of the World's wealth unto themselves, so we are just partly offsetting the excess in order to make the overall economy a little more equitable. However, if we go beyond that point, and take from the super-rich more than we really need, then our taxation of the super-rich would become excessive and therefore unfair.

We solve that problem by creating a counter-motivation for taxing the super-rich, so that people will tend to vote for it only when it is really needed, and not otherwise. Specifically, we make it part of the 'game plan' that any excess of Expenses over existing Income can only partly be funded by taxing the super-rich, and that the remainder must come from all the other 'indcorps' by increasing tax rates on other sources such as Property and Consumer Sales.

If more than a majority of the excess were fundable by excess taxation on the wealth of the super-rich, then people still might tend to vote in favor of such excess, so it probably should be only a minority at most. However, if the share were too small, then that would tend to obviate the value of that backup funding mechanism. Our intuitive feeling as of Session 209 was that most appropriate would be a 30% share of any budgetary excess being fundable by direct taxation of the wealth of the super-rich, with the remaining 70% needing to come from ordinary citizens in the form of increased regular taxation. That was only a starting point, however, and can be modified through experience as appropriate.

This appeared to cover the three main phases of appropriateness in public polling, budgetary enactment to reflect the public polling as much as practical, and actual government spending to match the budgetary targets as closely as practical.

Question 386

Do we have room to reduce Federal spending from recent levels? If so, then where and how much?

As a starting point for consideration, we felt in Session 209 that we would like to review the Federal income-expense statement for the fiscal year most recently completed. We felt philosophically that the statement should be easily downloadable from the website of the General Accounting Office, so we went to see whether it was.

We found that the General Accounting Office had been renamed as the 'Government Accountability Office', then being charged (according to its own website of www.gao.gov) "with the auditing and evaluation of Government programs and activities". This was already a problem in our estimation, because we want there to be an office whose mission is solely to acquire, ledger, and report all the correct and complete financial information pertaining to the Federal government, without subjective evaluation. The evaluation should be managed by a different Government agency, specifically the Office of Management and Budget in our recent structures. If the GAO is now less of an accounting agency and more of an auditing agency, then could we expect to find the recent financial statements there?

Main menu of the GAO website included a heading for "Reports & Testimonies", so we started there, but it appeared only to list a bunch of articles on diverse topics, with no obvious links to recent financial statements. Clicked on "Resources" in the main menu, then "For Researchers" (because the Harmony Research Group overseeing this Project comprised researchers), then the tab for "Quick Links", but that listed only writeups of agency procedures and protocols. Tab for "GAO.gov Search Tips" was of little help. Typed "financial statements" in the search field, but that resulted in links only to various reports and articles on the subject matter, and not obviously (if at all) to the financial statements themselves.

Therefore abandoned the GAO website with great disappointment (but participated in a survey to express our disappointment), and performed a general Google search on the expression "united states government financial statements 2016". Top link took us to the 'Bureau of the Fiscal Service' under the Department of the Treasury. Again, probably not how we would organize things, but at least the links were there to download the latest financial statements. Report was in PDF format, and consumed 8.8 megabytes and 274 pages.

Our immediate goal in reviewing this report during Session 210 (August 2017) was to map the elements into the cost-center codes which we envisioned for the Federal Government going forward. After that, we felt that we could begin looking at the individual bureaus and offices as outlined in the upcoming Questions 387-411.

Generally, our overall objective in this Section was to reduce Federal spending to at most our current level of income, because we held that it is fiscally irresponsible toward the stakeholders for any organization to deficit-spend indefinitely, and to borrow indefinitely to pay for this habit. The investors are without that capital during the term of the borrowing, they stand a chance of never recovering their investment

if the organization becomes insolvent, and the stakeholders (the American taxpayers in this case) usually will be expected to pay a significant interest on the outstanding balance, which the Government will never be able to cover unless either it creates more currency (thereby deflating the purchasing power of the base currency unit, which according to Answer 368 would be bad), or else it lives under a surplus operating budget for a time, and uses its excess income during that period to reduce its outstanding loan principal as well as simply covering new interest charges.

We therefore expected that we'd want a significant surplus in our operating budget, but nobody wants to hear about new or increased taxes, so our main focus would be on reducing spending to at most our current income levels, and then we could see about opportunities for either increasing income and/or further decreasing expense.

Before beginning to actually examine the report, we thought it best to draft the cost-center codes into which the various expense elements of the report were to be mapped. The first digit of each code would correspond to the Branch of government:

- 1 - Executive
- 2 - Legislative
- 3 - Judicial

Each operating expense would go into one of these 3 categories, so that the ordinary citizen could see how much each Branch costs, without needing to worry about any 'miscellaneous' transactions. However, there would be one more top-level category,

- 9 - Non-Operating

to include Depreciation, Debt Servicing, and any other charges which descend from the decisions made by previous governments (often involving both the Executive and Legislative Branches) and which therefore cannot be altered at the present point, so that no manager of any current cost-center need be held responsible for it.

For 3-Judicial, we thought that we might break things down for the second digit by the Federal circuit, since there happened to be 9 of them, or that maybe it would be better to structure things according to levels, with the Supreme Court being 1, and the next-highest level 2, etc., or that maybe we should somehow do both. For that, we figured that we should see how they currently broke things down in the Federal financials, and decide from there whether any improvement was indicated.

For 2-Legislative, we knew from Subsection I-E-1 that there should be an office for the 'Custodian of Congress', who would manage all staff who work for Congress as a whole, so that office would be '20' in our list of cost-center codes, then the Senate should be '21', and the House of Representatives should be '22'. If we create a third house for area-based representation, as also recommended in Subsection I-E-1, then it should have '23'. The next 3 digits for each house should designate the federal number of the jurisdiction being represented. Within each 5-digit set, we might assign a 6th digit according to the class of position within each jurisdiction, '1' being for the actual representative, '2' for any traveling personal staff of the representative, '3' for any staff stationed in the representative's Capitol office, and '4' for any staff attached to the representative's field office(s). Database should allow comparison of expenses being incurred at each of the several 6th-degree levels, to see who is generally managing her jurisdiction most efficiently.

For 1-Executive, the second digit of '0' went to the President and VP and anyone else who works for the Executive Branch as a whole. The third digit of '1' went to the President, and the third digit of '2' went to the VP, with additional third digits going to other offices as needed. Each 3-digit level can be organized similarly to the 5-digit levels in the Legislative Branch, but can allow for deeper subdivision if desired.

The other 9 second-level digits for the Executive Branch would go to the 9 federal Departments, using the order in which we would recommend having the Vice-President hold weekly meetings with them, the heavier and more serious ones generally coming earlier in the week when the mind is fresher, and the lighter and easier ones later in the week when everyone's a little more tired. Also wanting to get potentially-related subjects next to each other, to make it easier for the Vice-President to transition between them. Our recommendation in Session 210 was:

- 1 - Foreign Affairs
- 2 - Defense
- 3 - Domestic Affairs
- 4 - Transportation
- 5 - Science
- 6 - Health & Safety
- 7 - Justice
- 8 - Finance
- 9 - Administration

We had proposed Bureaus in Section I-D for all these Departments, but we felt at this time that we could wait until we reviewed the actual expense statement before we began assigning cost-center codes to that level.

Statements of Net Cost began on p.52 of the document as published, and on p.60 of the file as downloaded. Statement for the most recent fiscal year took up about one page, and was directly followed by a listing for the same agencies in the preceding fiscal year, to make comparisons a little cumbersome. Each year's listing was then shown in descending order according to net cost, which we found to be a good thing.

They used a fiscal year ending September 30, but behold we are recommending for general ease that we adopt a fiscal year for everyone forever which is equal to the calendar year. If any organization has a 'holiday season' which surrounds calendar year-end, then all incomes and expenses related to that holiday should be accrued as needed to the year in which the actual holiday falls.

That all said, here is our initial mapping of agencies in the Statement of Net Cost:

- 16 - Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- 13 - Social Security Administration
- 12 - Department of Veterans Affairs
- 12 - Department of Defense
- 91 - Interest on Treasury Securities Held by the Public
- 13 - Department of Agriculture
- 18 - Department of the Treasury
- 14 - Department of Transportation
- 13 - Department of Education [although not appearing in our current Federal structure at all, because our model in Section I-D had placed Education at the County level -- still, any expenses related to the

- function at the national level should go somewhere, just in case they end up existing, so we placed them here for now]
- 15 - Department of Energy [also not specified in our then-current model structure, but would go here if anywhere]
 - 12 - Department of Homeland Security
 - 13 - Department of Labor
 - 17 - Department of Justice
 - 12 - Defense Security Cooperation Agency
 - 13 - Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
 - 11 - Department of State
 - 15 - National Aeronautics and Space Administration
 - 13 - Department of the Interior
 - 11 - U.S. Agency for International Development
 - 14 - Railroad Retirement Board
 - 13 - Federal Communications Commission
 - 13 - Department of Commerce
 - 16 - Environmental Protection Agency
 - 15 - National Science Foundation
 - 13 - U.S. Postal Service
 - 92 - Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation
 - 13 - Smithsonian Institution
 - 11 - Millennium Challenge Corporation [foreign aid]
 - 13 - Small Business Administration
 - 16 - U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
 - 19 - General Services Administration
 - 18 - Overseas Private Investment Corporation
 - 18 - Securities and Exchange Commission
 - 18 - Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation
 - 18 - National Credit Union Administration
 - 13 - Tennessee Valley Authority
 - 18 - Export-Import Bank of the United States
 - 19 - Office of Personnel Management
 - 18 - Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation
 - XX - All other entities [presumably including the Legislative and Judicial Branches, although this is not specified]

If we kept this mapping, here are the numbers of current agencies and the then-current expense Dollars (in Billions) which would roll into each of the 9 then-envisioned Departments of the Executive Branch:

| | | |
|----------------------|----|-------------|
| 1 - Foreign Affairs | 3 | 41.0 |
| 2 - Defense | 4 | 1,342.9 |
| 3 - Domestic Affairs | 12 | 1,306.8 |
| 4 - Transportation | 2 | 91.2 |
| 5 - Science | 3 | 91.1 |
| 6 - Health & Safety | 3 | 1,083.0 |
| 7 - Justice | 1 | 37.1 |
| 8 - Finance | 7 | 117.1 |
| 9 - Administration | 2 | (-8.3) |
| Non-Operating | 2 | 277.7 |
| <u>All Other</u> | | <u>19.8</u> |
| TOTAL | | 4,404.4 |

[Added shortly after: This intuitively seemed very disproportionate to us upon initial inspection. It seemed that three Departments would be assuming the vast bulk of the expense of the Executive Branch, so -- unless we cut their spending by about 90% each, which intuitively seemed a bit drastic even for our libertarian tastes -- it would appear that the other groups of agencies might not deserve to remain as Cabinet-level Departments, and/or might not need weekly visits from the Vice-President in order to focus on expense mitigation. On the other hand, we didn't want there to be only three Departments represented in the Cabinet, so we figured that we may need some further reorganization to accompany our expense-cutting, such that each of the nine Departments in the final structure bear an approximately-equal share of the overall expense of the Executive Branch.]

We observed in Session 211 (August 2017) that, according to the summary table on p.8 of the Financial Statement document as published (p.16 of file as downloaded), the \$4.4044T of Net Cost compared with \$3.3453T of Revenues during fiscal 2016.

It was also interesting to see that they had factored in \$11.7B of additional income as resulting from "Unmatched Transactions and Balances", stemming from "such items as restatements and errors in federal agency reporting and unreconciled intragovernmental transactions and balances among agencies", so clearly whichever government office was in charge of the actual accounting function at the time was doing an inferior job of it.

More specifically, because all automated accounting programs will not post any transaction unless the total of debits equals the total of credits, such that it is impossible for there to be any "Unmatched Transactions", either some of the tracking was performed manually on paper or spreadsheets, or else different government agencies were using separate programs, such that when Bureau 1 posts a liability credit payable to Bureau 2, it is only hoping that Bureau 2 will post a corresponding asset debit for the receivable, in the exact same amount. We understood about the potential security risk involved with having one single financial database for the entire Federal Government, yet we were not prepared to tolerate the possibilities of accounting mismatches adding up to as much as \$11.7B per fiscal year.

Furthermore, the discussion in Answer 364 suggested that all financial databases for everybody in the nation should be linked together anyway, in order to facilitate bill payments, loan payments, tax payments, and other transactions, so we had better get used to the idea of having everything linked together. It need not all be one single company file, because certainly that would take a long time to load on anybody's system, and if it ever crashes or otherwise gets compromised then it would suck for everybody. However, we imagined that we could find a way to have separate databases which are linked together, same as banks currently do for linked deposit accounts, so that any transaction which affects more than one entity will still reflect immediately and automatically in the databases of all the affected entities. Until we can make that happen on a nationwide (or possibly even worldwide) basis, we had better at least make that happen within the Federal Government, forthwith.

Even with that additional \$11.7B of unallocated net-income, the FY2016 deficit of expenses over incomes amounted to \$1.0474T. If we want to maintain a balanced budget, then we need some combination of expense decreases and income increases which add up to this deficit. If we want to maintain a surplus budget (so that we can pay down our current principal instead of simply covering new interest charges, as established earlier in the present Answer), or if we wish to reduce our current

Federal tax load (which a lot of our citizens would enjoy, as we in this SIG certainly would...), then we must go further than that. If we want to avoid any increase in our current tax load (remember from Answer 385 that any direct tax on the wealth of the super-rich would need to be matched at a rate of at least 233% by increased conventional taxation upon the rest of us), then the desired deficit reduction must come entirely from expense reduction.

In other words, we needed to decrease the expenses of our Federal Government by 23.78% just to achieve a balanced budget, and by more than that if we want to pay off the borrowing commitments made by our ancestors. [Of course, the figures would need to be increased in order to reflect our post-2016 experiences.]

The extent of our targeted budget surplus was going to depend on multiple factors, including the amount of federal services and/or entitlements which we were prepared to do without, the amount of tax reduction which we might be able to realize by possible reallocation of our tax load according to whatever decisions we reach in Section II-C, the length of time for which we are prepared to tolerate the continued existence of a 'national debt', the amount by which we may elect to shift certain federal responsibilities (including health care?) to lower governmental levels, and the effects of any (sudden or gradual) revaluation of our base currency unit to whatever we may collectively find to be a more optimal level. We would need extensive input from the general public and the political community on all these points, and those collective preferences may evolve over time, according to our actual experience of what works and what doesn't work, so we could not reasonably be expected here to get all the constituent factors exactly right on a single set of darts.

However, we did need a set of starter assumptions, so that we could have at least a general idea of where we need to cut expenses and by approximately how much, so we decided to go ahead and do that now, and then we could modify the assumptions as needed once we escalated this conversation to the national level, and once we saw just how much our legislature and our people were actually prepared to tolerate.

We therefore assumed -- to be conservative, and then hopefully our experience would be even better than our assumptions (in which case we could accelerate the paydown of our national debt), but in any case it would be no worse -- the following:

(1) That any reallocation of our tax load in Section II-C would simply shift the aggregate tax burden but not reduce it;

(2) That we would take the same amount of time to pay down the national debt that it took to create it, so that the reduction would not 'shock the system' any more than the creation did;

(3) That we are not currently shifting any federal functions to lower governmental levels, because if we did then those levels might collectively pay as much as the Fed was paying then, although our hope would be that shifting to lower levels would improve our overall efficiency and lower our overall cost, because otherwise there would be little reason to make the shifts in the first place;

(4) That we keep the purchasing power of the U.S. Dollar at its 2016 level;

and,
(5) That the effective interest rate which we pay on our national debt would remain constant until paydown.

We realized during Session 211 that we still had some Questions coming up later on Debt Servicing, but we rather felt at this time that we needed to tackle that subject

up front, so that we could get an idea of how much surplus we needed in our current budget in order to meet our paydown targets, and so that we then could get an idea of the degree to which we need to cut our operating expenses, so we went ahead and did that at this time, viz.:

The table on p.8 of the Financial Statement document as published showed that we had a total debt of \$19.2924T as of 30-Sep-2016. The previous table of agency costs showed that we had expensed \$273.0B of loan interest during the year. This translated to an effective interest rate of 1.415% per year.

However, the note on p.19 of the document as published (p.27 of the file as downloaded) discussed that "Federal debt held by the public and accrued interest totaled [only] \$14.2 trillion as of September 30, 2016 [and that] the Government [had] about \$5.5 trillion in intragovernmental debt outstanding, which arises when one part of the Government borrows from another." In other words, of the \$19T-plus-change of total government net-liability, only \$14.2T was generating interest expense, so this translated to an effective interest rate of 1.923% per year.

This meant that some portion of any budget surplus might end up needing to be allocated to the portion of government debt which was not generating interest expense, even though our fiscal preference might be to eliminate interest-generating public debt first. Because we would not know this until after a much deeper analysis of our liability structure, we decided to make an additional assumption:

(6) That any budget surplus would be allocated proportionally to the portions of governmental liability which generate interest expense and those which do not.

With that assumption, we could go back to assuming an effective interest rate of 1.415% on the total net-liability balance of \$19.2924 trillion.

Now, a review of various web sources (including the Congressional Budget Office, <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/21728>) showed that we had a national debt in place going back as far as the Revolutionary War. We thought it safe to assume that we do not wish to wait another 200+ years to resume a net-neutral financial position, so we decided to look at when the debt really started to become significant.

The website <https://www.treasurydirect.gov/govt/reports/pd/histdebt/histdebt.htm> listed the year-end debt figures going back to 1790, but it was not clear whether the figures were adjusted for inflation. However, our impression was that they were not, because the figures were closely approximated by those shown in the table on p.59 of the 2007 paperback *World Almanac*, and probably would have been significantly different if inflation adjustments had taken place. Numerous web sources showed graphs of the national debt as a percentage of annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which may be utile for certain purposes, but not so much for our present purpose of seeing when it really took off in terms of Dollars as valued during some fixed index year. We did not see such a source online anywhere, so it appeared as though we needed to construct such a chart manually.

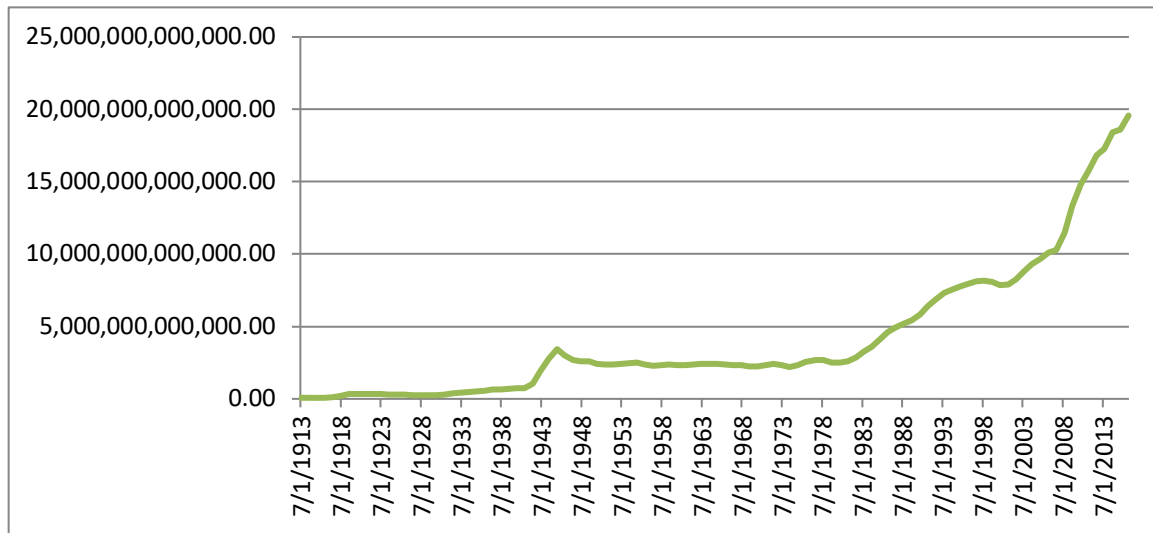
We figured in Session 212 (September 2017) that the next step therefore was to find online a reasonably-reliable table of CPI figures going back to 1790, remembering that there were multiple versions of the CPI out there for different varieties of measurement. However, we did not find any tables going back further than 1913,

but that probably will be good enough for our needs, because again we probably don't want to wait as much as a full century to relieve our borrowing obligations.

Therefore pulled from www.inflationdata.com, and also from www.usinflationcalculator.com, both of which referenced the CPI-U variation for 'all urban consumers', which was good enough for us. The data in the two tables were very close, but not always identical, so we created a hybrid table which produced averages of the two datasets.

A higher total debt figure of \$19.5734T as of 30-Sep-2016 came from www.fiscaltreasury.gov, so we used that as the final figure in our table.

Collated the data and prepared the chart as follows:



U.S. National Debt adjusted from CPI to 2016 Dollars

Chart shows that we hit a low of 244B 2016\$ in 1929, after which the government began to start borrowing to pay for its various relief and work-stimulus programs. The debt really spiked to 3.4T 2016\$ during our involvement in World War II, after which it leveled off to a pretty steady 2.5T 2016\$, until the early 1980's. At that time, the higher military spending initiated by the Reagan administration began to contribute to larger budget deficits. We enjoyed a couple of years of surplus budgets in the late 1990's, and then the debt surged back up when we created a larger 'homeland security' network after the 11-Sep-2001 attacks. The debt began climbing at an even greater rate after 2008, when the various social entitlements (including especially for health care) were enacted during the Obama administration.

Clearly, large deficit spending by the Federal Government was not limited to either one of the so-called 'major' political parties.

If we had planned to pay off most or all of the debt within 75 years, then we would have reached the level at which we began to spike for World War II, and hopefully that would have been net-satisfactory for all stakeholders.

We assumed for the present that the paydown would start in September 2016, although in real life we knew that it wouldn't happen so soon in even the best-case scenario. We would update the projections later, as we got closer to finalization and publication, and again when we determined when we might realistically expect the government to adopt and implement the paydown package.

Once we settled upon 75 years as our recommended paydown period [again, to be adjusted on the basis of post-2016 experience], our next task was to construct an amortization table which would tell us how much we should be planning in the way of budget surpluses in order to have enough left over to meet our paydown target.

We figure that we do not need to show the entire amortization table in this report, but our calculations showed that an annual surplus of 425.2B 2016\$ would pay down our then-current debt over 75 years, if we continued to pay an annual average of 1.415% on the unpaid balance.

In summary, what we now had was \$3.3453T of current revenues, of which \$425.2B needed to be allocated over each of the following 75 years for paydown of the national debt, leaving \$2.9201T available for current operating expenses.

Of this available total, the \$19.8B of 'All Other' federal expenses not directly relating to departments in the Executive Branch represented less than 1% of the total, so clearly that was not 'where the game was happening', so we saw no urgent need to look for cuts there.

That left the 9 actual Departments of the Executive Branch, which [as noted above] we ideally wanted to share the remaining \$2.9003T of operating expenses in approximately equal proportions, so that they could properly merit equivalent amounts of attention during weekly Cabinet meetings and mid-week focus sessions.

If we were to split the remaining expense load exactly equally, then each department would end up with approximately 325B 2016\$ of operating costs, so first focus of next Session would be how to construct 9 departments which each operate at that level, in place of those we first conceived back in Section I-D.

Question 26 (continued)

If multiple sovereign governments are in place around the world, can/should there be an international oversight organization ("i.o.o.") that could set and enforce laws affecting the entire international community?

During the week following Session 212 (September 2017), we read a 22-page report provided by the Global Challenges Foundation (sponsors of the "Swedish project") on past attempts of global governance, titled "Global governance models in history". Specific authorship was unspecified. Our takeaways from the report follow:

-- p.5 discussed Einstein's view that a one-world government should possess a monopoly on all armed force, but we found that to be unrealistic at least, and dangerous at worst, because it would be challenging to recruit directly to a global military except by borrowing as needed from national forces, and because it would be cruel to request/require all nations to disarm and to leave themselves vulnerable to sneak attacks from outside attackers who may or may not represent other national governments, and because the idea of national sovereignty is forever

abrogated if we require complete obedience to a central global authority which has the sole military means to enforce any of its decisions

-- p.6 discussed an elaborate model by Hutchins of the University of Chicago, with apparent overlaps in authority and confusion in the chain of command, such that either nothing ever gets done or else we are completely subservient to the president of the popular assembly, which was already questionable because it would contain some 7500 members in the then-current environment, and which would have the curious 'Eppley-like' rule [a reference to a certain Wednesday participant who liked constructing complex models to manage simple tasks] to approve the second-leading candidate in order to protect minority interests, which system would probably encourage some very strange insincere voting

-- p.8 discussed Kelsen's proposal that all international disputes should be addressed as legal matters by a court, without the presence of a general legislative assembly of any kind, but we rejected the concept, because a court cannot assess whether international law has been violated unless we first have a body which passes international laws (Kelsen argued in favor of reliance upon previous international 'common law', but sometimes such standards become outdated, and sometimes we need new laws to cover new types of problems), and because assessing on a civil basis whether some given alleged act is a 'bad act' cannot be completed on such a large scale by individuals, because individual attitudes and philosophies have evolved over time and continue to be widely different among our current global population; we need a body in place which represents different nations and constituencies to tell us on an ongoing basis what the current standards are for acceptable international behavior, and *then* you could have a judiciary of some kind to assess whether those standards have been violated in some particular instance; however, we leaned away from the idea of a separate judiciary as we had in America, because that branch had a perennial problem of attempting to interpret from the legal language and the debate record what the original intent of the legislature was, whereas a committee of actual legislators is in a much better position to possess that knowledge as a matter of actual fact

-- p. 10 discussed Streit's model of a union of the World's 15 then-leading democracies, without allowing for the prospect that some of those nations might become unstable over time (Ireland was one of them!), and without considering the fact that many of the World's problems are going to be non-international in nature, and without providing for adequate representation of the interests of peoples in Africa (except for South Africa) and Asia and South America and Eastern Europe

-- however, further discussion of Streit's model in p.12 established the two-house model, where one house is for national representation and one house is proportional based on population, so that got us closer to the desired result, but we still were not getting any voices lifted for the Planet as a whole

-- we also liked that the five members of the executive board would be elected to five-year terms, such that one member rotates off each year, and such that the presidency of the board rotates to a different member (presumably the senior member, though not specified) each year

-- also liked that the union would make use of existing national forces and facilities, instead of trying to maintain a separate military system of its own

-- p.12 began to discuss the Clark/Sohn model, which again proposed complete pan-national disarmament and a global police force, again appearing to ignore the reality that both large and small nations would often be unwilling to support or tolerate such a concept, and the reality that starting a new global police force from scratch would be very difficult and expensive and probably ineffective, and the reality that such a global force if once successfully created would basically be a single schoolyard bully which would be able to get anything it ever wanted (including our lunch money) simply by the threat or execution of physical force

-- p.13 went on to mention a quorum requirement of a majority of the general assembly, but we did not include a quorum requirement in our model, because we did not want to hold up important business simply because some given proportion of the assembly's members choose to ignore the regularly-scheduled and globally-announced meetings of the assembly; we could have a quorum requirement for special meetings, but if the regular meetings are frequent and comprehensive enough then special meetings should never be necessary; besides, any emergency actions such as national defense could be managed by the applicable committees on their own, subject only to overrule by the full assembly during next regular meeting

-- p.14 went on to stipulate that the executive council of 17 members must include a certain proportion of representation from Europe and a certain proportion from outside Europe, but again we prefer to enable representation from all over the globe

-- p.16 did mention a budgetary limit of 2% of the World's total GNP, which was slightly oxymoronic, but which probably makes good economic sense, although again we felt that we should defer that decision to the finance committees of the respective houses, coordinated by the executive council as needed, because ever-changing conditions around the World may warrant increases or decreases to such a limit

-- p.17 went on to discuss a global declaration of human rights, which clearly was influenced very heavily by the American Constitution, but which really should not be, because it is not the role of the global government to make pronouncements about how individuals live within their separate nations, so we continued to like our provision that we will help people to evacuate who feel that they are being unjustly victimized, but otherwise we basically respect national and individual sovereignty

-- p.18 discussed model of Held of Great Britain, again focusing upon democracy as the one and only way, a premise which we found to be faulty, because otherwise everybody else in the World would have adopted it by now

-- p.19 discussed Monblot's book, again attacking Marxism and anarchism as unacceptable approaches to sub-global governments, whereas once again we prefer to allow all national governments to decide their own internal paths, not only to see what works and what doesn't work, but also to allow for the very real possibility that some approaches will work better for certain nations than for others

-- Monblot also argued for "an international clearing union that automatically compensates trade deficits", but we hold that there actually is no such thing as a trade deficit, because any two entities which agree to any particular trade do so because they each feel that the transaction is in their mutual interest, and that the negotiated exchange trade is fair and net-advantageous to both parties; in other words, they each feel that they are coming out net-ahead in the transaction, for otherwise they would not engage in it, so there is no shortage to be made up

-- Monblot also assumed that the "moral authority" of the world parliament would be sufficient to persuade the legal entities of the World to accept its recommendations, so it therefore would be an advisory body only, and so we would not be solving the problems of the U.N. and its predecessor the League of Nations

-- generally, we did not see anything here which compelled us to modify any element of our current submission in the least bit, but it was encouraging to see that different thinkers had adopted different elements of the model, and also that some elements of the model appeared not to have advanced far enough in the global conversation to have been reflected in the present historical summary

We also attempted this week (with apparent success) to build a Twitter account, taking a big chance on reentering the world of social media following the big hack of 2012 which effectively destroyed the 'purple group' of Mensa members participating in this Project nationally via the Yahoogroups platform in existence at that time.

Question 386 (continued)

Do we have room to reduce Federal spending from recent levels? If so, then where and how much?

We had left off thinking that the first focus of the next Session would be how to construct 9 departments which each operate at the same approximate level of expense, in place of those which we had first conceived back in Section I-D.

Before we could do that, however, we felt in Session 213 (September 2017) that we needed to cut the current net costs by a certain percentage in order to meet our budgetary targets for paydown of the National Debt.

We therefore constructed a spreadsheet listing all the agencies appearing in the table on p.60 (as downloaded) of the Financial Statements document, with the current net cost of each agency, the total net cost excluding debt servicing and 'All Other', and the prorated net cost of each agency which would bring the total to \$2.9003T.

Current total of the affected agencies was \$4.1116T, which we would need to get down to \$2.9003T, resulting in an overall target reduction of 29.46%, which we decided to call 30% for ease of conversation.

But, could we really cut Social Security (SSA) benefits, given that recipients had come to expect -- and budget for -- a certain amount coming to them each year?

By similar token, would we really want to cut Veterans (VA) benefits at all? Or the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB)? Probably not.

If we were to cut the size of our military by a certain amount, then the amount being paid in Veterans benefits can reduce over time by attrition, but we felt that we probably should not be seeking any current cuts to that budget.

Conversely, with our then-current growth in the retirement-age population, we might expect the SSA cost to rise not fall over time, but in any case we felt that we probably should not plan for any drastic cut in that area.

This meant that other agencies would need much deeper cuts in order for VA and SSA to remain intact.

While we were at it, those agencies which currently served as profit centers should not have had their rates cut, because they basically were fine as they were.

We therefore constructed a second table which left the government pension centers (VA, SSA, RRB) and profit centers intact, and which renormed the remaining agencies to meet our overall budgetary target.

Having excluded all these 'sacred cows' (adding up to \$1.6205T) from our total, we were left with \$2.4911T which theoretically could be modified downward. This 'non-sacred' portion would need to be trimmed down to \$1.2798T in order to meet our budgetary target without affecting the 'sacred cows', so we were looking at 50% cuts across the 'non-sacred' board. That would take our total to \$2.8661T, so maybe (and hopefully) we could spare the less-expensive agencies from any cuts.

That being the case, the Department of Defense (DoD) could remain as a stand-alone department with its new total net cost of \$304.6B [compared with target of \$325B], without needing to be segregated into its foreign and domestic components, as might have been necessary had we not cut their overall net cost by 50%.

With its new target net cost of \$537.2B, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) could be broken up into its nominal components of Health and Human Services, which made sense because the functions overlapped some but yet were largely distinct.

All remaining agencies were less than \$70B each, so they would need to be combined into some number of departments, but before we could assess that number we needed to look more closely at whether SSA or VA or both could/should be split into multiple departments.

According to the discussion beginning on p.177 of the Financial Statements document as published, "social insurance" comprised Social Security, Medicare, Railroad Retirement, and Black Lung. Social Security comprised the Old Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) Trust Fund and the Disability Insurance (DI) Trust Fund, often referenced collectively as 'OASDI'. Medicare comprised the Hospital Insurance (HI) Trust Fund (aka 'Medicare Part A') and the Supplemental Medical Insurance (SMI) Trust Fund (aka 'Medicare Parts B and D'). According to the table on p.181 of the Financial Statements document as published (p.189 as downloaded), OASDI then resulted in a net loss of \$56.6B, whereas Medicare (i.e., HI and SMI) then resulted in a net loss of \$316.8B, which of course was much bigger.

Where then were we getting the current total of \$981.8B for the SSA collectively? Could administration of the benefits actually cost us that much? This is where we certainly wanted each line-item total on the primary income-expense statement to be a weblink which would easily and immediately break down that total to its next-level constituents, and then each next-level constituent could break down to further levels until we got to listings of the individual transactions.

No such breakdown appeared in this 266-page Financial Statements document, so next step for us was to research the breakdowns from separate online sources of the current \$981.8B of SSA net cost, and the \$649.1B of VA net cost. After that, once

we saw how many departments these two agencies would actually require at an average of \$325B per department, we could see how many other departments were available for rearrangement of the remaining agencies as halfway-trimmed.

To do this, we went back in Session 214 (September 2017) to the website for the Bureau of the Fiscal Service, to see whether we could extract any breakdown of the net costs shown in the financial statements for SSA and VA. We located a reference to the United States Standard General Ledger (USSGL), which appeared to be what we were looking for. However, we had trouble locating the actual file for the fiscal year in question. We could find various documents listing guidelines and transaction codes and Frequently Asked Questions, but not the actual General Ledger.

With some digging, we finally found the 'Combined Statement of Receipts, Outlays, and Balances', which provided agency-level details in Part Three. Spreadsheets in this section were focused on individual agencies and provided considerable detail of different kinds of outlays to the penny, although the overall format of the reports was somewhat confusing.

Still, we were able to determine the following agency outlays for FY2016:

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|----|-----------------------------|
| Legislative Branch | \$ | 4,343,885,157.64 |
| Judicial Branch | | 7,496,688,902.63 |
| Agriculture Department | | 138,161,667,212.62 |
| Commerce Department | | 9,162,455,068.85 |
| Defense Department | | 565,363,934,819.56 |
| Education Department | | 76,981,407,439.42 |
| Energy Department | | 25,851,930,711.49 |
| HHS Department | | 1,102,964,841,780.24 |
| Homeland Security Department | | 45,195,366,139.33 |
| HUD Department | | 26,392,604,435.75 |
| Interior Department | | 12,584,331,466.08 |
| Justice Department | | 29,523,425,684.67 |
| Labor Department | | 41,370,676,605.41 |
| State Department | | 29,448,163,778.06 |
| Transportation Department | | 78,419,079,873.80 |
| Treasury Department | | 526,116,049,561.23 |
| Veterans Affairs Department | | 174,018,161,803.04 |
| Corps of Engineers | | 6,388,208,341.91 |
| Defense - Civil Programs | | 64,505,389,186.23 |
| Environmental Protection Agency | | 8,728,979,420.83 |
| Executive Office of the President | | 395,272,606.26 |
| General Services Administration | | (-735,164,946.24) |
| International Assistance Programs | | 16,241,154,426.70 |
| NASA | | 18,828,577,328.00 |
| National Science Foundation | | 6,904,413,041.71 |
| Office of Personnel Management | | 91,316,306,995.45 |
| Small Business Administration | | (-444,346,897.68) |
| Social Security Administration | | 976,783,034,405.57 |
| Independent Agencies | | 13,161,693,455.99 |
| Total | \$ | <u>4,095,468,187,804.55</u> |

Notes on the above:

-- Unclear whether any elements of any of these listings also appeared in other listings, or whether they were all mutually exclusive, and if the latter then whether these listings were collectively exhaustive. In other words, was there any omission or duplication here? We were not sure.

-- VA's \$174.0B was not nearly the \$649.1B indicated in the Statement of Net Cost.

-- Defense (Civil Programs) included retirement programs for the military, so we were wondering why this was not part of the VA.

-- Executive Office of the President did not immediately appear to show anything for the Vice-President's office, and we were not seeing that anywhere else.

-- Most negative stuff in General Service Administration came from 'real property activities', but then we were wondering why these would be treated as negative outlays instead of positive revenues.

-- [We had recorded a sadness during the preceding week that the Cassini probe had needed to conclude its glorious 20-year mission by destruction in the atmosphere of Saturn, but we were thoroughly delighted with all the results, and noted that we need to keep funding space exploration somehow, because we are better as a nation and as a species as a consequence of what we saw and learned from Cassini.]

-- Why would the Office of Personnel Management not be part of the General Services Administration?

-- Most negative stuff in Small Business Administration came from 'intrabudgetary receipts deducted by agencies', which would look highly suspicious if it did not constitute a net-gain for us, and which still could be a little clearer. In any case, again wondering why they were treated as negative outlay and not positive revenue, especially in this case where they were specifically referenced as 'receipts'.

-- The \$976.8B for the SSA did at least come close to the \$981.8B figure in the Statement of Net Cost.

-- Independent Agencies included the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the CIA, the Civil Rights Commission, the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Export-Import Bank, the FCC, and others.

-- The total of \$4.0955T compared with the \$4.4044T on the Statement of Net Cost, but outlays are not the same as net cost.

-- However, the government's summary spreadsheet of 'Outlays by Function' showed a total of only \$3.8541T of outlays for FY2016, which was different from the total of the above list.

Going back to the Financial Statements document, we saw that the \$649.1B of net cost for the VA included \$377.5B of 'Loss from Changes in Assumptions', whereas it showed only \$276.5B of gross cost, so that was a big difference.

Generally, the gross costs in the Financial Statements document (adding to \$4.5077T) only vaguely approximated the precise figures in the spreadsheets of agency outlays. We therefore needed to figure out this stuff more clearly before we could take the time to examine HHS and SSA and any other specific agencies.

We therefore looked back in Session 215 (September 2017) through the 266-page Financial Statements document, to see if they distinguished within the text between 'outlays' and 'net cost'. It had come to us between Sessions that 'outlays' may mean the same as 'cash basis' in accounting, in which payments are ledgered according to when they were actually issued, whereas 'net cost' may refer to 'accrual basis', in which payments are ledgered according to when the original liabilities were incurred, so we checked into this possibility.

Neither the word 'outlay' nor any inflection thereof appeared in the table of contents, which we took for a bad sign. However, p.2 of the main document as published (which excluded the opening statement from the Secretary of the Treasury, the table of contents, and a list of Social Insurance charts) defines 'outlays' as payments made by the Government to the public. It also established that receipts and outlays are compared to see whether we are operating in a budget surplus or a budget deficit.

Converse to the budget, which focuses on receipts and outlays, the Financial Report focused on 'revenues' (amounts earned but not necessarily collected) and 'costs' (amounts incurred but not necessarily paid), to derive net operating cost. This basically was the distinction which we had previously envisioned, that 'outlays' equated to 'cash basis'.

Because outlays could include capital purchases which should be depreciated over some period of time, and may not include new liabilities not yet relieved, we found that we ideally should focus on the net costs after all.

We therefore went back to the website for the Bureau of the Fiscal Service, to see whether we could find a spreadsheet similar to the one which we had explored in Session 214, but focusing on net cost instead of gross outlay. We did not locate such a spreadsheet or set of spreadsheets on the site, so we determined that we needed to rely on the outlay spreadsheets to at least provide good approximations of where our current and future tax dollars were going.

Recalling our debt-paydown calculation from Session 212, we saw that our \$4.0955T of gross outlays must be reduced by \$425.2B in order to see how much was remaining which possibly could be trimmed, which now left \$3.6703T, which we had found in Session 212 as needing to be reduced to \$2.9201T in order to pay down our debt while still maintaining a balanced budget without raising taxes, so our total reduction needed to be \$750.2B.

Of this amount, we dug into the individual spreadsheets to isolate how much was currently being paid out in the form of 'sacred cow' benefits which ideally should not be touched. This may be the better approach anyway, because maybe for 'net cost' purposes they treat as liabilities-previously-incurred the benefits which are now being paid to VA and SSA recipients, whereas we want to know what is currently being paid out, regardless of when you consider the liability to have been incurred.

The \$526.1B for the Department of the Treasury included \$430.0B of interest on the public debt. Accounting for this figure in our overall target totals gave us:

| | <u>Current</u> | <u>Target</u> |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Total Outlays | \$4,095.5B | \$3,345.3T |
| Debt Servicing | <u>- 430.0B</u> | <u>- 425.2B</u> |
| Operating Expense | \$3,665.5B | \$2,920.1B |

We therefore needed an overall operating-expense reduction of \$745.4B, which was an average reduction of 20.3% of then-current operating expenses, although not all programs and agencies would be hit to the same proportional degree.

Biggest target for possible reduction is the agency with the largest outlay total, then being the Department of Health and Human Services, whose \$1.1030T of FY2016 outlays (see above table) broke down thus:

| | | |
|--|------------------------------|----------|
| Food & Drug Administration | \$ 2,566,120,348.24 | |
| Health Resources & Services Adm. | 10,262,806,999.95 | |
| Indian Health Service | 4,682,925,844.04 | |
| Centers for Disease Control & Prevention | 7,501,643,413.87 | |
| National Institutes of Health | 29,255,099,865.93 | |
| Subst. Abuse & Mental Health Svcs. Adm. | 3,442,764,087.84 | |
| Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality | 268,815,994.44 | |
| Centers for Medicare/Medicaid Svcs. | 1,417,340,201,371.04 | (whew!!) |
| Adm. for Children & Families | 50,905,434,297.07 | |
| Adm. for Community Living | 1,972,702,314.12 | |
| Department of Management | 2,510,144,448.94 | |
| Program Support Center | 506,496,841.35 | |
| Office of the Inspector General | 81,785,987.16 | |
| Offsetting Receipts | <u>(-428,332,110,033.75)</u> | |
| Total | \$ 1,102,964,841,780.24 | |

The \$1.4173T of outlays for Medicare and Medicaid in the above table compared with \$80,996,234,151.03 of "Medicare Premiums and Other Charges", according to the spreadsheet of "Receipts by Source Categories" in Part Two of the Combined Statement of Receipts, Outlays, and Balances. This looked way too far off to be correct, so we went through and itemized every line item in the receipt spreadsheet which referred in any way to either Medicare or Medicaid or the HI Trust Fund or the SMI Trust Fund. There were 35 such line items, and they added up to \$389,259,695,613.42 of total Medicare-related receipts.

Conclusion was that the Medicare program was operating at a deficit of (\$1.4173T of outlays minus \$389.3B of receipts) equals \$1.0280T, which was easily enough to cure our overall budgetary shortfall, with \$282.6B left over which could be used to bolster other programs (such as Social Security) and/or reduce our overall taxes and stimulate the economy.

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Session 216 took place the evening after the 1-Oct-2017 mass shooting at the Mandalay Bay Hotel in Las Vegas. This was a highly-publicized news event, of course, and it made us think about a few things: First, it seemed to us that we need a lot more weed-smoking in this culture, because we have never once heard or read

about any violent act either committed or threatened by anybody who had recently smoked marijuana. Second, the preponderance of weapons both in the perpetrator's hotel room and in other residential locations made us wonder why and for how long he had been collecting them, especially given that not all of them were used during his lifetime, but in any case we felt that we need at least enough gun control that individuals cannot amass nearly that size of an arsenal; specifically, we felt (subject to further discussion) that one rifle or shotgun for your home (and possible militia use) and one handgun for travel (following all appropriate protocols, of course) should be sufficient for any one individual, and that we therefore should flag any shotgun purchase being attempted by anyone who is already registered as owning a shotgun, and any handgun purchase being attempted by anyone who is already registered as owning a handgun. Third, the incident made a further argument in favor of forced sterilization of serious criminals, because the perpetrator in this case was the son of a bank robber considered by the FBI to be mentally disturbed, but again -- as we discussed at length in Section I-F -- we need to consider that every serious criminal is mentally disturbed to some degree, and we don't need people like that passing their genetic characteristics on to other individuals who then grow up to be serious criminals on their own. [Will be added to Answers 623, 597, 403.]

Subsection II-B-1: Operating expenses

Question 387

How much can we reduce the overload of ongoing administrative expenses?

The previous breakdown of federal agencies showed (-\$735M) going to the General Services Administration (GSA), and \$91.3B going to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The total of these two agencies was well below the target average of \$325B per federal department, so we didn't feel on that basis as of Session 216 that we needed to reduce the administrative load all that much.

Still, if we left the Legislative Branch at \$4.3B, and the Judicial Branch at \$7.5B, then we would have \$2.9083T left over for the Executive Branch, and we were not sure that we would want 3.1% of our budget to be purely administrative, although maybe the percentage is not all that bad at that.

In any case, to give a more robust answer to this Question, we took a fresh look in Session 216 at the spreadsheet for the Office of Personnel Management from the Bureau of the Fiscal Service (BFS). Major categories were:

| | | |
|--|----|-----------------------------|
| Salaries and Expenses | \$ | 112,094,009.40 |
| Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund | | 36,664,016,634.00 |
| Employees' Health Benefits | | 12,116,860,734.99 |
| Office of the Inspector General | | 5,775,156.50 |
| Employee Life Insurance Benefits | | 43,808,218.43 |
| OPM Building Delegation Fund | | (-1,387,373.02) |
| Flexible Benefits Plan Reserve | | 7,220,359.79 |
| Undistributed SIBAC Chargebacks for DC | | (-593,577,234.64) |
| Offsetting Receipts | | <u>(-38,215,641,803.28)</u> |
| Total | \$ | 91,316,306,995.45 |

Conclusion was that maybe we could manage to trim about \$10M off of Salaries & Expenses, but that generally this did not seem to be 'where the game was happening' in terms of opportunities for expense reduction.

Question 388

What other areas should we target for possible expense reduction?

Original phrasing of Question 388 was "Specifically, how can we reduce defense spending?", telling us in Session 216 that the 'administrative expenses' referenced in Question 387 and the original titling of Subsection II-B-1 did not mean the strictly administrative agencies in OPM and GSA, but rather all the operating expenses which do not involve consumption-based entitlements. We therefore at this time retitled both as 'operating expenses', and agreed to revisit Q387 in that different context. We later restored the original Q387, and rephrased Q388 as above.

Biggest non-entitlement cost centers in FY2016 were Agriculture at \$138B, Defense at \$565B, Treasury at \$526B, and the VA at \$174B, although the last could possibly be considered to be more appropriate for the Entitlements category.

In any case, we did not feel any need or desire as of Session 216 to trim either Agriculture or the VA, so the only targets worth discussing at this general planning stage were Defense and Treasury, for which we created new Questions at this time, which we took up after addressing a certain handwritten note in the 'black book':

Question 126 (continued)

What is the motivation for any particular government agency to follow such principles?

An undated note handwritten into our 'black book' of preliminary ideas suggested: "If nowhere else, here give bonuses to employees whose Departments come in under budget, but the budget has to be balanced, or else they will overload to get under more easily". We formally recognized this note for the official record during Session 216 as part of Answer 388, but we repackaged it in the Third Pass as part of Answer 126, since it is more about the motivation than about the amount spent. We also considered appending it to Answer 272.5 on the budget process, but it doesn't really inform that discussion all that much. Best as a motivational factor for Answer 126.

Question 388.1

How can we reduce Defense spending?

We introduced into the record in Session 216 a set of notes from our 'black book' of preliminary ideas compiled in the mid-1990's (originally attached to Question 388), and added a little 'frills and dressing'. There are three main points which we can consider here:

First, we don't need necessarily to be better than everybody else in nuclear armaments. If we (and they) know that we can completely obliterate all comers with a single motion, then that is more than sufficient, so we probably don't need to 'keep up' fully with everybody else's technological investments.

Second, with Communism seen to have grown rapidly in disfavor, and with no nation as large as the previous Soviet Union seeking [as of the 'black book' or as of Session 216] to present a military challenge to our ongoing role in international affairs, we perceive that there generally is far less of a need to maintain high troop levels, and large numbers of domestic and foreign military bases. We still need some, of course, both for our own security and also in order to help the global community to maintain the international peace, but probably not nearly as much as we needed before.

Third, we should fix Pentagon procurement as needed to encourage/require more competitive bidding with contractors. This can be facilitated by periodic audits from the Legislative Branch, to supplement any internal audits performed within the Executive Branch, and to help maximize bureaucratic independence from the officials being audited. In fact, we are suggesting that each house within the Legislature maintain its own separate auditing office, not just for Pentagon procurement but for all operations within the Executive Branch, and establish/maintain its own separate standards for what to look for and where/how to look for it.

Question 388.2

How can we reduce Treasury spending?

The BFS spreadsheet for FY2016 showed numerous line items of less than \$1 billion each. We found in Session 216 that these were not worth itemizing in this general overview, so we looked at only those programs which cost over \$1B. These were:

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Bureau of the Fiscal Service | \$ 18,988,013,060.83 |
| Internal Revenue Service (IRS) | 133,125,784,234.39 |
| Interest on the Public Debt | 429,962,550,585.09 |

The second line above was our bogey!! It should not cost us \$133.1B to collect \$3,345.3B in revenues. In fact, with our current technology, enabling us to collect taxes immediately and automatically from vendor sales and other financial transactions, we claimed that it should not cost us anything at all, maybe a million or so to keep the servers in shape and to spot-check our records for accuracy, but basically we assumed that we could wipe the entire \$133.1B of IRS costs off of our books, and we did so with the greatest of glee.

Question 389

If we make these huge cuts in Defense and other operating expense, then thousands of Government employees will be put out of work: Isn't this bad, and won't it create a sudden economic havoc?

We reviewed in Session 216 the following entry appearing in our 'black book' of preliminary ideas compiled in the mid-1990's, in order to gauge the extent to which we still agreed with it:

All the money that government is spending is going to people ultimately, people who can be doing more productive work in the private sector, if individuals and businesses in the private sector were allowed to invest more of their own money. To reduce government spending and the public debt requires that we lay off a whole bunch of people. We don't want them to starve, nor do we want a sudden crime wave, or any other kind of economic

calamity. On the other hand, we do want immediate widespread relief from government burdens. Best way to accomplish this end [may] be to announce to the entire country that we plan to make war on huge government, and cut back policies and programs and agencies and administrative overhead and other stuff, and that businesses can expect a reduced tax load quickly; in anticipation of this, they should make plans immediately to expand their operations and take on more staff; current government employees should start moving towards these private-sector opportunities at once, so that when we are actually able to effect some of these changes, many of the staff reductions will already have taken place by attrition.

Trouble with this analysis is that it depended upon businesses getting significant tax breaks up front, to enable them to hire former government employees, whereas all our projections as of Session 216 assumed that we were not planning to cut the overall tax burden. However, if we completely balance the budget in Medicare (which from Session 215 would free up \$282.6B), and if we could completely eliminate the IRS (another \$133.1B), then that would give us at least \$415.7B, plus whatever we might be able to safely generate from Defense reduction.

That's an average of about \$1,056 per man-woman-child (not including Defense, and also not including gradual interest reductions), most of which presumably would be paid by individuals into various businesses, increasing their capital to the point where in some cases they actually could take on more workers.

Also, smaller businesses can expect to benefit from our tax model, which is expected to shift the existing tax load to richer 'incorps'.

Plan therefore may actually work after all, but it still may be better to cut expenses and taxes and government payrolls more gradually than quickly, in order to give things a chance to work out and re-adjust as we go along, without anybody suffering too much, especially the Medicare recipients who may need more gradual paydowns.

Question 385 (continued)

Are there any additional mechanisms or incentives which we can concoct to allow or encourage governments to regulate spending?

We approved in Session 217 (October 2017) of the supplemental suggestion offered from one of our newsletter readers, that once we get to a balanced-budget environment, the proponents of any new spending program (whether for finite-term construction or for permanent administration) must specify where the funding for the new program is to come from, whether by increasing revenue or by cutting other expenses or by some combination. Simple projections or estimates should not be considered sufficient, and borrowing should not be allowed either to increase our current debt or else to create a new debt after the old one is eventually paid off.

Question 390

How shall we deal with pensions or severance packages for government employees who are actually laid off?

We felt in Session 217 -- from a combination of intuition and professional experience -- that three months of severance is sufficiently generous, particularly in that we are

announcing our 'war on big government' in advance, so everybody should already be sharpening their private-sector marketability in advance of any actual layoffs.

The 'black book' of preliminary ideas noted that we don't have a special trust fund for separated employees. However, that funding can come out of the regular salary budget, which simply gets attenuated at the end of the severance period, and not at the time of layoff. This means that severance shall be paid on the same schedule as the original payroll, *e.g.*, by 6 semimonthly installments at the previous semimonthly pay rate of \$2000, as opposed to a single lump-sum payment of \$12,000.

The 'black book' made a good supplemental note that severance packages should not be so attractive that employees stick around in order to try to obtain them. Rather, they should be motivated to seek out superior employment before the layoff notices hit. We felt that the '3-month rule' satisfies this condition.

Question 391

Can we establish any limiting mechanisms on Congressional salaries?

As we saw from the analysis in Answer 386, the budget for the entire Legislative Branch was barely 1/10 of 1% of the total Federal expense budget, so it was not 'where the game was happening' in terms of productive expense reductions.

However, that doesn't mean that we should allow legislators to abuse the privilege and declare million-dollar salaries for themselves, so we still should have some kind of limiting mechanism in place which the legislators would not be in a position to override easily, if at all.

By way of Answer, we referred in Session 217 to the poll suggested in Answer 384, to be conducted periodically by each jurisdiction at each government level, to see how much the electorate generally wishes to pay for its current government operations: Regardless of how detailed that poll generally gets, they probably should make sure at least to have a line item for legislative salaries.

As suggested in Answer 385, we could have voting requirements in place, establishing that increasing vote proportions shall be required for increasing variances from the amounts produced in the most recent polls. Or, perhaps better yet, we could let each State and District to decide for itself through the periodic polling how much that State's senator or that District's representative should make annually until the next periodic poll, thereby taking it completely out of the hands of the legislators.

We liked this last concept best in Session 217, because it is the voting taxpayers who are the 'bosses' of the legislators, so they are the ones who should be stating directly what the current pay levels should be, and also because different legislators probably should be drawing different salaries, owing to varying market conditions, same as for everything else. If we want to attract more qualified candidates for public office, then we will want to make the compensation package more attractive; conversely, if we're just getting a lot of do-nothing fatcats on the ballot who clearly are in it for the 'cush' more than to serve the public with sincere vigor, then it could be time to cut the salaries in order to filter down the field.

Question 391.5

Shall we continue to give pensions to retired Presidents?

Yes, we did favor in Session 217 the continuation of generous-but-not-luxurious pensions to former Presidents, except when individually restricted by extraordinary act of Congress (such as in case of a criminal conviction or other duly-established wrongdoing), because they generally deserve a pleasant retirement for their lifetimes of public service, and because they may not be sufficiently good speakers or writers to make a satisfactory living in those ways.

Besides, we want them to remain in good physical and mental condition, and in good spirits with no resentment toward the Government or the People of the United States, so that they will be in good positions to provide us with important consultation when we may need it.

Subsection II-B-2: Special projects

Question 392

Should special projects be undertaken simply to provide work for people, and hopefully stimulate the economy?

No. We do not wish to waste valuable labor and physical resources on projects which will be of little practical use to our nation. In the unlikely event that we actually run out of potholes to fill, and bridges to paint, and trash to pick up, but still are producing and delivering as much food as everybody wants, we felt in Session 217 that we would do better to reduce our average workdays and enjoy our greater luxury, than to give ourselves stressful and debilitating 'busy work'.

Subsection II-B-3: Entitlements

Question 393

To what extent should we continue to grant consumption-based entitlements?

Generally, we observe that different people have different feelings about this Question, on either an individual or sometimes a geographic basis. A unanimity of attendance at Session 217 supported minimal entitlement expenditure, apart from appropriate government pensions and the public 'orientation centers' [later 'help centers'] discussed in Section I-D. However, we recognized that our opinions represented only a small sampling, and were not universally held, at least not yet.

We therefore proposed that the periodic poll suggested in A384 also make sure to specify at least how much should be going to consumption-based entitlements generally, and possibly how much should be going to specific programs. If a large jurisdiction like the Fed observes a very wide variance in the non-frivolous poll results, and especially if the split appears to vary with geography, then it can and should delegate that entire program and funding debate to the next-lower level of government, allowing different jurisdictions to experiment with different strategic approaches, and then see which ones turn out to be the most effective and popular.

As a general philosophical 'basic principle' for this subject, though, we take it as axiomatic that we generally want to keep the Earth in a sustainable and renewable condition for our kids and grandkids and all future generations. If we agree on that, then it follows that Humanity should be seeking at all times to produce at least as much as it consumes, and preferably more for safety. If we agree on that, then it also follows that most (if not all) of us should be seeking -- as nations and communities and households and individuals -- to be producing at least as much as we consume, and preferably more for safety, or else the risk of collective over-consumption becomes too great. If we agree on that, then we need to take a dim philosophical view of consumption-based entitlements generally, because they generally represent the fruits of the net-producers going to the net-consumers, effectively rewarding them for their helping to detract from our general goal of keeping the Earth sustainable. [Modified slightly in Third Pass, as shown later.]

That said, we still readily acknowledge that many members of our 'human family' (if we may thus refer to ourselves) are too young or too elderly to be expected to produce within the active workforce, and that some members may have some other conditions which inhibit their productive capacities. Some extremists may prefer to take the Spartan approach of throwing our weakest members off the nearest steep cliff, but we perceive that the prevailing public sentiment is to take care of our weaker members to the extent that we practically can, if not for the simple impulse of being humane, then at least as an 'implied social contract' that we will take care of other people now if future generations will similarly take care of us when we need it.

Thus, we probably should have consumption-based entitlements in our public sector generally, but for our long-term prosperity let's do keep effective reins on them.

Question 89 (continued)

Whatever qualifications for any office are prescribed by law, shall any candidate for such office be required to answer questions not pertaining to such qualifications, including as to commission of any criminal acts, or anything socially unsavory?

Ratified in Session 218 (October 2017) from pre-meeting reflection: Neither candidates nor any other public figures should ever be required to answer questions in the form of "Have you ever said/done/written XYZ?".

Question 90 (continued)

Should any individual or organization (including press, U.S. Senate, etc.) be permitted to ask such answer-proof questions?

Ratified in Session 218 from pre-meeting reflection:

We have a right in this nation not to be forced to incriminate ourselves. This implies that anyone who wishes to know anything about our past statements or actions should be restricted to whatever has been duly entered in the public record, including as to any criminal convictions or judgments of civil liability. Candidates and all other individuals get to keep their past lives past, and should not even be asked to disclose any private information, because the very form of the question places the interviewee in a position of either admitting some kind of wrongdoing, or else lying about such wrongdoing, or else refusing to answer and thereby appearing guilty.

It therefore is inappropriate for members of the press to ask any candidate or other individual whether or not they have committed some alleged 'bad act'. Report on what is in the public record if you find it interesting enough. If you feel that you have sufficient evidence to find someone guilty or liable for some alleged 'bad act' within any applicable 'statute of limitations', then take it to the local district office of the Prosecutions Bureau of the state's Law Enforcement Department, and then let them take whatever action they feel may be indicated for the circumstances.

All candidates and other public figures and other individuals should therefore refuse to answer any such questions when put by the press; the author pledges to set the example should the occasion ever arise. Definitely should enter a plea during arraignment (see Section I-F), but not yet sure about traffic police ("Do you know how fast you were going?", "Have you been drinking?", etc.), although we suggest currently answering if asked, because we don't want you to get into trouble on our account, but eventually let's try to have the police not ask such questions, at least not without clarifying at the outset of the conversation that the driver has the right to remain silent as to any combination of questions. [Third Pass speaks to last.]

Question 659.2

What about the idea to replace all c's with either k's or s's as applicable, or to replace all q's with c's, or other similar consolidations of letters?

Ratified in Session 218 from pre-meeting reflection:

It would be easier and more logical if all c's in the English language were either k's or s's, according to the indicated sound. It would make the language more phonetic, and therefore easier for foreigners to learn. That would make it stand out more readily as a 'global language', which anyone who seeks to dabble in international business or politics should be expected to know. [Added later: We also could get away with smaller keyboards, which might be better for all our mobile devices.]

However, if we changed all the dictionaries and laws and contracts and other documents in any kind of public circulation, or even if we simply resolved to do so, then we might be creating more problems than we're solving. Would it really be worth the effort? We doubt it, at least not for that alone, maybe in combination with some other concurrent improvements.

In any case, while we wouldn't object to such a move, neither were we pushing it at this time. If the remainder of our Agenda is approved and implemented without this element, then we could still 'declare victory' with the greatest of glee. However, if there ever is widespread enough of an impetus to move forward with such a change, then yes we certainly would support it.

Question 394

Should the Government continue to manage state-run Health Insurance programs?

Noted in Session 218: "Wow, here's a big one."

Still, the 'black book' of preliminary ideas made a strong point that government in a non-Fascist environment generally should not be in the business of doing anything

which can be satisfactorily managed by the private sector. It made another strong point that government is stretched in its ability to manage functions like that because it is already doing 18,003 other things at once.

Privatization of all insurance coverage would mean that administrative costs could be allowed to skyrocket, because they would not be controlled by sworn government managers and workers. However, privatization also implies competition, so more business would go to those carriers who keep their premium rates attractive by limiting their overhead costs.

But, the 'black book' was assembled during the mid-1990's, and did not have occasion to mention anything about 'universal health care', which became more of a prevalent notion during the Obama era. Now that it seemed to be more in the national conversation, and expected by many even if still opposed by some, we had best plan for it, because we fear that our Agenda will not be approved without it.

So, universal health care it is, but again that doesn't mean that it should be either administered or financed in any way by any level of government, least of all the Fed. What we wanted to do instead was to leave both the administration and the financing to the private-sector industry which is already in place for this sort of thing.

Trouble is, private insurers could then turn away prospective insureds because they had some 'pre-existing condition' which increased their liability risk, or because they simply could not afford to pay the premium rates which would be needed if all medical costs incurred within the Nation were spread out to all individuals equally. Therefore, in order to have 'universal health care' happen entirely within the private sector, it would be necessary for wealthier individuals to pay higher-than-average premiums in order to support the poorer populations, and for healthier individuals to pay higher-than-average premiums in order to support the medically-challenged.

We were very sympathetic in Session 218 to the arguments that people should be motivated to maintain wellness by being allowed to avoid needing to pay any insurance premiums into 'the System', and conversely that individuals under a universal coverage system could feel free to engage in riskier lifestyles because they know that any damages would be covered. However, it was pretty clear (if only from the \$1.417 trillion of gross outlays issued by the combined Medicare-related agencies in the Federal government during fiscal 2016) that the sick cannot be expected to finance their own health care without assistance.

Some might suggest that they therefore should either be allowed to suffer and die, or else be thrown off the nearest steep cliff, but the prevailing mood of most of the Nation seemed as of Session 218 to be for a more humane approach, and this SIG certainly will not argue against it. It makes sense on a general social basis, and applies specifically to all active parents in the World (including among other animal species), that we agree to care for you while you're young and healthy in exchange for your taking care of us when we're old and sick. Also, an attendee recalled specifically that he once needed to have a gangrenous appendix removed in a hurry, and would not have wished to be allowed to die just because he didn't have the \$95,000 cost which the insurance company needed to absorb for that operation.

So, we're going with universal health care, moved entirely to the private sector, with insurers being required collectively to provide coverage for all with low incomes or pre-existing conditions. They still can charge higher-than-normal premiums to

individuals with pre-existing conditions who can afford it, and can require deductibles and/or copayments in order to continue the motivation to maintain wellness. And, perhaps some individuals end up needing to go into debt because of medical expenses which exceed their coverages, and sometimes they will die before paying off such debt. But, that's part of the cost of doing business in the industry which the insurers selected, which is to provide financial benefits to those in need.

Further, the insurance companies should not be required to assume the full brunt of any defaulted medical debt: Seems to us that doctors and other medical providers should be expected to provide some services on a *pro bono* basis, same as lawyers, and same as the TV/radio broadcasters who are required as part of their license agreements to provide certain amounts of time for public-service announcements.

Exact proportions can be worked out by the actuaries, and may evolve over time, but the main objective is for all individuals who can afford it to pay enough premium into 'the System' that all patients get medical care when they need it, including by some amount of *pro bono* coverage by medical providers and/or insurance companies, without any government either charging medical taxes or issuing medical benefits.

We previously felt that this entire Question should be devolved from the Fed to the States, and very possibly to the County level, so that the people in different jurisdictions could decide what kind of environment they collectively wanted to live in. However, upon reflection in the new context of universal coverage, we recalled in Session 218 from our insurance studies that people generally do better when they pay a fixed and predictable insurance premium and have all their applicable damages covered, even though it means that some people will end up over time paying more in premiums than they collect in benefits. The variance could be very high for States with smaller populations, or for States where certain higher-risk industries are more prevalent. We therefore now imagined that it would be best after all for 'the System' to include all individuals within the Nation.

People with pre-existing conditions or documented inability to pay full premium should be placed into an 'assigned risk' pool, same as in the auto-insurance industry, and assigned for coverage to the different carriers on a proportional basis. Higher individual coverages can be spread among multiple carriers through a 'reinsurance' program, same as in the life-insurance industry. All such decisions can be made by the office of the State's Insurance Commissioner, unless the private sector wishes to maintain its own internal panel to manage the assignments, as long as it happens.

Government can also get involved with regulating premium rates as needed, same as for public utilities, in order to reverse the effects of monopoly and collusion.

The foregoing all applies to prescription-drug coverage in particular, so we do not need to have a separate conversation about that.

Question 395

To the extent that some Government jurisdictions choose (imprudently) to stay in the Health Insurance business, should they be permitted to require forced contributions from workers?

We claim no. We claim as of Session 218 that premiums should be paid directly to the insurers by the insureds, without employers having anything to do with it. We

can set up automatic bill payments for our medical premiums, same as for our utilities and our long-term loans and many other services, so the function doesn't need to involve any employer's payroll.

Question 396

Might it not be overly difficult for people to have to choose from among many health providers and insurance carriers?

Yes, it might be, but better to have freedom of choice than to need to live with whatever decision your company's insurance advisor makes. When individuals are all making these purchase decisions individually, we get a much better feel for how different combinations of price and services and advertising are most popular and therefore the most net-desirable. Make your own decisions. Shop around.

The 'black book' of preliminary ideas reminded us (sure is a good thing that we had that...) that individuals may have the option to deal with brokers, who presumably are trained to find the net-best coverage options for individuals in different situations. Downsides are that you are trusting the relative competence and diligence of the brokers to a large extent, and that in any case you can expect to pay a brokerage fee in exchange for the luxury of not needing to shop around yourself, so it may not be for everybody, but for some it may be a net-good way to go.

Question 397

If government doesn't force people to pay into a Health Insurance program, might some individuals not be inclined to blow it off, in order to save money or spend it elsewhere, presenting a potential burden to government if they get sick?

Already addressed in Answer 394. The 'black book' of preliminary ideas asserted that people should be allowed to self-insure for health, which makes sense at the individual level, but which apparently doesn't work out at the national level, so we have changed that preliminary position. If the sick were able to cover all their own medical costs, then by all means we would gleefully grant them leave to do so. As it is, though, they apparently cannot do so, so regretfully we must ask for contributions from individuals who are still young and healthy, and who should remember that even the young and healthy and risk-averse can experience an accident or sudden medical problem for which they will want immediate coverage, so yeah they had better pay their fair share now, regardless of previous philosophy or action.

Question 398

If an uninsured individual loses her job, or gets sick or injured, to what extent should government be involved in paying for recovery?

Also diverting here in Session 218 from the 'black book' of preliminary ideas: All individuals should pay proportionally into the insurance pool to the extent that they practically can, but should be covered in case of any urgent illness or injury. OK for more discretionary levels of supplemental medical care to be provided only on a pay-as-you-go basis, but at least the life-threatening emergencies should be addressed for everyone, regardless of employment status or other ability to pay premiums.

OK for missed premiums and uncovered medical costs to be tracked by the State's insurance agencies or by industry panels or by the national financial database described in Answer 364, and then for such liabilities to be repaid by automatic deduction at appropriate rates from future earnings, but in the meantime the care is to be provided to everybody, and we should simply figure out as best as we can how much the wealthier need to provide in order to pay for it all.

Question 399

If people are allowed to 'self-insure', then will we not see some antiselection, making claim rates and premiums go higher?

Yes, antiselection is a problem. That's when so many people opt out of insurance coverage that there are not enough premium dollars in the pool to pay for all the covered losses. Apparently, it was large enough of a problem in the modern healthcare industry that many people and numerous political candidates had called as of Session 218 for a 'universal health care', in which everybody gets covered but everybody pays premiums who can afford it.

If the actuaries ever come to support the notion that all individuals still receive the medical care that they expect (including the prescription-drug coverage) even while some individuals get to back out of 'the System' and avoid paying premiums for some period of time, then by all means allow the option. As of Session 218, the aggregate costs of medical care were so high in America that we probably could not reasonably expect only the self-selecting premium participants to pay for all of them.

Question 400

Wouldn't actuarial projections be more accurate if all workers in the State were in a single pool?

Yes, they would, and they would be even more accurate than that if all non-workers were also included. We noted in Session 218 that this actually is another reason to support universal participation, and not just within each State but within the Nation entirely, because then we get data on everybody, and the premium rates can be made generally more accurate and more reliable and more fair.

Question 401

A lot of people out there may feel very uncomfortable in contributing higher tax dollars to allow economic aid (read 'welfare') to individuals: How shall their preferences be accommodated?

Under our model as it existed as of Session 218, they would not be paying any tax dollars at all. However, they probably would be paying premium dollars, so the 'meat' of the Question still remained.

We hope that some of the problem is addressed by continuing to require deductibles and copayments, so that individuals still have some motivation to maintain wellness and avoid risky behaviors. And, we remind them that we can still track unremitted premiums and excess medical costs in each individual's overall financial position, to be remediated when practical, and affecting their credit in the meantime.

Among those insureds who can afford it, premium rates can be graduated according to apparent risk, as long as coverage is not entirely refused. We also remind the uncomfortable individuals in question that they also will get covered by 'the System' in case of accident or sudden illness, whereas they might not be if all coverage were allowed to remain voluntary.

If that's not enough, then there's not much else that we can do for them. Universal coverage appears to be the way that we're going, whether we all like it or not, because too many people are now expecting it as an essential requirement of any modern political/economic system.

Maybe we can set aside a very small number of States to 'opt out' of the national network, such that people living in those States have the option to self-insure, and then we leave it up to those States to figure out how they are going to deal with their sick and injured, and don't come crying to us. How many of you really wish to do that, and which States or Counties do you live in, and do you represent a majority of your local populations?

Assuming that any such individuals represent only a minority of their States and Counties, we are proceeding in the context of a national healthcare system with universal coverage and required premium participation by those who can afford it.

Question 402

What if the majority of a particular County wants to have such aid available, but simply does not have the resources to do it, even with all their residents participating?

Notwithstanding the language in the 'black book' of preliminary ideas, this is one of the reasons in favor of national coverage. The people of some Counties may be working very hard, doing what they can, saving where they can, and maybe even at their best levels they cannot provide as much funding as some more prosperous Counties elsewhere. Should we abandon those Counties to fend for themselves?

We claim no as of Session 218, both because we seek to be more humane at least toward our own fellow Americans (if not also toward the rest of the World), and also because they are still participants in our national economy (however meekly), so they still are partners and should therefore receive proper partnership benefits.

We have thus fixed Health Care: Wasn't nearly as tough as everyone made it out.....

Question 90 (continued)

Should any individual or organization (including press, U.S. Senate, etc.) be permitted to ask such answer-proof questions?

Added in Session 219 (October 2017): We generally shouldn't be asked any kinds of embarrassing questions about our past. Many of us have made mistakes which did not constitute a sin or a crime or a civil injury, but which we yet wish that we had not made, and which we have learned not to repeat. Life is a process of learning and maturation and growth, and many of us are not the same people as we were in earlier years before we learned certain valuable life lessons. We therefore should not be judged now on who we were then. Both because people can arrive at an

erroneous conclusion about somebody's current qualifications for some kind of position based upon characteristics or tendencies or attitudes or behaviors which the individual no longer possesses or exhibits, and also because it can be very embarrassing to endure such irrelevant discussions, such that some very worthy candidates for public office might decline to serve rather than go through such unnecessary and irrelevant embarrassments, it is better not to ask such questions at all, nor to allow them to be asked. Focus on the present and future.

Question 403

Suppose that we minimize economic aid to individuals and families: What happens when people without sufficient economic resources continue to bear children? Should the kids suffer just because their parents are irresponsible?

Noted in Session 219: "This is a very sensitive topic, but we must confront it if we are to purport to cover 'Everything' in this Agenda."

When children are born to parents who cannot afford their care, it becomes a strain upon the children themselves, or a strain upon society, or some combination. We therefore feel that poorer families generally should try to avoid increasing their sizes beyond sustainable levels, and we agree with the 'black book' of preliminary ideas that we should somehow try to incentivize them to limit their births.

Generally, we expect that any set of one or more parents should demonstrate satisfactory financial means before they have even one child, but let's face it, those initial pregnancies sometimes happen before we're fully ready for them. In many cases, they will continue to happen unless stricter preventive measures are taken at some point.

We generally don't begrudge a child to even the poorest of couples, and in some cases even a second for the purposes of helping with that 'implied social contract' of 'we will take care of you kids when you are young, if you will take care of us when we are old'. Two parents bringing up two kids, and two kids taking care of two parents later on, that's a balanced division of labor, and avoids uncontrolled population growth.

Once we exceed the 'replacement level' of two children per couple, we get to a point where we are consuming more than we are producing, unless the kids are born into families which can provide them with education and maybe some business opportunities or some other means by which the additional kids will not present a net-drain in our economy.

At some point, if the population of our World or our Nation exceeds some particular level which we somehow collectively determine to be unsustainable, then we may eventually need to talk about forced sterilizations after a family has had their second child. In the meantime, we probably need to agree as a society now that at least one partner in any couple should volunteer to become sterilized after the live birth of the couple's second child, unless they can provide satisfactory evidence of financial responsibility.

This way, we reduce both the economic burden on our society, and the number of children who must suffer because their parents were both poor and too irresponsible to practice sufficient birth control on their own.

Question 404

Anything further on foreign aid?

Referring back to our notes from Answer 147 in Subsubsection I-D-1-a, we found in Session 219 that we continued to support the stated policy: Generally good for wealthier nations and corporations and individuals to provide charitable support to poorer nations and corporations and individuals, because otherwise the disparity between rich and poor can become (or remain) too great, and by our definition our economy would be 'bad', so we eventually would need to find some other manner of relieving the imbalance. In particular, a lot of nations have for some time been pissed off at America, because they perceive (however correctly or incorrectly) that we are hoarding too much of the World's collective wealth, notwithstanding our past and present foreign assistances. We therefore are philosophically in favor of providing reasonable amounts of foreign aid, especially if it goes to infrastructural or other systemic improvements which will help enable the regions in question to produce more for themselves going forward.

However, Answer 147 makes another good point that such foreign aid should not be sent at the expense of the needy here in our own Nation. We are still having trouble getting all of our own populations fed and bathed and sheltered and educated and provided with basic medical care. Until we get our own internal problems sorted out, we generally should give ourselves the higher priority.

It's kind of like when we're on an airplane, and the flight attendants are providing the required safety instruction, and they always remind us to get our own oxygen masks working before we seek to assist anyone else. If we do not get ourselves in good shape, and stay that way, then we will not remain in a good position to help others, and we all will suffer and die. Let's first make sure that our own people have what they need, and then see about giving to and/or investing in others.

Question 405

How shall we deal with the Social Security program?

First, whether we leave it exactly as it is or do something else with it, this is one of the big reasons (and there are others) why it is so critically important that our base unit of currency retains its economic value over time: In our modern inflationary environment, the dollars which we collect in Social Security taxes during our workers' younger years do not possess nearly the same purchasing power when those same individuals are ready for retirement. Those dollars have lost value in the course of sitting around in the Social Security Trust Fund. In order to keep our currency unit at a stable value, we need to quit growing our money supply at a faster rate than our total amount of 'stuff' is growing, so we need to stop consuming more than we're producing, and spending more than we're earning, and borrowing more than we're paying back. That goes for our Government in particular and for our entire Nation.

That said, our philosophical feel about Social Security was basically the same in Session 219 as it was for Medicare: We should not borrow from the future in order

to pay for the present, because the future will have its own needs to pay for. Our current eldercare must be funded by current dollars, comprising whatever is sitting in the Social Security Trust Fund [Third Pass: or future equivalent], plus supplemental taxes from wealthier 'incorps' as appropriate.

On an ongoing basis, people should be putting portions of their wages away for retirement, but we have seen that people often neglect to do so if given the option, in which case society is on the hook for providing eldercare in our 'orientation centers' [later 'help centers'], which is a drain on everyone, including the elders themselves. It therefore is in society's interest to make sure that people are putting something away from each paycheck into an annuity fund, which will then provide retirement benefits for the remaining lifetimes of the annuitants.

That's what Social Security was designed to do, but it has not always worked, partly because of the diminishing value of the Dollar, partly because of inaccurate actuarial projections, and largely because having the Government hold the Social Security Trust Fund left it available for 'raiding' when the Government was otherwise short of cash, as we have seen in our actual history. Because the Government clearly cannot be trusted to maintain the Trust Fund in a trustworthy manner, it should not be allowed to do so at all.

This means that the retirement annuities which we need must be managed within the private sector, same as the medical insurance coverage. We still need to mandate universal participation, however, again same as for the medical insurance, and for the same basic reason, that otherwise there will not be enough benefit dollars to go all the way around.

In order to mandate participation, annuity premiums can be skimmed off the top of all paychecks, same as we currently do with Social Security taxes, but the funds are instead to be remitted to the employee's chosen annuity carrier, which must be selected within the first pay period of employment, or else both the employer and the employee are subject to penalty.

The annuity carriers will price their packages in such a way as to create a certain periodic amount of 'life only' benefit, where the benefit rate can increase when the retirement date is delayed, same as in our current Social Security environment. Privatization allows the increased use of professional actuaries, who have an incentive to make their contribution projections high enough that their employers will remain solvent and keep employing them, but also low enough to be attractive in the new competitive environment.

Annuity carriers -- again like their cousins in the Insurance industry -- should be required to maintain reserves which are sufficient to provide for their current participants in case of a sudden dropoff in revenue, but not so high that beneficiaries are being made to suffer unduly. Therefore, government regulators can require that reserves beyond a certain level (which can be allowed to vary according to the number of annuitants currently in each carrier's pool) should be promptly rebated to the annuityholders, as the equivalent of 'unearned premium'. Alternatively, any excess in reserves can be donated directly to private 'retirement centers' and/or our public 'orientation [help] centers', to supplement their own eldercare resources.

In any case, all of our elderly populations should be accorded the best care that we can practically give them for the remainder of their lifetimes, and that funding needs

to come from all of us who have and/or are earning money, without the pool ever being too high in either Assets or Liabilities, and without any level of government ever touching any of the premium or benefit dollars at any time.

Question 406

But, can people be trusted to plan effectively for their own retirement?

The language of this Question was formed at a time when we considered making participation in retirement annuities voluntary. As it was by Session 219, we had already addressed this point in A405, viz.: No, we cannot expect people to plan effectively for their own retirement, even if we emphasize the value of such planning in our educational system, and even if we leave open the alternative of vegging for the rest of their lives on bunks in a public 'orientation [help] center' (read 'poor house'). That is why we must require participation when one is earning new income, and that is why we must take those premium dollars off the top of each paycheck.

If for some reason enough members of the public find this too onerous a burden, then let them come forward to show how they can and will provide for their own retirements without such forced financing, and we will be happy to reconsider. As it then appeared, though, we were going to need to deal with this societal problem as a society, and require all to pitch in their 'fair shares' whether they like it or not.

Question 407

How shall we deal with the needs of those people (both retirees and those currently employed) who have already paid large amounts into the Social Security system?

The 'black book' of preliminary ideas suggested the option of lump-sum payments, but we leaned away from that in Session 219. It seemed to us both easier and fairer if everybody receives an annuity benefit beyond a certain chronological age, unless their current net worth is above some specific threshold of 'non-poverty', which is another benefit of the national financial database proposed in Answer 364. If some 'prodigal sons' receive a lump-sum payment, and then blow it all on a weekend in Vegas or something, then we are back to the same problem that we had before.

Each worker's share of the Social Security Trust Fund should be turned over to the annuity carrier of the worker's choice, and then future contributions (if applicable) and benefits will happen normally after that.

Question 408

To what extent shall the Federal government get involved in art funding?

Generally concurred here in Session 219 with the 'black book' of preliminary ideas: As suggested in Answer 392.1, the Fed should get involved in only those activities and projects which serve the entire Nation, or large sections of it. Any artist who can make a sufficiently-compelling case that her project will somehow serve the entire Nation, or a large section of it, can apply for a grant. However, most art projects serve only those who visit local museums and galleries, so any public funding for those projects should be sought at more local levels.

Question 402.5

What about other forms of state-run insurance programs?

Disability and Workers Compensation can continue to operate through one's employer as current. We probably could also make an exception for Unemployment Insurance by allowing Government to administer it as it currently does.

We felt in Session 220 (October 2017) that we probably do need all those coverages, and they then usually did involve private third-party carriers, so no major need to mess up that system. They all need funding only from employing companies and those in the labor pool who do not work directly for a farm or other family business.

However, we should also make sure that there is little or no supplemental funding coming from general taxes except when duly approved by a particular jurisdiction, in which case we still should make sure that the government of that jurisdiction [except maybe the Fed] is never running a budget deficit as a result of such funding.

Subsection II-B-4: Debt servicing

Most of the Questions presented in this Subsection were addressed above already, so this Section will need to be restructured in the final packaging, but for now:

Question 409

Is there any constructive purpose to maintaining an ongoing national debt, or similar debt for smaller governmental jurisdictions?

This was specifically addressed in the course of Answer 386: No, as of Session 220, we wanted to eliminate our national debt, and never again create one.

Question 410

The current national debt is enormous: Even if we do balance the budget, should we take on the chore to pay down the debt until it is eliminated?

Also addressed in Answer 386: Yes, we wanted to pay down the current debt.

Question 411

Over what time frame should we plan on paying down the national debt?

Also addressed in Answer 386: We calculated a 75-year timeframe based on data as of 2017. Would need to be recalculated when we are ready for implementation.

Question 409 (continued)

Is there any constructive purpose to maintaining an ongoing national debt, or similar debt for smaller governmental jurisdictions?

The 'black book' of preliminary ideas added that borrowing may be considered useful for new construction projects, but also that adding frequently to our existing bond load makes the potential bondholders think that they will not be repaid on schedule

(or at all), so the bond price goes up, possibly beyond anyone's willingness to pay it. Better to simply allocate a portion of each year's tax revenue toward construction projects if needed/desired, and amortize the costs of each project at least over the period of construction, and possibly over the projected useful life of the project, depending upon the prevailing Accounting standards (*i.e.*, the 'Generally Accepted Accounting Principles' or 'GAAP') of the day. Meanwhile, allocations for research and emergency relief should be part of each year's normal operating budget.

We also had written a note in the 'black book' to remind us to address a certain suggestion made in 2005, that any bond issues should be paid for by just the people who voted for them, instead of coming out of the General Fund. Problems here are (1) that such a practice would violate our current standard of voter confidentiality, (2) that it would require enormous recordkeeping and tracking on the part of the government, and (3) that many of the original voters are likely to die before those bonds mature and would need to be repaid. Better approach is not to borrow at all, except in a sufficiently high emergency, in which case you should have no trouble achieving at least a 2/3 majority of your local electorate, or maybe 3/4 or some other level under certain conditions, as you may work out and occasionally modify within your respective jurisdictions over time.

We also reminded ourselves in Session 220 to consider Jefferson's argument, expressed in a letter written to Madison on 6-Sep-1789 (ref. "The Earth Belongs to the Living"), and previously referenced in Subsection I-E-7 above, that national debt should be limited. We continued to feel that we should go further, and eliminate national debt completely. To 'borrow' from the future when you will not have the means to repay the debt later is in effect to 'steal' from the future. Even if future generations do have the means to repay, we still find it immoral to make them pay for decisions in which they did not participate, and one of the big reasons why we are in our current economic bind is because we are still needing to deal with the 'borrowings' perpetrated by our ancestors. Long-term economic stability and equity and fairness can be achieved only in a debt-free environment.

SECTION II-C: TAXES

Noted in Session 220: "THOUGHT THAT WE'D NEVER GET HERE!!"

Also noted that we would place this Section ahead of II-B in the final packaging, because the latter assumed certain conclusions about Taxes which had not yet been ratified in actual group Sessions, but for now:

Question 412

Should each governmental jurisdiction raise its own revenue, or should revenues be calculated in such a way as to allow for some funds to be apportioned to either higher and/or lower jurisdictions?

This is the 'revenue sharing' question, and we don't care for the concept at all.

As we noted during Session 220 from what we are now calling Answer 392.1, we generally find it unfair for one State to help pay for projects or other expenditures which benefit only some other State. Same for Counties within a State, and Cities within a County. Each jurisdiction at each level should focus only on those projects and activities which are assigned to it, and raise the revenue internally which it

needs to support them, without needing to clog its budget with expected revenues which may dry up unexpectedly, or expenditures which are outside its proper scope.

Only exception which we would make is from the earlier discussion about Land Management [Answer 361a] and Eminent Domain [Answer 362.5], where we had found that each Nation and subnational jurisdiction owes some level of periodic payment to its respective parent entity in exchange for whatever level of self-administration it gets to enjoy. That's not really 'revenue sharing', though, and the amount should be fixed by treaty, possibly to vary over time according to population and/or some other such easily-quantifiable factor(s), but in any case reliant upon the base currency unit retaining its approximate purchasing power over time, which of course is another reason [in addition to Answer 368] why we need that.

The 'black book' of preliminary ideas reminded us of the additional argument that eliminating 'revenue sharing' allows different subnational jurisdictions to compete for business and labor by keeping their expenses and tax rates as low as they practically can, which works well for everybody.

Territories are a special case, because the whole idea is that they have not been determined to be sufficiently developed politically and economically to function as full-fledged States, so the Fed needs to provide them with any revenue which they may need but which they cannot raise internally.

Question 413

But, if 'revenue sharing' is removed, then what leverage will the Federal government have in enforcing its policies at State and local levels?

We generally felt as of Session 220 that the Fed should not be in the business of establishing any policies (drugs, immigration, etc.) which need to be enforced at the local level. Insofar as the Fed is allowed to do so anyway, it should provide its own funding for its own police force.

If violation of Federal law is happening at a sufficiently large scale that an entire State can be found under due process of actively abetting or passively allowing such activity, then Congress may vote to revoke Statehood, but that should require a very high majority vote. [This procedure apparently had not been established in earlier Answers, so we packaged it in the Third Pass, as shown later.]

At more local levels, those who live in unincorporated areas of a County should pay two levels of local tax: One should be a general County tax for the general projects and activities which the County undertakes to benefit all its residents equally. Second should be an increment to pay for the same services which Cities typically contract for themselves, such as garbage collection and street maintenance and traffic control, such that each community is getting those services and each community is paying its fair share for them.

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At this time, we considered adopting a certain Resolution proposed in the 'black book', to generalize our position on 'revenue sharing', but decided to drop the whole 'resolution' approach, because we couldn't keep track of them anyway, and because the Answers are their own resolutions which can be easily referenced in future text.

Question 414

Are there any methods other than traditional taxation which might be considered for raising Government revenue?

Bake sales, voluntary donations, investment income from bond principal, but in Session 220 we didn't see these as particularly effective or even safe.

In particular, a government's budget should not depend upon voluntary donations which may or may not actually arrive, so best to simply rebate any sufficiently-large donations as temporary tax breaks, without upsetting the government's general budgetary projections of income and expense very much, or at all.

Question 415

What would happen if, instead of traditional taxation, we gave to the Federal government the power to print money for itself?

We had found against this concept during the discussion of Question 368, which is another reason why these Questions need to be rearranged.

To recap, we confirmed in Session 220 that it is important for numerous reasons to keep our currency unit fairly stable, which will not happen if we simply print or otherwise issue more dollars whenever we need to cover our uncontrolled expenses.

[This is one of several perceptions in Part II which we adjusted during the Third Pass in light of Stephanie Kelton's book "The Deficit Myth", as detailed later.]

Question 416

With other methods of revenue generation not to be depended upon, and with Government not having the power to generate currency beyond the level needed to keep the base unit stable, shall we agree to chip in a certain amount of our collective resources, to be paid out to those individuals who provide various forms of civic service to us?

Yes, generally, we felt in Session 220 that those of us who can afford to support the economy which provides us with our material wealth should do so, because it is unrealistic and unfair to expect that all of our civic needs are going to be satisfied entirely by volunteer labor and donated equipment.

Question 417

Given the theoretical (at least) appropriateness of taxation, what are the different ways in which we could be taxed?

As with public revenue generally, there turn out to be more types of taxation in active use than the average American might concoct. We noted in Session 220 the types listed in the 'black book', including tax on stuff earned (income), on stuff produced (excise), on stuff bought or sold (sales), on stuff leased (property), on stuff owned (wealth), and on all (or certain sets of) persons equally. [Amended later.]

Question 418 (continued)

Of these basic types, which is the fairest method of taxation, or is it appropriate for more than one type to be levied at once by a single jurisdiction?

To begin our main evaluation in Session 220, we reviewed the printed paragraph in the 'black book' of preliminary ideas, but we disagreed with the note that military protection benefits only those who own property, because it actually benefits all of us. Still, we cannot all afford to pay according to the full benefit which we receive, so the clear-if-unfortunate reality is that wealthier 'indcorps' must pay somewhat more than their true 'fair share' if the functions are going to be discharged at all.

While we liked the general approach of the 'black book' here (that people generally should be taxed for Government services in approximately the same proportion to which they benefit from them, so that might mean different rates for different types of services which benefit different constituencies), we were not totally happy with all the specific assertions as stated therein, so we would need to modify before final packaging. It did appear that different types of taxation are most appropriate for different types of Government service and functionality, which can be written into our tax system. However, again, whichever way we do that will require additional contributions from wealthier 'indcorps' to cover those who cannot afford them.

Generally agreed with the conclusion in the 'black book', that we don't want to penalize workers by taxing income, and that we should instead tax according to the proportion by which people use up our collective resources, both to discourage excessive consumption and because people who are paying for pleasures clearly have enough to contribute some toward our civic functionalities.

Specifically, we found in Session 221 (November 2017) that Property taxes can pay for firefighting, garbage collection, and any other services which specifically benefit propertyholders. Population (or 'capitation') taxes can pay for police protection, parks/libraries, military protection, and any other services which benefit all individuals regardless of age or economic status. Sales taxes can pay for currency maintenance, the Commerce Department, education, and any other services which benefit those who participate in and/or benefit from our economic system.

We next addressed the arguments for and against Sales Tax, both those printed in the 'black book' and those added by subsequent notations.

Per note written into 'black book' on Sunday morning 2-Aug-2009: An oft-heard argument against Sales Tax is that it is allegedly 'regressive', whereby the poor are proportionally more affected by a given percentage of Sales Tax than rich people. However, we may be overlooking the amount of revenue which can be generated by the purchases of cars and boats and houses, as well as all stock/bond transactions and corporate acquisitions, meaning that the wealthy would be subsidizing so much of the Government's operations that the actual net tax rate paid by the poorer people will still be lower than it is now. Meanwhile, at the lower end, we don't want anyone to be a total drain on society, to the extent that we can practically avoid it, so we want to make sure that everyone contributes toward those public services which benefit everyone, according to how much the individual can afford to contribute. We assess how much you can afford to contribute by your ability to pay for things generally, which we assess by the amounts that you actually pay for stuff. The amount of your contribution to public service, then, is calculated directly

according to what you pay in Sales. We still can exempt certain staple commodities from taxation, and/or charge higher rates on larger transactions, and/or exempt products with a unit price below \$1 or some other fixed threshold (again requiring our base currency unit to retain its approximate purchasing power over time), so that poorer people can feed their families without needing to worry about taxes. We do have a concern that such artificial constraints might tend to 'skew the market', and result in inequitable distributions of wealth and capital, but they are available as possible options if the people of a given jurisdiction at a given time feel strongly enough that they are needed.

Another argument in favor of sales tax (handwritten into the 'black book' on 26-Apr-2010) is that purchasers are removing resources (whether food, gas, cars, other consumables, other fixed assets, or real property) which could have been accessed by the rest of us, meaning higher prices for the remaining resources if there any at all. For that privilege, we are assessing the purchaser a fee to help offset the higher prices which the rest of us need to pay, again in proportion to the degree to which the purchaser is taking away from our common resources.

We did not like in Session 221 the idea recorded in the 'black book' on 20-Apr-2012, to tax sales only on the excess of consumption over the per-capita average, because it depends upon us knowing how much each individual spends in total, whereas another benefit of Sales Tax is that it is much easier to administer (especially if governments promptly notify all local businesses of any changes in the local tax rate (not then happening in California!!), so that they can update their payment systems, or else somehow get all those systems updated automatically after any rate change), by taking effect immediately and without any kind of tracking or reporting or filing at the individual level.

If we do observe a regressivity factor even with the taxes imposed without loopholes on Luxuries and Securities, then [as indicated in the 2009 note] exempt any product where the unit price is below \$1, or whatever other threshold will mitigate the regressivity factor sufficiently. But, if you do that, then stores may need to set limits on how many items one may purchase on a tax-free basis, again so that we do not take too much food out of people's mouths. Seen as "probably not really a problem" in Session 220, because such hoarders still would need to travel to each store to buy all their stock, and then keep going back every day after a store is resupplied; not much more of a problem for untaxed cheap items than it might be if they were actually taxed. [Noted in Third Pass that new delivery culture obviates this point.]

Question 419

Wouldn't a sales tax tend to reduce spending?

Yes, but as of Session 221 that was the result desired by our group. With millions of hungry and homeless people living on our own American streets, let alone the rest of the World, the rest of us collectively need to consume fewer resources so that more can be allocated to those who need them the most.

We also wanted to mitigate the global perception that America is a consumer nation, and we help with that challenge by being able to report gradual reductions in our domestic spending, which reporting again will be made much easier once we can get our base currency unit to retain its approximate value over time, per Answer 373.

Besides, as the 'black book' noted, decrease in spending means increase in saving, and we wanted to encourage increased savings in order to facilitate our retirements and reduce the need for entitlement programs such as Medicare and Social Security.

Also, as the 'black book' suggests, a greater emphasis on taxing Sales may motivate the manufacturing sector to de-emphasize the production of 'gag gifts' and other frivolous goods which people don't really want and won't really use. That means a greater emphasis on products which people really do need and really do want.

Also suggested by the 'black book', the whole idea of deferring Income Taxes on contributions to IRA's and other deferred annuities is that we want to tax the money only when it is available to be spent, so similarly with Sales Taxes we are taxing the money whenever it actually is spent, not before and not after.

We were not thrilled in Session 221 with the 3-Sep-2001 argument in the 'black book' that shifting to Sales Tax would encourage boycotting of certain products as a means of pressuring the Government to change certain policies. When we boycott anything, we often hurt ourselves more than we hurt the intended target, so it is not always a very effective tactic. Better to use our existing electoral process to help influence Government policies, and to make effective use of the periodic public polling suggested in Answer 384 to determine tax rates and spending priorities.

Question 419.5

How can we make sure that businesses report sales figures accurately for tax purposes?

Even though we have the mechanisms already in place to collect Sales Taxes, businesses may try harder to circumvent them if the stakes are higher as a result of shifting away from Income Tax. We therefore adopted in Session 221 the suggestions handwritten in the 'black book' on 22-May-2001, viz.:

- 1) Make sure that each business is licensed, and prosecute any individual or organization found to be doing business without a license;
- 2) Make sure that each licensed business produces periodic records of sales, accompanied by applicable tax payments;
- 3) Maintain a listing of accredited accountants and accounting firms;
- 4) Make sure that each set of books provided by businesses has been audited by a qualified accounting entity on the official listing;
- 5) Perform random audits of businesses, and prosecute both the business and its accountant if any discrepancies are found.

Question 420

Wouldn't elimination of income tax inhibit the use of certain tax exemptions?

Yes, and that's a good thing, per our perception in Session 221. Many (if not all) tax exemptions were created for the purpose of allowing wealthier 'incorps' to retain

more of their wealth, such that the slack needs to be taken up by the middle and lower classes. Reducing/eliminating such exemptions will help ensure that all 'indcorps' are paying as close to their 'fair share' as we can practically manage.

Also, as the 'black book' of preliminary ideas points out, allowing certain tax exemptions means that they need to be priced and reported and tracked, which requires further consumption of taxpayer time and Government funds for a function which doesn't really add any value to our society.

Question 421

To the extent, then, that income tax will continue to be a part of our lives, what types of loopholes (if any) should we close?

All of them. Make sure that you are contributing your 'fair share' of the funds needed to keep our society running, if you have the means to do so. Only with whatever you may have left over should you consider making any kind of investment (home, car, education) which might have been tax-exempted in the 'old days'.

The 'black book' of preliminary ideas reminded us to specify church expenses and charitable contributions and capital losses, for the reasons indicated, *viz.*: Exemptions should not be claimed on the basis of religious vocation, since almost anyone can start a virtual church, and write off practically everything. Charitable donations should be charitable, and not done just for tax purposes, because the Government is then effectively subsidizing the charities without having specifically resolved so in its periodic budgets, and already has arguably been spending too much on entitlements and other forms of human consumption. Capital losses shouldn't be written off for a tax deduction, because that causes the Government to help pay for one's poor investment choices.

Question 422

Is an income tax even constitutional?

This was addressed prior to Session 221 by the Wednesday general-public group, which found that the point had been covered on p.187 of Anastaplo's book 'The Amendments to the Constitution', *viz.*: Congress apparently did levy income taxes during the Civil War, and the constitutionality of the practice was not settled until the Supreme Court decision of 1895 and the passage of the 16th Amendment in 1913.

Section I-9 of the Constitution requires that 'capitation taxes' (i.e., taxes levied on a per-capita basis to everybody in the Nation, regardless of age or economic standing) must be based on the most recent Census, but Section I-8 generally allows Congress to collect Taxes and Duties without explicit limitation on variety, provided that they are imposed uniformly throughout the United States.

Question 423

To the extent that income tax continues to hang out, shall rates be graduated at all with respect to income levels?

We were not sure in Session 221 that we really needed to address this Question at all. However, just in case, yes we imagined that we probably should tax higher

levels of income at higher rates, in order to elicit more contributions from wealthier 'incorps'. However, the quantum jumps in tax rates seen at the time for certain income levels could be pretty severe, but on the other hand creating more graduations or some kind of advanced continuity formula might make things more difficult to understand and administer. Again, best to simply skip the whole thing, and have constant rates for certain taxes other than on incomes.

Question 424

If an income tax is retained to any significant degree, then do we want to revisit the immigration question at all?

One argument which we had heard a lot against Immigration is that it encourages employers to hire 'undocumented workers', from whom Income Taxes could not be collected easily (or at all), meaning that they would be sponging off our system without contributing anything to it beyond their actual labor.

Conversely, if we shift from Income Taxes to Sales Taxes, then everybody must pay (except possibly for the very cheapest commodities, as discussed in Answer 418), so that argument against Immigration would no longer be available.

We had found in Subsubsection I-D-1-a that we prefer to keep our borders as open as possible, in order to continue [restore?] America's role as the one place in the World where people can go if they're getting hassled in their own countries, and in order to improve the size and diversity of our labor pool. We continued in Session 221 to believe in that principle, and we do not feel that it should be compromised because of any reliance upon Income Tax. If anything, the ability to deregulate Immigration is yet another reason supporting the elimination of Income Tax.

Question 425

Given the foregoing conclusions, what are the approximate rates that we can expect to see for the different types of taxes for different levels and functions of government?

Of course, this Question depends largely on how much we continue to spend as a society on certain common functions, on how much we may shift certain functions to the private sector (where they may end up costing less), and on how much we may shift certain functions to different governmental levels. Even for those functions which stay exactly where they are, we will see a lot of variation among different States and Counties and Cities, so all that we could practically do here was to assume that we keep all public functions exactly where they were, and to select one set of localities as an example just to give everyone a general indication of what they could expect on average.

For our sample, simply because the Moderator had the most individual familiarity with them, we selected for examination the State of California, the County of Los Angeles, and the City of Pasadena in Session 221.

At the Federal level, we recalled from the analysis in Answer 386 that the Fed had issued \$4.0955 trillion of outlays during the fiscal year ending 30-Sep-2016. This included all the benefits paid out for Medicare, Social Security, and all other entitlement programs, for if we didn't pay for them with taxes then we would need to

pay for them with premiums to private insurance carriers. However, we could expect still to eliminate the \$133.1 billion of costs relating to the soon-to-be-defunct IRS, leaving only \$3.9624 trillion of Federal expenses that we still needed to worry about. Again, we hoped to be able to cut our military budget by a significant amount, but for now to be conservative we assumed that it would stay at its 2016 level.

Question 368 (continued)

How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

Considered in Session 222 (November 2017) that, while we liked the definition on a philosophical basis of one Dollar feeding one person for one day (we had heard a radio ad for the Salvation Army that day, asserting that a \$100 contribution would feed a family of four for three days, so the then-current Dollar had only 12% of its ideal purchasing power), yet revaluing the currency may not be worthwhile for that reason alone. And, if we get rid of Cash as indicated in A375 (which therefore needs to precede this Q), then the argument goes away about making the Penny financially worthwhile to mint. We therefore also wanted to look at how the economy tends to perform when Dollars are worth more versus when they are worth less.

We therefore constructed a table of per-capita GDP during the years in which we tracked the CPI, and adjusted the figures for the CPI. Apart from a slight spike at the end of World War II and a slight dip immediately afterward, the data showed a gradual rise from 1950 to the present date, indicating that the deflating Dollar either directly facilitated our economic growth, or at least didn't interfere with the growth resulting from improvements in technology. This meant that we were not able to use this information to help find an ideal value for the U.S. Dollar.

Question 414 (continued)

Are there any methods other than traditional taxation which might be considered for raising Government revenue?

Noted in Session 222 that Lotteries seem to work well, even though players know (or should know) that the odds are usually against them. We therefore needed to factor these revenues into our analysis of where money comes from and where it goes.

Question 425 (continued)

Given the foregoing conclusions, what are the approximate rates that we can expect to see for the different types of taxes for different levels and functions of government?

We sketched out the following table in Session 222, summarizing the actual totals for the 4 sample jurisdictions from the fiscal year ending in 2016, which was on September 30 for the Fed, and on June 30 for the lower 3 levels:

| | Total (millions) | | Pop. (mil.) | Per-Capita | |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------|----------------|------------|----------|
| | Costs | Revenues | | Cost | Revenue |
| Federal - U.S. | \$4,404,400 | \$3,345,300 | 326.5 | \$13,490 | \$10,246 |
| State - CA | 272,668 | 283,255 | 39.1 | 6,974 | 7,244 |
| County - L.A. | 23,344 | 22,556 | 9.8 | 2,382 | 2,302 |
| City - Pasadena | 570 | 662 | 0.1 | 5,700 | 6,620 |

Nice to see that the State of California and the City of Pasadena seemed to be operating on a surplus budget at that time, and that the County of Los Angeles came pretty close. Somewhat surprised at first that per-capita expenses were greater at the City level than at the County level, but then reasoned that the smaller locality is often more 'hands-on' in its provision of services.

We initially considered in Session 223 (November 2017) that we should add to these figures the costs paid by families to private entities (schools, hospitals, insurance companies, etc.), on all those functions which recently had been subsidized significantly by government, particularly including for Medical Care, Eldercare, and Education. But, then we reconsidered: The family shares of these functions had been priced according to their apparent direct shares of the provided benefits, whereas the portion covered by taxes represents Society's share of those benefits.

For example, the family directly benefits when the daughter goes to college and learns a marketable profession, and when she eventually is able to earn enough income to help take care of her parents in their retirement if needed, but Society also benefits by having more educated people in its labor pool and electorate, so it should somehow share the costs of the education process.

Similarly, the family benefits when their older members are having their medical needs satisfactorily addressed, but Society also benefits when we live knowing that we are forever preserving a system which will help us to address our own medical needs when the time comes, so again the private family and the public fund should somehow share in paying the costs of medical care.

Apart from the extremists who feel that tax revenue should pay for all Education and Health Care, and those other extremists who feel that tax revenues should not in the least bit help to pay for any Education or Health Care, there seemed to be little ongoing dispute at the time as to the specific proportions between private and public funding, or among premiums and deductibles and copayments, and we had no challenge of our own to the pricing calculations which had been made by schools and insurance companies and other such institutions.

That being the case, we were not immediately projecting any significant change in what families then paid in direct contributions for their share of Education and Health Care. That meant that we also were not immediately projecting any significant change in how much Society subsidized Education and Health Care from tax revenue. The money was currently going to the Government (where it sometimes 'stuck' a little bit before it reached its ultimate destinations), and we were recommending that it instead go directly to the private carriers of the taxpayers' preference, and we hoped as a result to see some overall net-reduction in cost, but to be conservative we assumed for the moment a straight shift without numerical adjustment to what people actually paid to their various carriers on a consolidated basis.

We therefore decided at this time to recap all those changes which we were then proposing which would have an impact on our bottom lines, viz.:

A361 - Each civic jurisdiction and individual propertyholder owes some amount of periodic tax to the higher level, for the privilege of controlling what happens within that territory.

A361 - Base rate of property tax should be somewhat higher than what we think that we could get on a net basis if we were to exercise the property ourselves, and somewhat less than what the individual renter thinks that he can net-get under his own control.

Continued in Session 224 (December 2017) to list previous findings impacting Q425:

A365 - Tax the super-rich to build more centers to help the poor.

A368 - Base unit of credit should remain stable over time.

A368 - USD then held only 12% of the purchasing power which we felt that it should have.

A377 - No ongoing public debt, but maybe temporary.

A381 - States determine their own levels of health coverage, with the States of residence needing to reimburse the States of occurrence for health problems incurred while traveling.

A385 - Targeting a maximum of 30% of tax revenue to come from the super-rich, with minimum of 70% from everybody else.

A386 - We will want a significant surplus in our operating budget. [Reviewed later.]

A386 - In FY2016, the Fed had \$4.4044T of net costs, and \$3.3453T of revenues.

A386 - Need to cut Fed expenses by 23.78% just to achieve a balanced budget, more to have a surplus to pay down our debt, unless we try to increase revenue instead.

A386 - Overall tax burden to remain same as current for now.

A386 - No shifting of government functions to lower levels at this preliminary time.

A386 - Keeping the USD at its 2016 level for now.

A386 - Interest rate on the national debt presumed to remain constant until payoff.

A386 - National debt was \$19.2924T as of 30-Sep-2016, loan interest was \$273.0B during FY2016, so interest rate was 1.415% annually.

A386 - Paydown of national debt to take 75 years.

A386 - Therefore need \$425.2B of annual surplus.

A386 - Our \$3.3453T of current revenue, minus \$425.2B for loan servicing, leaves \$2.9201T for operating expenses.

A386 - Need overall reduction of \$745.4B in operating expenses, or corresponding increase in revenue.

A386 - Medicare was operating at \$1.4173T of outlays, minus \$389.3B of receipts, leaving \$1.0280T of annual deficit.

A386 - Cutting the Medicare deficit would leave \$282.6B of budget surplus.

Continued in Session 225 (December 2017) to list previous findings impacting Q425:

A387 - Can trim \$10M of salaries/expenses from the Office of Personnel Management.

A388.1 - Could cut Defense spending by some amount to be determined.

A388.2 - Definitely cutting \$133.1B for the Internal Revenue Service.

A389 - Medicare balancing and IRS elimination give us \$415.7B of budget surplus, in addition to any Defense cuts.

A394 - Health Care is to be managed by the private sector instead of by the Fed, but it still will be universal.

A405 - Same as for Medicare, eldercare (read 'Social Security') should be financed only by current dollars.

A412 - Each nation owes a periodic payment to the global community, and each lower jurisdiction owes a periodic payment to the next-higher level.

A414 - Revenue calculations should include Lottery proceeds.

A417 - In addition to Lottery proceeds, taxes hypothetically can be assessed on Income, Sales, Property, Estates, and/or Existence.

A418 - Property taxes can pay for Firefighting, Garbage collection, and other services which benefit propertyholders. Capitation taxes can pay for Police protection, Parks & Libraries, Military protection, and other services which benefit all individuals. Sales taxes can pay for Currency maintenance, the Commerce Department, Education, and other services which benefit participants in our economic system. There should be no Income tax.

A418 - Maybe we could charge higher Sales-tax rates on more luxurious purchases, and/or exempt lower-level purchases.

This brought us back to the beginning of Answer 425, so we felt ready at the end of Session 225 to combine everything together.

Question 417 (continued)

Given the theoretical (at least) appropriateness of taxation, what are the different ways in which we could be taxed?

We amended our Answer in Session 226 (December 2017) to include stuff bequeathed, meaning Estate Taxes.

Question 418 (continued)

Of these basic types, which is the fairest method of taxation, or is it appropriate for more than one type to be levied at once by a single jurisdiction?

DeeAnn Griebel (speaker on the Social Security program at a then-recent national Mensa conference) was suggesting a 5% tax on all Estates regardless of size. However, upon further consideration during the week preceding Session 226, we had decided (and communicated to Griebel) that we should not tax Estates, except possibly for a mandatory service charge. Reasoning was that it makes more sense in an Income Tax environment [or so we thought], where Government is allowed to pounce upon any transfer of currency from one entity to another, but doesn't make as much sense in the Sales Tax environment which we had adopted. Specifically:

-- If the estate-tax rate were higher than the prevailing sales-tax rate, then people would be motivated to spend their money liberally before they die, treating their beneficiaries as guests for extravagant periods of 'riotous living' at the regular sales-tax rate, so that the funds would not be taxed at the higher estate-tax rate.

-- If the estate-tax rate were equal to the prevailing sales-tax rate, then the funds would effectively be taxed twice, including once at the time of transfer, and once when the money is actually spent on stuff later on. This would be good for our budget but would be unfair to the beneficiary/taxpayer.

-- If the estate-tax rate were lower than the prevailing sales-tax rate, then people would be motivated to mislabel their purchases as preliminary distributions from a living trust or something, in order to qualify for the lower tax rate.

Best probably to allow all estates and other gifts to be transferred without tax, such that the funds are taxed only when they are actually spent on various commodities and services which are in limited supply. Okay to assess a modest service charge of maybe \$100 per disbursement to each beneficiary, partly to cover the administrative costs of recording the transfers on the public ledger, and partly to discourage excessive disbursements in favor of simplicity and transparency, but that should be it. [Modified later, when we saw how much revenue this source was generating.]

Question 425 (continued)

Given the foregoing conclusions, what are the approximate rates that we can expect to see for the different types of taxes for different levels and functions of government?

To be clearer on this Question, we figured in Session 226 that we should create four charts, including two for current Government revenue and cost, and two for proposed Government revenue and cost. Each chart would have four columns for the four levels of Government. The revenue charts would have enough rows to cover all the different types of taxation and other revenue. The cost charts would have enough rows to cover the different types of expenses which might best be funded by different types of taxation. We therefore created the following, in which the first line for each category represents the gross total in millions, and the second line represents the per-capita average in single dollars:

| | Fed (U.S.) | State (Cal.) | Co. (L.A.) | City (Pas.) | Totals |
|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------|
| Pop. (mil.) | 326.5 | 39.1 | 9.8 | 0.1 | |
| CURRENT REVENUES (2016) | | | | | |
| Income Tax | 2,897,500 8,874 | 89,100 2,279 | | | 11,153 |
| Sales/Use Tax | | 39,200 1,002 | 107 11 | 37 370 | 1,383 |
| Property Tax | | | 5,774 589 | 59 590 | 1,179 |
| Excise Tax | 100,400 308 | 5,000 128 | | | 436 |
| Utility Users Tax | | | 58 6 | 28 280 | 286 |
| Unemployment Tax | 46,900 144 | | | | 144 |
| Insurance Tax | | 4,200 107 | | | 107 |
| Estate/Gift Tax | 21,000 64 | | | | 64 |
| Documentary Transfer Tax | | | 85 9 | | 9 |
| Wealth Tax | | | | | 0 |
| Other Taxes | 228,000 698 | 2,528 65 | 398 41 | 40 400 | 1,204 |
| Other Revenue | 51,500 158 | 143,227 3,663 | 16,134 1,646 | 498 4,980 | 10,447 |
| Total Revenue | 3,345,300 10,246 | 283,255 7,244 | 22,556 2,302 | 662 6,620 | 26,412 |
| Total Taxes | 3,293,800 10,088 | 140,028 3,581 | 6,422 655 | 164 1,640 | 15,964 |

We reviewed the preceding Revenues chart in Session 227 (January 2018), and noted the specific changes which we felt that we needed to make, as follows:

- (1) Start by moving all Income Tax to Sales Tax, pending subsequent adjustments.
- (2) Rows 4-9 were not considered for specific adjustment at this time, so they could all be rolled into Other Taxes with no further adjustment.
- (3) We could fill the Wealth Tax field with the amount needed to create a balanced budget in any jurisdiction currently carrying any deficit, and also to meet our annual

debt-reduction level until completion (projected at 75 years for the Federal debt), at which time we could reevaluate our tax strategy based upon then-current economic conditions. Doing so would make certain that we never again need to endure a 'government shutdown' as had happened at various points in our history (including in January 2018), nor to deny entitlement benefits to those individuals who are found to deserve them.

(4) When we do fill in the Wealth Tax field of the Fed column (the three non-Fed levels were showing nearly-balanced budgets in those days, so we were not recommending any adjustments there), check to make sure that it is less than 30% of the total.

(5) After all the above, consider reallocating revenue according to the types of expenses covered, in order to be prepared if someone raises a complaint about a given revenue source allegedly being depended upon too much to support a given type of outlay, although no problem to continue allocation derived above if there are no complaints, because there is an argument in favor of stability and familiarity as long as the bottom line remains at its target level.

Time therefore to construct our summary chart of current Costs. Again, the first line within each section represents the gross total in millions of dollars, and the second line represents the per-capita average in single dollars. Category titles came from the mapping suggested in Answer 386. Figures came from the financial statements provided online by the applicable governments.

| | Fed(U.S.) | State(Cal.) | Co.(L.A.) | City(Pas.) | Totals |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------|
| Pop. (mil.) | 326.5 | 39.1 | 9.8 | 0.1 | |
| CURRENT COSTS (2016) | | | | | |
| Foreign Affairs | 41,000 126 | | | | 126 |
| Defense | 1,347,900 4,128 | | | | 4,128 |
| Domestic Affairs | 1,306,800 4,002 | 93,895 2,401 | 228 23 | 293 2930 | 9,356 |
| Transportation | 91,200 279 | 12,121 310 | 381 39 | 36 360 | 988 |
| Science | 91,100 278 | | | | 278 |
| Health & Safety | 1,083,000 3,317 | 127,543 3,262 | 21,406 2,184 | 129 1,290 | 10,053 |
| Justice | 37,100 114 | 11,875 304 | | | 418 |
| Finance | 117,100 359 | 6,316 162 | | | 521 |
| Administration | (-8,300) (-25) | 16,686 427 | 1,236 126 | 59 590 | 1,118 |

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|---------|--------|-------|--------|
| Non-Operating | 277,700 | 4,232 | 93 | 9 | |
| Expense | 851 | 108 | 10 | 90 | 1,059 |
| All Other | 19,800 | | | 44 | |
| Government | 61 | | | 440 | 501 |
| | ===== | ===== | ===== | ===== | ===== |
| Total | 4,404,400 | 272,668 | 23,344 | 570 | |
| Cost | 13,490 | 6,974 | 2,382 | 5,700 | 28,546 |

Reference mapping of non-Federal expense categories to consolidated sheet:

| State expense: | | County expense: | | City expense: | |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------|---------------|----------|
| Gen Gvt | 16,686 Adm | Gen Gvt | 1,236 Adm | Gen Gvt | 59 Adm |
| Educ | 65,468 Dom | Pub Prtxn | 7,098 H&S | Pub Safety | 97 H&S |
| HHS | 127,543 H&S | Pub Wys/Fac | 375 Trans | Transp | 36 Trans |
| Env Prtxn | 6,988 Dom | Hlth/Sanit | 3,418 H&S | Cult/Leis | 32 H&S |
| Bus/Housing | 815 Dom | Pub Assist | 6,192 H&S | Cmty Dev | 73 Dom |
| Transp | 12,121 Trans | Education | 141 Dom | Int/Fiscal | 9 Non-Op |
| Corr/Rehab | 11,875 Just | Rec/Culture | 388 H&S | Electric | 175 Dom |
| Int on Debt | 4,232 Fin | Int on Debt | 93 Non-Op | Water | 45 Dom |
| Elec Power | 728 Sci | Hospitals | 4,310 H&S | Other Exp | 44 Other |
| Water | 1,087 Sci | Water Works | 87 Dom | | === |
| Lottery | 6,316 Fin | Aviation | 6 Trans | | 570 |
| Unemp Pgms | 11,459 Dom | | ===== | | |
| State Univ | 7,199 Dom | | 23,344 | | |
| Enterp Pgms | 151 Dom | | | | |
| | ===== | | | | |
| | 272,668 | | | | |

Decided in Session 228 (January 2018) to focus on only richest Individuals for Wealth Tax purposes, and to omit Corporations from that discussion. We noted three reasons at the time: First, to include corporations in the same listing as individuals who own shares in them would constitute 'double-dipping'; if your economy consists of one corporation with \$1 million of net assets, and with one shareholder who has no other wealth, then the total wealth of that economy is still only \$1 million. Second, we do not want to penalize middle-class shareholders of wealthy corporations. Third, the justifying factor of reducing the disparity between rich and poor requires that we compare individuals on an 'apples-to-apples' basis.

Therefore added to our to-do list from Session 222:

(6) Amend the 'wealth tax' line with specific taxes on richest individuals (including Bezos of Amazon at \$105B, and Gates of Microsoft at \$100B), based upon listings available online through Bloomberg and/or Forbes.

We then reviewed the preceding Costs chart, and noted the specific changes which we felt that we needed to make, beginning with:

(1) Add a column for 'Fed - was', to highlight where the biggest changes are happening in our model.

Figured at this time that we probably should do the same thing for Revenue, so we added it to that to-do list, viz.:

(7) Add a column for 'Fed - was', to highlight where the biggest changes are happening in our model.

Resuming our to-do list for the Costs chart:

(2) Go back to our previous notes, and create new Department-level cost centers within the Executive Branch, based upon the largest current outlays, aiming for an average of about \$475B per Department.

(3) Make sure that we have a row for the level of Operating Surplus (previously calculated at \$425.2B) which will be going to Debt Reduction.

(4) Cut the Medicare deficit by \$1.0280T, but reflect it as a Revenue increase and not a Cost reduction.

(5) Trim \$10M of Salaries & Expense from the Office of Personnel Management.

(6) Cut \$133.1B from the IRS.

(7) Specifically, break up the \$1.3479T of Defense into the three Departments of Veterans Affairs at \$649.1B, Defense at \$609.2B, and Homeland Security at \$89.6B, unless we determine that the last can be rolled into other Departments. We justify the distinction *vis-à-vis* Defense (always had thought that they should be together, because they have the same basic mission of defending Americans and our homeland) by distinguishing between uniformed services and civilian analysts.

(8) We now figured that Domestic Affairs should be three Departments, where one is everything except the Social Security Administration, and where we break up the \$981.8B of SSA into two somehow. We didn't see a separate breakdown of this in the previous notes, and so looked again at this time. The 274-page financial-statement document didn't break it down. Funny that we had previously downloaded Outlay spreadsheets for Defense, OPM, and Treasury, but not for SSA. Now that we did so, we saw that the biggest Outlay of the \$976.8B for SSA was \$769.8B to SSA, with no further breakdown, so we guessed that we were stuck with \$981.8B as an individual cost center.

(9) After breaking out Social Security, Veterans Administration, Defense, Non-Executive, and Non-Operating, we had \$1.8668T to divide among six Departments, for an average of \$311.1B per Department. Health & Human Services with its \$1.0743T theoretically should be split among three Departments, so we would need a separate outlay breakdown, but that included lots of Medicare, so we would need to examine the financials more closely to see just how much Medicare was involved here, and what (if anything) there was in HHS outside of Medicare, because it may turn out that we needed to keep Medicare as its own Department-level cost center, same as Social Security. We re-examined in Session 229 (January 2018) the current Outlays associated with the current Department of Health & Human Services. Offsetting Receipts of \$428.3B (see chart appearing within Answer 386) were not broken down by agency. But, even if all related to Medicare and/or Medicaid, then that agency would still come out as \$989.008B, with a remainder of only \$113.957B, much of that remainder pertaining to other types of Health programs, so it may not make much sense to break these units into different Departments.

(10) In particular, the many outlay lines for Medicare and Medicaid addressed both programs jointly, so they would not be easily separable.

(11) We theoretically could separate HHS into Medical Support and Health, but several of the non-Medicare programs currently administered within HHS also involved medical support, so splitting up the programs would offer no real advantage. Therefore best to leave it all as Health, and to take 'Human Services' out of the name in order to introduce transparency as to what this total actually comprises.

(12) After the main four of SSA, VA, Defense, and Health, we had \$792.5B of net costs to divide among five Departments, for an average of \$158.5B per Department. Agriculture was easy at \$133.6B, and we used our spreadsheet of net costs from 2016 to figure out the remainder. Results are displayed in the chart shown below. This analysis showed that Administration should not be a separate federal Department after all, but rather a set of cost centers within the Branch umbrella. Further narrowed the field to 11 Departments, then combined further, deciding against having a Department of Domestic Affairs because there are too many disparate functions which are domestic to group them all as Domestic Affairs.

(13) Decided to move the Justice Department to the Judicial Branch (!), partly because the net cost is so relatively small that it may not deserve recognition as a full Department within the Executive Branch, partly because the function does not relate enough to other Executive Departments to be attached to them, and partly because the mission of the Justice Department is more in line with the mission of the Judicial Branch.

(14) Final change at the Federal level was to recombine Veterans Affairs with Defense, partly to get the field down to nine clearly-separated Departments, and partly to show how much the overall Defense function is still costing us, relative to the other Departments.

Once we finalized our new Federal Departments, we redid the mapping of non-Federal functions, and came up with the following chart of consolidated government costs, again with the second line of each category referring to the per-capita averages in single 2016 dollars, now sorted by per-capita category totals:

| | <i>Fed(U.S.)-was</i> | Fed-prop. | State(Cal.) | Co.(L.A.) | City(Pas.) | Totals |
|--|----------------------|--------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Pop. (mil.) | | 326.5 | | 39.1 | 9.8 | 0.1 |
| PROPOSED COSTS (in 2016 million-dollars) | | | | | | |
| Health | 1,074,300 3,290 | 1,074,300 3,290 | | 127,543 3,262 | 7,728 789 | 7,341 |
| Defense | 1,258,300 3,854 | 1,258,300 3,854 | | | | 3,854 |
| Social Security | 981,800 3,007 | 981,800 3,007 | | | | 3,007 |
| Energy & Environment | 95,400 292 | 95,400 292 | | 8,803 225 | 87 9 | 220 2,200 |
| Education | 74,000 227 | 74,000 227 | | 72,667 1,859 | 141 14 | 2,100 |
| Economics | 214,100 656 | 81,000 248 | | 18,741 479 | 6,192 632 | 73 730 |
| Public Safety | | | | | 7,098 724 | 97 970 |
| Debt Reduction* | -0- -0- | 425,200 1,302 | | | | 1,302 |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------|
| Admini- stration | (-8,300) (-25) | (-8,310) (-25) | 16,686 427 | 1,236 126 | 59 590 | 1,118 |
| Trans- portation | 117,800 361 | 117,800 361 | 12,121 310 | 381 39 | 36 360 | 1,070 |
| Non-Operating Expense | 277,700 851 | 277,700 851 | 4,232 108 | 93 9 | 9 90 | 1,058 |
| Non-Executive Expense | 56,900 174 | 56,900 174 | 11,875 304 | | 44 440 | 918 |
| Agriculture | 133,300 408 | 133,300 408 | | | | 408 |
| Foreign Affairs | 129,100 395 | 129,100 395 | | | | 395 |
| Recreation | | | | 388 40 | 32 320 | 360 |
| | ===== | ===== | ===== | ===== | ===== | ===== |
| Total Costs | 4,404,400 13,490 | 4,696,490 14,384 | 272,668 6,974 | 23,344 2,382 | 570 5,700 | 29,440 |

*Technically is an outlay, not a cost, but needs to be included in this table in order to project taxpayer cashflows accurately.

That \$29,440 bottom line represents the average annual total which each American person would need to come up with in order to subsidize all our current government functions (including a gradual reduction of our Federal debt), if we did not make any large-scale reductions in Health or Defense or Social Security. Obviously, many Americans do not make that much money annually at all (especially children and the retired), and those who do must first take care of their own rents and groceries and other basic expenses, so a higher-than-average contribution to the public pool must be made by those individuals with higher-than-average financial resources.

In accordance with our Answer 418, certain types of taxes should pay for certain types of costs, so our revenue distribution should reflect the above cost breakdown.

Specifically, we felt in Session 230 (January 2018) that: Capitation taxes should cover Defense, Safety, and Recreation, because the entire population benefits from those functions. Property taxes should cover Energy & Environment, because those functions benefit propertyholders the most. Sales taxes should cover Economics, Agriculture, Transportation, and Education, because it is those individuals who purchase and consume our economic commodities who should be contributing the most towards the perpetuation of our economic system. Wealth taxes (#WealthTax) should cover Social Security and Health, as a means of peacefully reducing the disparity between rich and poor. Estates and other sources should cover the remaining functions of Administration, Non-Executive, Foreign Affairs, Non-Operating, and Debt Reduction, allowing the Estate rate to vary according to how much is needed to cover the 'leftovers' of government net-expense.

Currently allowing any revenue sources which currently exist but which are not specified in the above paragraph, until we once determine that any particular amount is causing some kind of undue harm to someone or something.

When we first applied these rules, the Estate factor for States, Counties, and Cities ended up negative, so we reduced Wealth and Other Revenue accordingly.

We also found after the first pass of applying the above rules that -- while our 30% rule for Wealth tax was satisfied at the overall level, it was exceeded at the Federal and County levels. Wealth tax needs to be a maximum of 30% at each level, so it was necessary to increase the Sales-tax component until the Wealth tax was reduced to its maximum of 30%, on the premise that we shouldn't tax the wealth of the super-rich until we first extract an appropriate amount out of our active consumers.

The net results after all the above applications are as follows. As before, the first line of each category represents the total in millions of dollars as valued in 2016, and the second line represents the per-capita average in single dollars.

| | Fed(U.S.) | State(Cal.) | Co.(L.A.) | City(Pas.) | Totals |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|--------|
| Pop. (mil.) | 326.5 | 39.1 | 9.8 | 0.1 | |
| PROPOSED REVENUES (in 2016 dollars) | | | | | |
| Income Tax | -0- | -0- | | | -0- |
| Capitation Tax | 1,258,300 3,854 | | 7,486 764 | 129 1,290 | 5,908 |
| Property Tax | 95,400 292 | 8,803 225 | 87 9 | 220 2,200 | 2,726 |
| Sales/Use Tax | 1,053,253 3,226 | 103,529 2,648 | 7,439 759 | 109 1,090 | 7,723 |
| Wealth Tax | 1,408,947 4,315 | 5,381 138 | 7,003 715 | | 5,168 |
| Excise Tax | 100,400 307 | 5,000 128 | | | 435 |
| Utility Users Tax | | | 58 6 | 28 280 | 286 |
| Unemployment Tax | 46,900 144 | | | | 144 |
| Insurance Tax | | 4,200 107 | | | 107 |
| Documentary Transfer Tax | | | 85 9 | | 9 |
| Other Taxes | 228,000 698 | 2,528 65 | 398 40 | 40 400 | 1,203 |
| Other Revenue | 51,500 158 | 143,227 3,663 | 788 80 | 44 440 | 4,341 |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|---------|--------|-------|--------|
| Estate/Gift Tax | 453,790 | -0- | -0- | -0- | |
| | 1,390 | -0- | -0- | -0- | 1,390 |
| | ===== | ===== | ===== | ===== | ===== |
| Total Revenue | 4,696,490 | 272,668 | 23,344 | 570 | |
| | 14,384 | 6,974 | 2,382 | 5,700 | 29,440 |

In our previous Revenues chart, the per-capita revenue generation from other than Wealth and Estate taxes was $(\$26,412 - \$64) = \$26,348$. In our revised model, per-capita generation from other than Wealth/Estate tax is $(\$29,440 - \$5,168 - \$1,390) = \$22,882$. This means an average reduction to middle-class taxpayers of 13.155%. Took us nearly three months to figure this out!!

SECTION II-D: INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION & DISTRIBUTION

Question 426

Any changes in corporate finance, particularly the stock market?

Two changes which we were recommending as of Session 231 (February 2018) until we were once persuaded to the contrary:

- 1) Go to 24-hour stock trading. You can still show daily closing prices as of midnight, in order to track evolving share values same as we currently do, but we are just making the cutoff time later, and allowing new trades immediately after. Advantages are that it increases transaction options for both corporations and stockholders, who can now buy and sell with partners all over the world, for this is becoming more and more of a global marketplace, whether we all like it or not.
- 2) Allow a portion of Federal sales-tax revenue to come from stock transactions. Think of it as an additional commission, same as you pay to your broker, but instead for maintaining systems in which these transactions can take place, for tracking everybody's recent transactions and current wealth, for building and repairing transportation networks to allow companies to conduct business, and for educating the future managers of our economy so that we may all enjoy comfortable retirements. Also will have effect of reducing volatility by discouraging 'quick-buck' stock purchases and encouraging longer-term investments in worthy companies.

Question 427 (continued)

Shall we have measures on the books to prevent monopolies?

The 'black book' of preliminary ideas suggested that we should allow monopolies as long as we disallow unfair business practices, but in Session 231 we were not sure that we went along with that. We had heard about several recent attempts to merge large companies in the Healthcare and Entertainment and Communications industries, which deals blessedly were always subject to anti-trust review.

If two or more companies with large market shares were allowed to get together (even in the absence of any 'unfair business practices' such as murder or arson), then they could manipulate prices unfairly, causing certain commodities and services to cost more than they're really worth, skewing the economy, penalizing consumers, and excessively enriching the corporate owners.

Thus, even if the monopoly comes about through completely fair and legal means, it still would be in society's interest to block its creation, so yes we do wish to maintain legal measures to prevent monopolies.

Question 428

What business practices shall we consider to be fair and unfair for this discussion?

The 'black book' suggested that we continue to prohibit false advertising, arson, competitor picketing, and slander. Generally, we don't want to allow any action which physically prevents a competitor from doing business, nor to allow any company to make any public statement about a competitor's product/service, except only by direct quotation of independent industry-review organizations.

Question 429

Shall the Government get involved at all in rate regulation if a concern has more than a certain percentage of market share?

Actually, what we had in mind as of Session 231 is that companies generally should not be allowed to have more than a certain amount of market share, specifically so that they cannot have too much of an influence over prices, which must be allowed to find their true market values relative to other popular products and services.

If we have only two competitors in a given industry, then whoever has the greater market share still is in a position to determine what the prices 'should' be, such that the one competitor is either slightly undercutting the 'primary' price in exchange for lower quality, or else charging a slightly higher price with the promise of higher quality. In either case, there still is too much effective collusion as to the primary price, so we want to make sure that there are always at least three competitors in any industry, so that consumers will always have sufficient options available, and so that all competitors will be motivated to keep their prices affordable but still sufficient to cover their expenses and remain in business.

In order to ensure that there are always at least three competitors within any industry, we feel that we should set a maximum of 33.3% of market share to be held by any one company. If any company exceeds that maximum, then either it must decrease production until its market share reduces to an acceptable level, or else it must divest its business among multiple independent brands. [Modified below.]

Only exception which we would make to the above is if an inventor of a proprietary new technology wishes to form a business to apply that technology within the marketplace, as Bell did with his telephone, or as Bill Murray and his buddies did in 'Ghostbusters'. In this case, we want the inventors to be justly rewarded for their creative and physical and entrepreneurial energies, and we don't want the value of those investments to be undercut because some 'copycat' companies wish to generate cheap knockoffs at cut-rate prices. We therefore feel that an inventor should be allowed to maintain a monopoly over the use of her invention for as long as her patent remains valid according to the laws of the day. During that period, the inventor may sell the production rights of her invention to other manufacturers in exchange for agreed-upon royalty payments. After that period, the inventor retains

no further right of ownership over her invention, and production must be made available for free to all business concerns who wish to engage in it.

To make this process work, we must make sure that it is treated as a prohibitive 'conflict of interest' for any one individual to own shares of more than one company operating within the same industry.

Monopolies and semi-monopolies can happen at the global scale as well, as in the case of OPEC controlling fuel prices in the 1970's, so the prevailing 'international oversight organization' (or 'i.o.o.') should have steps in place to prevent such collusive actions. [Noted for Answer 32.1 in Third Pass.]

If there are not enough companies willing to compete for market share within a given industry, or if for some reason a given government specifically wishes for monopolies to prevail in certain industries (such as Utilities), then it may regulate prices as it sees fit, except always remembering that setting prices too unduly high could eventually inflame the public to the point of civil disorder, which our SIG will not be able to stop once it starts.

Another reason to prevent companies from owning more than a 1/3 market share is because any company with a higher share is in a position to engineer 'planned obsolescence' into its production schedules. We have seen this happen with certain Computer companies which create hardwares or softwares which they plan to be unusable or 'no longer supported' after a certain period of time, such that consumers are effectively forced to purchase both the original inferior product and its subsequent upgrade.

However, if we divide Telephone service among multiple companies, then each phone in the World still should be able to call any other phone in the World. Similarly, if we divide Computer access among multiple companies, then our e-mail's and file attachments and other media should be understandable in all platforms, or at least the major ones. It may therefore be necessary for all companies within certain industries to conform with certain production standards maintained by the applicable national or international governments.

Question 430

How shall we deal with the fact that industry is currently using up a tremendous amount of coal, petroleum, and other non-renewable energy sources?

Our observation in Session 232 (February 2018) was that -- while we certainly still had a long way to go -- yet we had managed to accomplish quite a lot during recent years in the development of clean and renewable energy sources (including Solar, Wind, Hydroelectric, and Hemp), and in encouraging or requiring industries to phase out their uses of Coal and Petroleum within reasonable timeframes. We should continue with these processes, and provide our political and economic support to them insofar as we practically can.

For, even if you refuse to believe in the widespread scientific assertion that burning Coal and Petroleum causes serious (if not critical) damage to our atmosphere, in addition to other environmental problems, you should at least consider the fact that these resources are in limited supply, so the only smart thing to do is to figure out

how to satisfy our energy demands without reliance upon those dwindling resources, which will keep going up in price as supply diminishes (no matter what we do with monopolies and cartels), unless we reduce demand by shifting to viable alternatives.

Question 431

Shall tax breaks or other such incentives be offered to encourage the use of electric cars or solar heating?

The 'black book' of preliminary ideas (compiled back in the mid-1990's) said no, but we thought in Session 232 that we probably could provide Sales Tax exemptions on electric cars and solar panels and certain other products which are intended to reduce our consumption of physical resources. For, one of the big reasons for emphasizing Sales Tax is to discourage consumption, so it follows that we should not tax products which are designed to reduce consumption.

Question 432

Isn't it unfair to oil companies for the Government to subsidize research and products which will effectively put them out of business?

Unfortunate yes, but unfair? Sorry, we had a hard time buying that in Session 232.

First, the oil companies had been making billions off of our hefty energy appetites for many years, and they would keep much of those profits even if we completely closed all production tomorrow, so it's hard to feel sorry for them.

Second, some might argue that a lot of their profits came from collusive raising of prices far above what we would have had in a more competitive environment, so maybe if anything they should be giving some back in addition. If so, then our new Wealth Tax will see to that. [Third Pass: But, we had decided to tax persons only!]

Third and most important, industries come into and go out of existence all the time, as a result of our technological advances and other evolutions in our demographics. (For example, TV Repair was a big industry in the 1970's, but not anymore.) The fact that certain companies did a certain thing in the past -- when there was much higher demand -- does not imply that they get to keep doing it indefinitely.

Question 433

To what extent do we want to allow nuclear power in this country?

That's a tough one. It's much cleaner and cheaper than either Coal or Petroleum, but there are safety issues, including that we need to deal with a growing stockpile of radioactive waste.

Generally, our goal should be for 100% of our energy demands to come from Solar, Wind, Hydroelectric, Geothermal, and other completely clean and safe and renewable sources. Until we are able to make that goal a reality, we apparently require some dependence upon less-desirable sources, including Nuclear.

Until we can make them all obsolete, we imagined in Session 232 that we generally should be preferring Nuclear energy to either Coal or Petroleum, because at least it

doesn't directly damage the atmosphere, except of course in case of accident. However, we generally want to phase out Nuclear in favor of the net-safer sources.

Question 434

How shall we deal with the fact that industry is currently using up a tremendous amount of physical resources, such as steel and timber?

We spoke specifically about Timber in Subsubsection I-D-1-c, proposing that we should make sure that the Federal government includes an agency which manages a strategic reserve of forest land, both as a backup for our lumber needs and to replenish our oxygen supply, and that the agency prevents excessive harvesting.

Steel and other mineral resources are harder to manage, because they are not as renewable as Timber. However, if we can manage to level off our global population at some point, and keep it at or below the maximum level which our existing mineral supply will shelter and support, then we hoped as of Session 232 that renewability will not be a problem, if we do a satisfactory job of recycling the raw minerals whenever we tear down a stadium or warship or other large construction.

We can also help the issue by expending fewer mineral resources in military buildups, and more in civilian housing.

Question 435

How shall we deal with the impact on a local economy when such resources dry up?

Not applicable. We make sure that they do not dry up, including by the resource-management techniques exemplified in Answer 434. Communities which previously focused on mining and refinery can retool toward recycling and reconstruction.

Question 436

Should the Government continue to make sure that product and workplace safety are maintained?

Yes, definitely. The development of workplace safety standards was a major advance in our society, and we don't ever want to go back. Besides, businesses which want to attract quality labor will have a built-in incentive to maintain comfortable working conditions.

Since one of the principal missions of government is to protect the rights and safety of all individuals (certainly to include both workers and consumers), we felt as of Session 232 that this is an appropriate and important function of government.

Question 437

At what levels of government should product and workplace safety be managed?

Industries are often limited to particular States, but also cover numerous Counties. We therefore felt as of Session 232 that States are generally in the net-best position

to focus on those industries which are prevalent within them, and to develop applicable safety standards which can be widely known and implemented, instead of making each County do the same analytical work as other Counties performing within the same industries.

Product safety should be handled at least at the Federal level, and may someday need to escalate to Global, as our economic interaction continues to increase.

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Moderator found very funny following Session 232 the number of times that he had found his then-current positions to be distinctly different from what they had been when he composed the 'black book' of preliminary ideas 20+ years earlier. If he could not have a dialogue with other people, given our new quorum requirement of one, then at least he could kind-of have a dialogue with himself, based upon the different perspectives which he individually introduced at different times.

SECTION II-E: LABOR

We had already gotten the main point by the time that we commenced this Section in Session 233 (February 2018), that we need to apportion our existing workload among our available workers, such that no one is required to be unemployed, although it will lower the average workweek, but on the other hand it also will lower the number of hours needed for overtime to kick in. However, we still wanted to go through the Questions in the nominal sequence.

Question 438

Shall any American company be required to hire American citizens for employees?

N/A if we abolish Citizenship as resolved in A21, and still projected in Session 233.

Even if we retain the institution of Citizenship [as we later decided], we still don't want to make this a requirement: One of our core American values (see Answer 38) is a free-market economy, which means that all participants in the economy (producers, employers, workers, retailers, and consumers) compete with one another for whatever economic advantages they can lawfully get. If someone other than you shows himself to have better productivity and/or quality and/or attitude, and/or is willing to work for a lower wage, then an employer in a free-market economy generally (if not always) should be allowed to hire him.

Many (if not most) employers will have a natural preference toward American workers. Even if we abandon the institution of Citizenship, anyone who has lived in a certain area for a long time will tend to be more stable and a longer-term employee, and will have knowledge about the locality which may be useful in the course of his work. However, it is the prerogative of each employer in each industry to decide which factors are most important for her particular company, and to select her laborers accordingly.

There may need to be some exceptions, such as airline pilots or the military, where we as a society might want to insist that all employees be American citizens while we still have Citizenship, and afterward [if we abolish it] that they meet some other set

of qualifications (such as length of domestic residence, or number of years of domestic education) in order to be sufficiently 'American'.

Question 439

Should it be lawful for a company that so wishes to require that all of its employees be American citizens?

Yes, we felt in Session 233 that it is appropriate for an employer to decide that she wants to hire only Americans (however we may define that expression over time), just as she generally has the right to hire non-Americans.

Question 440 (continued)

But, if an employer is allowed to hire non-citizens, then won't many employers be motivated to hire aliens who are not subject to minimum-wage restrictions, and won't this tend to divert jobs and resources away from Americans?

We found in Session 233 that this Question goes to whether we should have a minimum wage at all. We don't want slavery or anything remotely resembling it in our society, and we do want everyone to be able to afford at least a minimally-decent standard of living with a reasonable work schedule. However, if we arbitrarily dictate some minimum rate which all workers must get per hour, then employers must pay more in wages than they would have paid otherwise, so they will need to raise prices on their goods and services, so consumers will need to pay more, creating an inflationary environment where the purchasing power of the Dollar (or other currency unit) goes down.

For example, let's pretend that the previous minimum wage was \$10 per hour, and that I could keep myself reasonably nourished by two \$5 meals per day from the local fast-food places. Then, let's say that they increase the minimum wage from \$10/hour to \$12/hour. Any growers and processors and conveyors and restaurants who employ workers only at minimum wage would all need to raise their payroll outlays by 20%, as well as most/all of their other expense categories (because their various suppliers and other vendors will also need to raise their payrolls), so they need to raise their menu prices by 20% in order to stay in the same financial shape. Therefore, those meals which previously cost me \$5 each will now cost me \$6. I now get \$12 per hour instead of \$10, but that \$12 will still buy the exact same two meals per day which \$10 bought before the increase. The increase therefore didn't really accomplish anything for me as a worker and consumer, but it did lower the purchasing power of the Dollar for no particular reason at all.

Therefore, if we remove the artificial restriction on wages, then they will be able to find their true relative values, and we can keep them at those levels by maintaining a stable currency value as recommended in Answer 368.

What we have left, then, is an environment where both employers and workers compete for each other's attentions in a fair global market. As discussed in Answer 438, it will often be advantageous to hire workers from among your own national kin, because they may have more allegiance to your company and your community, and may also have more knowledge of local language and customs and other factors which may be beneficial to your business. However, you may someday encounter a non-American candidate whom you find to be 'good enough' in all the other

categories, and who in addition is willing to work for a lower wage. In order to remain competitive (a free-market economy again being one of our core American values from Answer 38), the rest of us therefore should be prepared either to demonstrate why we actually deserve the higher hourly rate, or else to lower our salary expectations by some degree. In this way, we will have a clearer idea of the true range for what a worker in a given type of job should be expecting to receive in hourly compensation, which will help us make sure that all employers and employees are getting what they deserve, no more and no less.

Question 441

Is the conclusion, then, that the minimum wage should be lowered?

According to A440, it should be eliminated not lowered. [We changed this later.]

Question 442

In this case, won't many wage ranges go down?

Also addressed in Answer 440. In the absence of a fixed minimum, wages will lower until they find their true relative values, and then they can remain stable where they belong. Also as discussed in Answer 440, it's not so much the number of dollars which you earn, it's more about how much 'stuff' those dollars can buy, and prices will also be able to come down once wholesalers and retailers observe that wages are coming down, so your overall purchasing power will remain the same.

Question 442.9

What is the maximum number (if any) of hours of labor which we should be expecting from workers per day?

Original first paragraph of Answer 443, later packaged as separate Q: According to research in Session 233, the 8-hour work day (and hence the 40-hour work week) was promulgated by the Knights of Labor in the mid-1880's, in order to reduce the then-standard expectation that laborers should work 10 or more hours per day.*
[Source: *The American Pageant*, p.572] It may be time to lower that expectation further.

Question 443

How do we solve the problem of unemployment in America?

Some people work part-time, and some work more than 40 hours per week. Many (if not most) work approximately 40 hours per week, either because that's as much work as they can expect to get without incurring overtime costs, or else because many employers don't want to limit their labor pool by offering only 30-35 hours per week (although a lot of them do), or both. The preponderance of workers who each have scored 40 person-hours of the aggregate weekly workload means that millions of other people just in this Nation (let alone the rest of the World) don't have any work to do at all, so they become homeless and often suffer, and require subsidies from wealthier individuals in order to have just the most basic comforts of life.

Is it not better for everyone who wants to work to have some work to do, so that he can earn a wage which will keep him off the streets and off of public assistance??

If we agree on that, then we must do one of two things: Either increase the amount of work which is to be done, or else redistribute our existing workload.

As discussed in Answer 392, we confirmed in Session 233 that we don't want to create 'busy work' simply for the purpose of keeping people occupied. It is a waste of public resources if we are not realizing any constructive value from public workers, and few private employers (although we certainly have seen it happen!!) are willing to pay a wage to someone who is not really doing anything.

Further, the whole idea of improving all our technologies is so that we can accomplish more with less effort. It therefore follows that we should be expecting (if not demanding) a gradual lowering of our workweek standard over time.

We therefore suggest that the Fed should be calculating on an ongoing basis (could simply rely on decennial Census data, or else collect ongoing data from all employers) the total number of hours of work which is being performed per week, and dividing that by the total number of individuals who want to work. You will arrive at an ideal average, at which all the necessary work is getting done, everyone is getting a fair share of the work, and nobody is being forced to work for excessive hours without appropriate additional compensation.

Suppose for example that we determine that the total person-hours needed per week, divided by the currently-available labor pool, translates to an average of 36 hours per person per week. We then make it a Federal requirement that overtime must be paid in excess of 36 hours instead of the current 40 hours per week. Then, employers will be motivated to hire more workers in order to get the same amount of work done without paying overtime. An employer who currently has 9 employees each working 40 hours per week can now have 10 employees each working 36 hours per week, and still get the same amount of work done without incurring overtime. Meanwhile, we have increased our employment rate from 90% to 100%.

Of course, this means that workers currently getting 40 hours per week will need to settle for 36 hours or some similar level, but that disadvantage is offset by the fact that overtime will kick in sooner, and that you get more leisure hours per week.

Also, reducing the standard workweek will mean that we will have more flexibility as to when people start and end work for the day, which will spread out our traffic load among more hours, helping to reduce traffic congestion and increasing our leisure time even further.

Question 444

If people are doing less work per day/week, then won't they be earning less money, and have less purchasing power?

Addressed in Answer 443. It will be easier to earn overtime when the cap is lowered, so some employees will actually come out ahead. On an overall basis, though, we found in Session 233 that we all win if more people are employed, and fewer people are receiving unemployment benefits and other public assistance, and our government is not spending so much, and we are able to pay less in taxes, and we actually end up with more purchasing power than we had before.

Question 445

Many people's lives revolve principally around their work, and they derive enormous satisfaction and personal fulfillment out of doing a job that takes eight or more hours per day: If the average workday is reduced, then won't there be a negative impact on such people?

Noted in Session 233: Anyone who loves working that much should have little difficulty finding opportunities to volunteer within your community for little or no additional compensation. Do that if you are so eager for meaning.

Question 446

To what extent shall we allow or disallow child labor?

We are happy with our existing laws restricting child labor, because we don't want anyone taking advantage of a child's limited education to make her think that she must perform manual labor at all, especially under inferior working conditions.

We also want to be competitive on an ongoing basis in our ever-developing global society, so we noted in Session 233 that we should be making sure that our kids are getting the best education which we can give them, while the adults do the work.

Any children who are working as actors or models should have adult representation by licensed professionals in order to prevent any kind of abuse, because the 2018 experience with the Turpin family from Perris showed us that parents cannot always be trusted to act in their children's best interests.

Question 447

Shall the Government require that employers must provide a certain level of non-salary benefits to their employees?

Noted in Session 233: It should not be required, but probably will happen simply as a result of market expectation, which is how it should be decided.

Question 448

It is appropriate to deny salary or continued employment to an employee who must go on maternity leave?

The employer would argue that the employee is not performing for the period of leave, and that wages therefore should not be payable. However, in addition to sympathy toward the mother and her new child, we have a societal interest in maintaining a certain amount of healthy reproduction, and that objective is damaged when a woman suffers a loss of income during maternity, or else is forced to avoid maternity in order to preserve her salary.

We therefore felt as of Session 233 that we generally should provide full income for the period of maternity. However, with our national and global populations continuing to rise, we also have a societal interest in limiting our reproduction, so we probably should limit employer support to the first two healthy births per woman, after which she is on her own for any supplemental pregnancies.

Question 449

Is it fair to prefer male employees over female employees because female employees may be susceptible to pregnancy, resulting in maternity leave?

Noted in Session 233: Some employers might argue that they should be allowed to discriminate in favor of workers who definitely will never get pregnant. However, if we were to allow that, then we would run the risk of far too many employers taking advantage of that allowance, and hiring only male workers. This deprives the female population of their opportunity to work, thus depriving us of all their contributions, or else they must accept lower wages in order to be competitive in hiring.

Asking a company to shoulder up to three months of maternity leave, up to twice in an employee's lifetime, is not so huge a burden in the greater scheme, especially when you consider the many improvements which come from increasing diversity in the workplace.

Besides, there was a growing trend as of 2018 for men to request/expect/demand a certain amount of 'paternity leave', because they still are providing various types of assistance to their pregnant partners. If the time expectation is equal between the genders, then there is no advantage in preferring men over women during hiring.

Question 450

If a particular company avoids providing benefits to their employees, or if they pay salaries significantly lower than their competitors, is it appropriate for them to be boycotted, or otherwise punished in the marketplace?

Boycotting is one mechanism by which a free economic market validly expresses itself, and is far more tolerable than either violence or intimidation or property damage, so we felt as of Session 233 [notwithstanding previous discouragement] that it should be permitted wherever and whenever it wants to happen.

The converse is also true, though, that employees and consumers should be allowed to ignore any boycotts that they wish.

Question 451

If a worker is dissatisfied with salary, benefits, or any other working conditions, should he be allowed to strike?

Noted in Session 233: Same as with boycotting, striking is a means of expressing your opinion that wages or other working conditions are not sufficiently well-suited for your taste, so feel free if it's that important to you.

Question 452

If a worker decides to strike, shall the employer be required to pay him?

No. We found in Session 233 that this situation is materially different from parental leave, where a worker needs just a few weeks off in order to help with our species sustainability. A striker is willingly refusing to work when work is available to be

done, and when he is available to do it, so he does so at his own risk. Employers generally (if not always) should not be required to pay an employee while he is striking, nor to accept him back as a worker after he has finished striking.

Question 453

If an employee strikes, should the employer have the option to terminate his employment permanently?

Addressed in Answer 452. An employee who willingly refuses to perform available work is abrogating his contract with his employer, so the employer is under no further obligation to him. If anything, the employer may be due some amount of damages for breach of contract, since she has invested training time and is now suffering diminished production as a result of the employee's refusal to work.

Question 454

Should employees be allowed to gather themselves together into unions, and to present collective demands to employers?

Moderator of Session 234 (March 2018) was brought up to believe that labor unions were generally bad, generally disruptive of the economy, an upward influence on consumer prices, and a step closer to Communism. That last part may possibly be true, but even if so then that is not *ipso facto* bad. Meanwhile, the first parts may not be as true as we were originally taught.

Labor unions arose in the late 19th century out of a growing awareness that workers in a given company or industry have great influence over the means of production, and that they therefore should have a voice in any corporate policies or practices which affect them. We could not now find philosophical fault with this development, because a central theme of this whole Project (expressed as a core American value in Answer 38) is that the People should be able to express themselves peacefully, so that they will not be moved to do so through violence.

And, at least to a certain extent, the influence of labor unions over salaries is one of the engines of a free-market economy, inasmuch as workers within a given industry agree to expect a certain minimum wage as a condition of their employment, thus expediting the gravitation of the standard wage for each job toward its 'true' relative value faster than it would have taken if all workers were negotiating one at a time.

Further, there are certain professions (carpenters, electricians, airline pilots, and others) where public safety requires that all workers have received the proper amount of education and training, and labor unions can help to ensure that practice by requiring the applicable professional certifications as a condition of membership.

Now, it can also happen that some particular unions may occasionally 'abuse the privilege' of their positions, and demand wages and/or other working conditions which employers simply cannot afford, and then they get mad when the employers are forced to turn to non-union personnel (including from outside the United States) in order to stay in business at all. With our remaining Questions, we hope to be able to prevent (or at least mitigate) such abuses, so that this does not need to be considered as a reason to prohibit labor unions entirely.

Question 455

Should employers ever be required to hire union personnel, or to give them any preferential treatment?

As mentioned in Answer 454, we agreed in Session 234 that we may require union membership in certain industries as a matter of public safety. The specific industries falling within that category may come and go over time with advancing technologies and other changing factors, so those specific exceptions can be decided by the general public and the political community on an ongoing basis.

Beyond those specific statutory exceptions, though, employers generally should be allowed to decide whom they will hire, because it's their money on the line. Employers may find certain non-union employees to be net-better than the available union personnel, in terms of either work quality or attitude or salary requirement or some other factor or some combination. It would be unfair to the employer, and a major skew in the free market, to require the hiring of union personnel, when the lower salary requirements of satisfactory non-union workers might allow the employer to stay in business, as well as provide a check on union demands.

Question 456

But, certain trades -- such as acting, trucking, or construction -- require a certain amount of expertise which union membership can guarantee: Is this not a sufficient reason to require union membership at least in certain instances?

As mentioned in both Answer 454 and Answer 455, yes we may want per Session 234 to require union membership for employees within certain industries, particularly those which are affected with the public safety. The 'black book' suggests that non-union personnel have the opportunity to acquire the same amount of knowledge and training that their union counterparts have, so the public may wish to consider that option for certain industries which have less public-safety risk than others.

On the other hand, it saves employers a lot of time when they need only to ask for proof of union membership, rather than apply a whole battery of tests and evaluations. The public may therefore wish to require as a matter of hiring efficiency that all personnel within a given industry (particularly within the public sector) are union-enrolled. As suggested in Answer 455, these decisions may need to change over time, according to the prevailing economic conditions of the day.

Question 457

Should an employer be allowed to discriminate against a candidate for employment simply because he belongs to a union?

Union membership by itself should not be a disqualifying factor, if the worker can otherwise do the job satisfactorily, and is willing to work for a competitive wage.

Membership in a union does not directly imply that a particular worker is likely to strike for frivolous causes, and belonging to a union is not *ipso facto* a bad thing, for unions are there simply to protect workers' rights by joining their voices together.

The presumption probably should be that any candidate -- whether belonging to a union or not -- will apply himself diligently to his work, as long as the working conditions remain satisfactory. As long as he does, the employer should have no problems, and there should be no reason for a union to ever get involved. If the employer does create any problems, then she is open to job actions being taken against her, again whether a given employee is in a union or not.

Agreed in Session 234 with above 'black book' reasoning that there is no valid reason to justify the disqualification of a candidate solely because of union membership.

Question 458

Should an individual worker be required to join a union in order to be eligible for gainful employment?

This question seems like the converse of Question 456, to which we answered Yes, the public may have reason or desire to mandate union membership for hiring within particular industries. If that is the case, then per Session 234 yes any individual wanting to be employed within any such industry will need to be a member of the applicable union, with whatever certifications such membership may entail.

The 'black book' of preliminary ideas suggested that this should not be the case, but it ignored the big public-safety industries, and focused on SAG as a counterexample. For that, as discussed in Answer 456, we need to agree as a matter of free-market philosophy that any industry which has not been constrained by public statute should be allowed to hire non-union workers if for any reason they appear to be net-better (including by being willing to work for less) than the available union candidates.

Question 458.2

Shall we impose any maximum chronological age for working?

We thought No in Session 234, for a few reasons:

- 1) Any arbitrary constraint on any element of the economy tends to skew the economy, such that wages and prices do not find their true relative values, such that some people end up with more than they deserve, while others end up with less.
- 2) We would rather have people working than drawing retirement benefits, so that we do not need to tax the wealthy (or ourselves) quite so much.
- 3) Our lifespans are increasing rapidly, along with the numbers of years during which we can be productive in employment environments, so any requirement which we might set now would need to be re-analyzed in the future anyway.

We may establish a minimum chronological age or length of service before being eligible for public retirement benefits (with possible exceptions for Veterans and other special classes), but otherwise you retire whenever you practically can and feel like it. We are asking that you please register yourself as 'retired' with the applicable governmental agency, even if you are not filing for public aid, so that we know how many individuals out there are available for work, and so that we can do a better job of allocating our aggregate workload. As long as you do that, then retire earlier, retire later, retire whenever you can and feel like it, and enjoy, you've earned it.

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We read in March 2018 that the managers of the 'Swedish competition' did not accept our global-governance proposal for advance to the final round of judging, so at least it was good to know that it had not been dismissed on a technicality.

SECTION II-F: TRADE

Before we got into the specific Questions planned in the original Outline, we felt in Session 235 (March 2018) that we needed to ask as a general Question:

Question 458.6

What the heck is all the fuss about Trade??

We talked about this in Answer 363: Trade happens when each of two or more economic entities possesses certain commodities which are desired by the others, and they negotiate to exchange certain quantities of those commodities, in such a way that each entity feels net-better as a result of the transaction.

In the A363 example, both parties to the trade feel better having both coffee and milk than either would if each had only coffee or milk by itself.

If the parties cannot agree upon mutually-acceptable terms, then the trade doesn't happen, each entity keeps what she has, and nobody loses anything, no big deal. If they do agree on terms, then the trade happens and everyone feels net-better. We therefore can see that some people might have a hard time understanding why our various political personalities complain about an alleged problem with International Trade, or why there can be such a thing as a 'trade deficit'. We hoped as of Session 235 to clarify these issues in the course of the upcoming Questions.

Question 459

Shall we impose tariffs or other trade restrictions on goods produced in foreign countries?

Tariffs were recommended by the U.S. Executive Branch as recently as 2018, and no as of Session 235 we feel that such things should not ever happen.

We are only hurting ourselves with tariffs. Remember that both parties to a trade transaction feel net-better as a result of the exchange, so they will feel not-as-good if the trade doesn't happen, and we discourage trade by making it more expensive for distributors to bring foreign products into this country.

Even if the trade does go through, the distributor must charge higher rates to release their products to retailers, who need to raise the prices which they charge to their consumers. When this happens, either the consumers must decide against making those purchases, or else the purchasing power of our currency goes down.

Any nation which has been recognized as sovereign by the global community has the right to remain economically isolationist if it really wishes, and to limit its citizens/residents to whatever resources can be produced domestically, but we claim that it's a dumb idea: If we can have access to goods which are produced elsewhere, then it's good that they're doing all the work and we're reaping all the benefit. Conversely, with freer trade we have a much larger market for those goods

which we do still wish to produce domestically, so we have that much more capital with which to remain in business and keep our society operational.

If anyone is afraid that freer trade will encourage foreign imports and mitigate our Gross Domestic Product, then we suggest that we should be prepared to be more competitive in the new global marketplace: America has been advocating a free-market economy around the World for many decades now, and has even engaged in military action to promote the concept. So, now that it's the prevailing system among many nations, we should be fully prepared to allow foreign nations and companies and individuals to participate, and to attempt within the rules to beat us at our own game. If we wish to 'win', then it likewise must be within the same rules.

This means that we should either lower our prices (and therefore our salary demands) to be more commensurate with those of our competitors, or else establish to the satisfaction of the marketplace why our goods have higher quality and therefore deserve to cost more, or some combination.

Tariffs constitute simply 'giving up' on this challenge, and going with the easier/lazier approach at the expense of your people. So no, definitely not recommended.

Question 460

But, what if some other nation is charging tariffs for our goods? Shouldn't we be able to respond in kind?

Again, you can if you really want, but as of Session 235 we recommend against it. If a given nation or corporation wants to make the trade terms more expensive for us, then we can either agree to the increases or else stop the trade. If they want to take their coffee without milk, then that's on them. There are plenty of other nations and corporations who will be willing to pay a fair market value for our commodities, so we don't need or want to punish our domestic consumers by doing any business with an entity who wishes to impose tariffs as a condition of trading with us.

Question 461

Having concluded that tariffs are bad, can we agree on the best way to manage trade on a day-to-day basis? Does it need to be coordinated entirely through the Fed, or can States and Localities administer, or can private 'distribution centers' get involved without government oversight?

There are two basic approaches possible here: Either we can allow corporations to trade among themselves in a one-world economy, or else we can task our national governments with negotiating trade terms for everything.

If we go with complete free trade among corporations, then we probably will still need some amount of ongoing inspections of all imports by our Federal government, in order to make sure that the products are safe for our consumers, and that they comply with all advertised standards. As long as that happens, we are not seeing an immediate problem, because the free market should be able to determine that all sides get what they deserve, no more and no less.

If we go with national control over the trade process, then we see both upsides and downsides. One upside is that the national government may be able to summarize

on an ongoing and aggregate basis how much of each commodity we collectively want. It then may be able to negotiate terms for larger quantities than corporations might be able to deal with alone. It can also make sure that certain commodities are not left out of the total trade profile.

A downside is that trade may become over-politicized, as we may possibly have observed for the last couple of centuries, with tariffs and embargos and excessive regulations, intended to discourage global interaction in favor of economic isolationism, at the people's expense.

As a matter of general philosophy, we feel as of Session 235 that we should allow the free market to do as much as it safely can, but maintain continued public monitoring of all transactions, not only for safety and compliance, but also so that we are not excluded from trading or acquiring any key commodity, and generally to make sure that there are no abuses in the process. If it eventually appears that trade cannot happen without additional governmental intervention, then we can gradually introduce tougher measures, but in general we want everything to be as easy and inexpensive as we can practically make it.

In sum, do introduce and maintain whatever level of governmental intervention may be required for trade at each successive stage of our economic future, but probably no more than that.

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Turned out later in March 2018 that we had not made even the semifinal cut in the 'Swedish project'. Couldn't imagine what they could possibly want which was better than what we proposed, but we were due to find out within next couple of months.

Question 458.8

Do we actually have any problems with Trade?

We researched various news sources online in Session 236 (March 2018), but most references which we found spoke more about certain statements made by the then-President of the U.S. than about any actual issues with Trade. However, we were able to distill that America was then facing a 'trade deficit', and that this fact was widely perceived as constituting a problem for us. But, was it actually a problem??

The expression 'trade deficit' was defined by several online sources as occurring when a nation's imports exceed its exports. Nominally, this seems to us like a good thing: We are getting more stuff, and needing to give away less. However, they also spoke in terms of currency flow, because there was a net outflow of domestic currency to foreign markets. Again, though, so what??

We found a quote originating from the 1549 work *Discourse of the Common Weal of this Realm of England*, attributed to one Sir Thomas Smith, claiming that "We must always take heed that we buy no more from strangers than we sell them, for so should we impoverish ourselves and enrich them." We still had a hard time seeing it, though, because again we end up with more stuff. Who cares how our Dollars are distributed?? We get the Stuff, so we are able to spread it out among more of our people at lower cost, and thereby improve our average standard of living.

We looked at the issue from an accounting perspective: Most individuals and corporations and nations possess a certain amount of cash (an Asset) and a certain amount of physical stuff (another Asset). Whenever you take some of your cash and buy more physical stuff, the value of your cash decreases, but the value of your physical stuff goes up by the same degree. You therefore are not gaining or losing any total asset value as a result of your purchase. Converse when you sell, value of your physical stuff goes down some, but your cash increases by the same amount, so no net gain or loss. You lose Asset value only when you consume things, but you are deriving a certain amount of 'quality of life' or other benefit from the consumption, which is why it is normal for any individual or corporation or nation to incur a certain amount of Expense as part of the normal financial cycle.

Our research went on to show that both 19th-century French economist Frederic Bastiat and 20th-century economist Milton Friedman argued that a so-called 'trade deficit' actually is an indicator of a successful economy, rather than a failing one.

We then consulted the Hailstones book "Principles of Economics" from 1985, first referenced in Answer 370, and we were pleasantly surprised to find that it actually concurred with our position: They asserted that the "so-called **favorable balance of trade** [bolding theirs], in which exports exceed imports, ... is a misnomer". They went on to report that the concept is a holdover from the 18th and 19th centuries, when it was considered more important for a nation to hoard gold and silver than any other physical commodities.

It therefore appeared from a preponderance of our research that all the fuss about Trade is actually misplaced. Our political personalities were told during the course of their educations that an excess of imports over exports constituted a 'trade deficit', and that all deficits are bad by definition, so they now tend to get angry with nations who are actually supplying us with the goods which our people want. Until we are once convinced of the contrary, our position must be that they are full of shit.

SECTION II-G: INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES

Question 462

In general, do we concur that maximization of individual rights and freedoms generally carries with it maximization of individual responsibilities?

No, actually, that did not follow as logically in Session 236 as we thought when we had first composed the 'black book' of Questions and preliminary notes back in the mid-1990's. If we claim that rights and freedoms of the Individual are to be maximized, then that implies that any rights and freedoms pertaining to the State must be deemed to be subordinate to the rights and freedoms of the Individual. It may therefore be necessary for the State to assume certain responsibilities in order to maximize the rights and freedoms of Individuals.

This may apply particularly to the subject of Health Care, in that there are those who argue that the State has (or should have) the responsibility to provide medical care for all its citizens, regardless of their ability to afford any deductibles or copayments, and maybe even without any deductibles or copayments at all.

Answer 10 goes into responsibilities and rights, but we found then that only certain rights carry certain responsibilities, but not all rights and not all responsibilities.

Question 463

Does the responsibility to provide for an individual's own health and safety, and for the health and safety of those to whom he may accidentally cause injury or other damage, ultimately rest with the individual?

Afraid that we must find against this proposition as well. It would be nice to say Yes, and then require each family to provide for its own Health coverage, without any support from the State. However, we felt in Session 236 that we must overcome temptation, and conclude the opposite: A civilized and enlightened and moral society takes care of its citizens, including especially when they develop medical conditions which were not their fault, so the levels of responsibility which Individuals and States incur -- whether for Health Care or for any other subject -- appear to be a matter for different societies to conclude for themselves.

Question 464

Shall our economic system continue to include mechanisms whereby individuals can shift their share of responsibility to a pool?

However, yes we can include Insurance as a feature of our economic system, and we concurred in Session 236 that Individuals should contribute at least something to the premium pool, insofar as they can genuinely afford it, in order to discourage people from taking reckless risks with their lives and healths at the public expense.

Question 460.5

What about the argument that enacting/maintaining tariffs would help protect American jobs, particularly in the automobile industry?

We asked around before Session 237 (March 2018), and heard the argument asserted that enacting and maintaining tariffs would help protect American jobs, particularly in the automobile industry. But, is this actually the case?

The argument alleges that excluding tariffs on foreign imports makes them cheaper for Americans to buy, so they will tend to buy them in greater quantities than they would if tariffs were in place. This supposedly means that Americans would tend to buy American products less, so with decreased sales the American factories (particularly in the automobile industry) would need to reduce production and working hours, such that many workers would need to accept shorter working schedules, or else lose their jobs entirely.

On the surface, this argument raises the suspicion that its chief proponents may be American workers (particularly members of certain labor unions) who naturally want to maintain the high wage levels which they have managed to achieve as a result of past contract negotiations and other job actions. They naturally want to maximize their domestic market by effectively eliminating all foreign competition, so they 'persuade' the political community to enact tariffs which will make the foreign products too net-expensive for Americans to want to buy. In effect, they seek to create a completely 'protectionist' market, in which we produce and trade and

consume only within our own national borders, and engage in little or no commerce with foreign nations.

That's a theoretical way to go if you folks really want, but we're recommending against it. Two main reasons why:

First, on a philosophical level, we hold that we are all richer when we all have access to more different kinds of products made in more different countries. Sometimes, it's a matter of expanding our range of available experiences, and being able to enjoy product variations which are better suited to our individual tastes, as with cars and foods and adult beverages. Other times, it's a matter of accessing products which are not made within your home nation at all, although this is more applicable in many other nations than it is here in resource-rich America. Many times, it's a matter of the foreign products being cheaper to buy in America than the American-made versions, even when including the costs of importation. To this last point, we repeat our recommendation that American workers and American companies should be more prepared to compete in this worldwide capitalist economy which we ourselves worked so hard to create, and in the meantime that they should allow American consumers to have access to a wider variety of products at attractive price levels.

Second, on a more practical level, we recommend against tariffs because they probably would do little or nothing to encourage foreign governments to alleviate or eliminate any tariffs which they may have against American products. If anything, they would only raise their tariffs in retaliation, thus increasing barriers to international trade, so again we all suffer by having fewer products to choose from, and by having to pay higher prices for those fewer products because there are fewer vendors competing to sell them. Again, if certain other nations are stupid enough to enact tariffs against American products, then that's on them, they are doing a disservice to their own people, but likewise we would be doing a disservice to our own people by effectively denying them access to non-American products.

As a further result, enacting tariffs against non-American products (and thus encouraging added tariffs by foreign governments against American goods) means that you are drastically limiting the market for your American-made products. If we permanently exclude all tariffs from our national trade profile, then at least some foreign governments will be willing to ease up on their restrictions against American imports, so we are likely to have more customers around the World for our goods, so we should be able to increase production and increase jobs and increase hours.

In addition, if we were to maintain a strictly protectionist economy, then any internal market downturn or fiscal crisis or other economic problem would have a much greater proportional effect on our financial health, on both a national and an individual scale, because we would not have the funds continuing to flow in from other nations as we otherwise would. Keeping the purchases coming from most/all other nations at all times helps to keep our economy operational and healthy.

Therefore, seems to our group that those of you who work in the auto industry, and who are naturally eager to keep your jobs and your wage levels, should be more supportive of lower tariffs against non-American products, so that foreign customers will be more likely to buy our goods. Just be prepared to be competitive with foreign producers as to quality or diversity or low production cost or some combination.

Question 460.7

To what extent is this view on trade shared among professional economic analysts?

To help increase confidence in our having performed adequate evaluation to these matters, we located in Session 237 some opinion pieces from a variety of sources which explored the issue from multiple angles, at a time when tariff increases were being actively recommended/threatened/enacted by the U.S. Executive Branch:

(1) "Why steel and aluminum tariffs matter to the U.S. economy", Chris Isidore, *CNN Money*, money.cnn.com, 19-Feb-2018 ==> According to this piece, imposing tariffs and thereby reducing steel and aluminum imports would motivate increased domestic production to fill the gap, so the domestic steel and aluminum industries applauded the concept. However, even spokesman Matt Meenan of the Aluminum Association conceded that the U.S. aluminum industry could not satisfy all domestic demand. In addition, metals analyst Philip Gibbs of KeyBanc Capital Markets noted that a lot of mills would need to retool in order to create the specific steel products (such as piping and tubing) which are currently being imported, which would require a lot of additional capital. We therefore would still need to import some steel and aluminum, but with increased tariffs those purchases would cost more for American producers, who then would need to raise prices for their products. "If you impose tariffs, you might think you're doing a good job saving jobs," said KeyBanc's Gibbs. "But at the end of the day, people will farm out components and products offshore."

(2) "Steel, aluminum tariffs could boost jobs but hurt auto industry", Todd Spangler, *Detroit Free Press*, usatoday.com, 1-Mar-2018 ==> According to this piece, the proposed tariffs "could increase American jobs in those sectors but also raise prices [and] could hurt a number of industries including automakers and suppliers, boat and plane manufacturers and even beer companies." Jason Ware, chief investment officer and chief economist for Albion Financial Group, explained why the stock markets reacted negatively to the threat: "There's a quiet concern among investors about the potential of a trade war [which would be] scary because it could lead to higher costs and thus be inflationary in a general sense." In addition, John Bozzella, CEO of the Association of Global Automakers had urged against tariffs and quotas, saying that they could force auto prices and those of other consumer goods higher, and citing an analysis of steel tariffs put in place in 2002 which he said cost some 200,000 jobs nationwide, including 30,000 in Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania.

(3) "Trump plans to impose stiff steel, aluminum tariffs", Eric Kulisch *et al.*, *Automotive News*, autonews.com, 1-Mar-2018 ==> According to this piece, the auto industry had been urging against the adoption of recent Commerce Department recommendations to limit steel and aluminum imports, arguing that measures intended to shore up U.S. material producers would end up undermining the competitiveness of the domestic auto industry. "We are concerned with the unintended consequences the proposals would have, particularly that it will lead to higher prices for steel and aluminum here in the United States compared to the price paid by our global competitors," stated the American Automotive Policy Council, which represented Fiat Chrysler, Ford Motor Co., and General Motors. In addition, Nicole Bivens Collinson, who then headed the international trade and government relations practice at Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg, stated in a company webinar that she expected retaliation by other countries against U.S. exports. "They may hurt not only U.S. manufacturers and farmers exporting to those countries [but also]

downstream [companies] who are using steel and aluminum [such as construction firms]. ... I think it may be worse than shooting ourselves in the foot," Bivens Collinson said. "It could be shooting ourselves in the face."

(4) "Trump's Steel Tariff View Sends S&P 500, Dow Jones Tumbling On Trade War Risk", Jed Graham, *Investor's Business Daily*, investors.com, 1-Mar-2018 ==> According to this piece, steel and aluminum stocks were boosted by the proposed new tariffs, but the Dow Jones industrial average fell 1.7%, with the S&P 500 index and Nasdaq composite off 1.3%. "There's little reason to think that the action would comply with World Trade Organization rules," the report suggested. "There's also a risk that a pullback from globalization could add to upward pressure on inflation."

(5) "As NAFTA weighs, Trump's tariffs drive new U.S. auto concerns", Lesley Wroughton, *Business News*, reuters.com, 3-Mar-2018 ==> According to this piece, American makers of auto parts had expressed concern that the proposed metal tariffs would force them out of business. Ann Wilson, a senior executive at the U.S. Motor and Equipment Manufacturers Association (MEMA), stated that some of their member companies "would be deeply affected by Trump's tariffs because they rely on specialty steel and aluminum products imported from Europe, Asia and other regions." In addition, the article warned "that instead of increasing employment, price increases for consumers of steel and aluminum such as the auto and oil industries will destroy more U.S. jobs than they create."

We found a 6th piece online in Session 238 (April 2018), and added it to the list:

(6) "It's Not Just China's Retaliatory Tariffs That Should Worry U.S. Businesses", Charlie Campbell, *Time*, time.com, 2-Apr-2018 ==> According to this piece, "common consensus among economists is that all parties lose" any trade war, citing an editorial in the *Global Times* that an "unofficial" trade war had resulted from China imposing tariffs of up to 25% on 128 American goods — including pork, wine, and fruit — worth an estimated \$3 billion, following the recent U.S. announcement on steel and aluminum tariffs. In addition, continued the article, "China not only represents a large chunk of current foreign earnings but also represents a key sector for future growth. Apple, the world's most valuable firm, earned \$17.9 billion in Greater China in the last quarter of 2017 — about 20% of global revenue. Trump has accused China of unfair trade practices that led 60,000 American factories to close at a loss of 6 million jobs. But the U.S. has never felt the devastation wrought by 1.3 billion angry Chinese consumers."

General consensus (outside of metals suppliers and the Exec Branch) appeared to concur with our intuitive assessment, that trade wars tend to do more harm than good for all players, and that we generally should refrain from imposing/increasing tariffs against other nations, lest they do so with us, making everyone net-poorer.

Question 465

Shall insurance be managed only in the private sector, only in the public sector, or both?

As of Session 239 (April 2018), government had enough to do without actively writing and managing individual insurance policies for either Life or Health or Auto or any other product line. They also had enough assets and liabilities on their balance sheet without also needing to maintain one or more reserves for insurance claims.

Also, as noted in Answer 394, the 'black book' of preliminary ideas reminds us that Government generally should not perform any function which can be handled adequately by the private sector, which has shown itself in recent centuries to be able to manage our insurance needs without Government competition.

In addition, we know from actual experience with the Social Security Trust Fund (see Answer 405) that the Fed generally cannot be trusted to keep their sticky fingers out of any large treasuries which are designated for certain limited purposes.

So no, no level of Government should be involved in active management of any insurance program. They should act only as regulators and monitors of what happens within the private insurance industry.

Question 466

In general (possible exceptions to be noted hereafter), shall an individual have the option to participate in pooled insurance, or shall she be required to participate?

Our old intuitive answer was no, that individuals in a supposedly-free society should be allowed to self-insure at will, and to suffer the consequences if they experience losses which outstrip their individual reserves and any individual credit. However, by Session 239 we had rethought our position.

On an individual level, those of us who lead risk-averse lifestyles may be tempted to self-insure, especially when we are young adults trying to save our limited incomes for rent and groceries and student loans. However, we still can suffer losses which are not foreseen and which are not our fault, like the Moderator's appendicitis from 2016. When something like that happens, it is unlikely that any of us (outside of the super-rich) are going to be able to cover all those costs from personal savings alone.

You might then argue that you are the owner of your own life (see Answer 11), and that you therefore should be allowed to die from appendicitis rather than participate in an insurance program which could save your life. Well, if you're really that obstinate about it, and if you are willing to sacrifice your life in order to prove your point, and if there are enough other people living nearby you who share your philosophy, then we suppose that the bunch of you should get together within the same State or County, and maintain an environment in which Health Care (even in emergencies) and other such benefits are provided only to those who can pay for them out of savings or who voluntarily agree to participate in an insurance pool comprising only your own residents, and let's just see how that works out for you.

If you choose to go that way, then remember from Answer 399 that your State or County may need to deal with 'antiselection', where premium rates need to be increased in order to make up for the dollars which are not coming from the non-participants. This additional burden may possibly become too burdensome for you and your fellow self-insurers, so choose wisely, as recommended in Answer 401.

On a national level, we recall from several Answers appearing in Subsection II-B-3 that the overall society has a legitimate interest in making sure that everyone in the society is contributing as much of their fair share of our insurance requirements as they practically can. Greater diversity among insureds and insurers will give us a much better feel for which different combinations of price and services and

advertising are actually the most popular and therefore the most net-desirable. If people are allowed to self-insure, then the insurance industry will probably not have enough funds collectively to provide even the most essential of medical services to everyone who needs it, and maybe not even to their own insureds. Actuarial projections are more accurate when we can include data on all individuals within the Nation, including the unemployed and those who consider themselves too healthy to bother with insurance.

Finally, if certain States and Counties elect not to require their residents to insure for various economic needs, then the Nation faces a very awkward choice, either to extend supplemental economic aid to those jurisdictions in order to cover their neediest residents, or else to sit back and watch them die. Neither choice is morally palatable, and neither is likely to be politically popular. It could be argued that it is unfair to place your parent jurisdiction in such a predicament, and that you therefore should 'get with the program' and swim in the insurance pools with the rest of us.

Okay to charge lower premium rates to younger insureds for Health, and to older insureds for Auto, insofar as the actuaries continue to show that those classes tend to experience much lower losses. However, let's make sure that everybody continues to participate, so that we can educate our young people to expect Insurance as a key component of their adult lives, track individual records more easily, and maximize the accuracy and reliability of our actuarial data.

We can exempt Life insurance from the above, because generally it is only those with an 'insurable interest' who should be expecting or receiving any benefit in case of a particular individual's death. If no one with an 'insurable interest' steps forward and requests coverage within the prospective insured's lifetime, then everyone presumably can get along well enough without such benefits, and maybe no one really has an 'insurable interest' in that individual's life after all, in which case there is no reason to mandate coverage for everyone.

Question 467

Shall an individual be permitted to self-insure for Auto?

This is basically addressed in Answer 466. As an additional specific note, the 'black book' of preliminary ideas reminded us in Session 239 that having faith in your driving ability may not be sufficient to cover your own losses, and certainly not those of a party whom you yet manage to injure.

Everyone should expect to be covered in case she suffers a traffic loss which is not her fault. Because the at-fault party often will not have enough resources readily available to cover such losses, we had better make sure that everybody is covered by insurance.

Question 468

In an instance of damage caused by an uninsured motorist, should the applicable government level step in and cover the damages to the injured party?

Not applicable as of Session 239. The private sector should maintain reserves sufficient to cover their claims. Government never should need to get involved.

Question 469

What levels of government should establish and administer insurance laws?

Administration can be devolved to the County level if a particular State wishes. However, the establishment of any regulatory policies over the insurance industry should continue to happen at the State level.

We would not mind allowing the Fed to establish all insurance laws for the whole Nation, if we could all agree on one way of doing things. As it was in Session 239, we saw enough variations in local requirements (including especially in the State of New York, whose standards had been so unusual that some insurance conglomerates needed to create separate subsidiary companies just to get licensed to do business within that State) that we had best not try to get everybody harmonized together. Diversity is one of our key Answers To Everything.

To allow Counties to legislate insurance practices as well as administer them would likely be far too chaotic to be practical. Insurance companies have a challenging enough time trying to keep track of 50 sets of State requirements (again, sometimes needing to create separate subsidiary companies in order to maintain compliance), and we could not consider making them keep track of over 3000 sets of insurance regulations. No way. State level it is.

Question 470

With these findings in mind, what are the problems with the current Health Care system, and how shall we solve them?

Covered extensively in Answer 394.

Question 471

Shall an individual be permitted to self-insure for Health?

No, as covered in Answer 466.

Question 472

What about the impact on one's family, or on the Government, if a self-insured individual becomes sick or injured?

Our SIG's 'black book' of preliminary ideas took a sterner approach when it was drafted in the mid-1990's, and argued that heads of families should actively consider obtaining insurance protection for their dependents, but also that they should be allowed to self-insure if they judge that the prevailing premium rates are too high for their current resources and risk levels.

As we thought about it more in Session 239, though, we tended to feel that parents have an affirmative obligation to act in the best interests of their children. If we agree on that idea, then it could be argued that parents are morally responsible for making sure that their kids will be taken care of in the event of any unforeseen loss.

Question 473

What happens, though, when a self-insured provider becomes sick or disabled? Shall her family members, who may not have been in a position to participate in the decision-making process, be forced to go to orientation centers or other such facilities, and shall the provider be prosecuted for negligent care?

Covered in Answer 398 as of Session 239. Pay premiums to the extent that you practically can, when you practically can. If those premium dollars are insufficient to cover everybody's insurable losses, then we must pull some from the super-rich, who probably ended up with too many dollars in their accounts in the first place.

Alternative is to let people die, if you folks within certain States or Counties have the stomach for it. However, we cannot morally bring ourselves to recommend any kind of economic system in which some individuals have far more millions and billions than they could ever possibly use, while thrifty and hard-working individuals are allowed to suffer and die because the available dollars are concentrated elsewhere.

Question 474

Does an individual have a responsibility to her society to try to produce as much as possible for the benefit of all, and therefore to try to stay alive, healthy, and productive for as long as possible?

As of Session 240 (April 2018), we had not defined Life as a natural right, but we had identified 'Non-Injurious Self-Determination', meaning that an individual has control over her own life insofar as she does not inflict or threaten any injury upon others, where 'injury' is defined as 'compromising a person's ability to do what they would otherwise be physically and legally able to do'.

It could be argued that this definition implies a responsibility to keep alive and keep working, because otherwise other people would be compromised by your reduction in productivity. However, we find that this argument fails on a few key grounds: First, people don't live forever, so any definition or policy or philosophy which requires them to do so is ridiculous on its face. Second, we claim that it is normal and natural and desirable to allow people to retire who have put in their fair share of work during their lifetimes. Societies which require all their members to work until they drop dead are not likely to have many members.

Third, even if an individual's retirement or suicide causes a net economic impact on her society (which is not a given, because some people consume more than they produce), it is only an economic impact, and not physical or legal, and therefore would not constitute 'injury' under our then-current definition, and therefore would not violate Non-Injurious Self-Determination, so we claim that people have a natural right to commit suicide or retire from work under certain conditions.

Question 475

Should the society serve the individual, or the other way around?

This historical dilemma has both social and economic import, but we are emphasizing the economic impact in the present discussion.

We must make sure when considering Questions like this that we do not fall into the trap of assuming that our current American way of doing things is the one and only best solution for everybody. Numerous authors and politicians have asserted over several millennia that some or all individuals belong to The State, or to The State's political leader. (Do you remember Yul Brynner's line in 'The Ten Commandments': "The slaves are mine. Their lives are mine. All that they own is mine.") If our way is so trivially obvious, then why was the contrary proposition upheld for so long?

In order to give this Question a fair and unprejudiced consideration, we must consider the economic impacts of the different approaches, and then hopefully the moral and philosophical arguments will logically follow.

We looked at our 'black book' of preliminary ideas during Session 240 for an icebreaker, but were not sure that we could depend on the concept of 'implied social contract' (where "we tacitly agree to help each other out as individuals, and as contributors to the overall social order, provided that everybody continues to benefit from the relationship") to be of much deductive use for any such Question, because not everybody may accept that such a thing even exists, or that they are somehow subject to it. Non-author panelist (our first in nine months!) gave example of working at a restaurant, where other employees goof off because they know that they can get away with it; they would be unlikely to suddenly start working simply because someone dangled a sign of 'implied social contract' in front of their eyes.

While not suggested in the 'black book', another possibility is that these are civil designations only, such that each society in each period of history gets to decide what kind of relationship Individuals within that society have with the State.

If we went around asserting that society completely serves the individual, then many or all individuals would take that excuse to sit around all the time waiting for society to serve them, so little or no work would ever get done, and society would not be in a position to serve any individuals at all, so that can't be it.

Conversely, anyone who claims that all individuals are completely beholden to The State is also an individual who would also be beholden to The State. Under this approach, everybody would be a slave and nobody would be a master, and everybody within that society would have a generally lousy quality of life, so that can't be an effective approach for any society anywhere at any point in history.

Of course, there has long been the slight variant to the above paragraph, in which some monarch asserts authority of ownership over all his people, as exchange for their being able to live under his protection. While that may have been the Law of the Land in some areas of the world for centuries, with our advanced historical perspective we now look upon that approach as a 'protection racket' and an example of 'bullyism' on a national scale. Anyone trapped in such an environment who ever tried to speak out or escape would be overrun by Pharaoh's chariots, or suffer whatever other consequences were applicable in any given time and place in history.

Therefore concluding that an effective society has individuals and the collective working together in a relationship of interdependency: I will contribute some effort to the society, in exchange for the society providing some benefits to me, if not now then at least when I retire. Thus, individuals have some responsibility to The State, in order to keep the society operational and productive, but The State also has a

responsibility to all its member individuals, to sincerely take care of them, instead of simply squeezing as many working hours and tax dollars out of them as possible.

Question 476

Does every individual have a responsibility to continue participating in such a contract?

In other words, if we generally accept that most individuals have a responsibility to provide some years of useful labor to support The State, can we make an exception for certain individuals, and allow them to goof off while everybody else works?

We said No in Session 240, they do not have that responsibility, for per Answer 474 people can quit the contract under certain conditions, including by retiring if they have worked enough in their lifetimes.

Question 477

Does this principle apply in the specific case of suicide?

We agreed Yes in Session 240.

Question 478

But, what about the loss to society of an individual's ability to produce for the common good? Does that not give society a voice in whether a person may or may not bail from the social contract?

Two key points were raised in Session 240: As before, committing suicide does not constitute physical or legal compromise upon others, so it does not constitute 'injury', so it does not violate the natural right of Non-Injurious Self-Determination. Also, even to the extent that we want to consider the economic impact, those who commit suicide are no longer consuming, so not a severe economic impact either.

Question 479

If a loved one does not want an individual to voluntarily end his life, is she empowered to try to dissuade said individual?

This is a much tougher aspect of the discussion, and it is much more Social than Economic, but for now we will keep the relevant points together in the Outline.

When this Question was treated in Session 240, the Moderator revealed that he had a sibling recently decease from diabetes who had refused any medical efforts to keep her alive. Her husband had tried to persuade her to accept treatment, and we claim that he had every right to make the attempt, because he had invested both economically and emotionally in the relationship, and because her early death would constitute a severe emotional blow for him and their children. When we siblings found out about the extent of her condition, we too all wished that she would accept treatment, because we were not yet ready for her to leave our world. However, in the end, we all needed to face the fact that she was the master of her own life, and should be allowed to decease early if that truly was her wish.

We also thought during this discussion about the guy standing on the ledge of a tall building, threatening to jump, and taking up the attention of numerous police and firefighters and psychiatrists trying to get him down, as we have seen in several movies, including 'The Enforcer' and 'Lethal Weapon'. We have always wondered about scenes like this: If the guy wants to jump, why don't we just let him? Well, one reason might be that jumping off a tall building would likely cause some property damage to the sidewalk below, or maybe to a parked car. Another reason is that such a dramatic death could be emotionally devastating for the nearby pedestrians. For both reasons, maybe you try talking him off the ledge only with a promise to allow him to commit suicide by lethal injection administered by a medical professional in a controlled environment, which option he should have had made available to him in the first place.

Question 480

Does the right to end one's own life extend to the case of a hospitalized individual who orders the attending physician to arrange for the termination of life support?

Noted in Session 240: Yes, it does generally extend, as discussed in Answer 479. Only question is if someone's condition is so far gone that we cannot rely on their expression of preference, in which case we should assume for safety that they want to continue to live, unless they have executed a Do Not Resuscitate order or similar document, in which case we should go along with whatever they indicate.

Question 481

Shall an infirm patient be permitted to take an experimental drug?

Yes, we did not see any reason why not in Session 240.

Question 482 (continued)

Shall customers of restaurants and certain other establishments be expected or required to tip in most/all instances?

Noted in Session 241 (April 2018): At the very least, they should not be required to tip, because if it is a requirement then it is not a tip at all, but rather a mandatory price element which the vendor is designating for a particular purpose.

As to whether it should be expected in most/all instances, on one hand we can see allowing vendors the liberty to ask for tips if they wish, and allowing customers the liberty of paying the tips when asked, or even when not asked. However, as unpopular as the position may be within certain communities, we are recommending against any such expectation in most instances. Multiple reasons why:

First reason is that the practice has become exceedingly lopsided. Tips are currently expected for some very easy and straightforward tasks, such as filling a glass with beer from a tap, or carrying food from the kitchen to a counter or cash register, or driving somebody a short distance through a familiar city. Conversely, we refrain in most cases from giving tips to certain workers who are required to exert much greater effort, often in very uncomfortable working conditions, such as roofers and street pavers and firefighters and mail carriers and post-office clerks and fry cooks.

Second, even if you somehow instilled/restored equity to the tipping culture (such as by having all workers in all professions ask for tips routinely), we philosophically disapprove of the idea of advertising a particular price for a particular product or service, and then asking for more money at the conclusion of the transaction. We had already agreed upon the terms of a contract, in which I pay you a certain amount in exchange for your providing me with some kind of product or service, and now you are seeking to amend the terms of the contract after the contract has already been formed, and after certain specific acts have already been performed under the terms of the contract. How is this not a breach -- or attempted breach -- of our original contract? [Third reason added later, as shown below.]

The very act of asking for a tip places the customer in a very awkward and embarrassing position, either to pay the uncontracted supplement against her will, or else to be considered a schmuck for 'stiffing' the worker in question. Because the customer is providing the capital which the provider is eagerly seeking, we should not be placing her in such an awkward position by even *asking* for a tip, let alone expecting one. Better to set a price, agree upon the price with your customer, and perform the contracted service at the contracted price. Clean. Fair. Truthful.

Whatever amount is expected to go to some particular worker for his individual labor [including for product delivery per Third Pass] should be included in the overall price paid to the vendor, and conveyed by the vendor to the worker. In any case, prompt and courteous service should be expected from all workers in all industries, whether they are getting any uncontracted payments or not.

Couple of exceptions to the above: One, do feel free to provide tips if you really feel that a particular worker has gone way above and beyond the normal expectation, but again be careful about maybe creating an ongoing expectation on the part of that worker, and of other workers within that industry generally (because we have often heard workers swapping stories with their colleagues as to how much or how little they received in tips on different occasions). Two, we spoke in the conversation on Currency about dancers in private clubs who will provide a better dance experience to those patrons who pay extra for the privilege; as indicated at the time, we certainly see no reason to discontinue this practice, and it will still operate even in the absence of traditional cash, through the use of voucher tickets as described.

Question 483

But, the IRS currently assumes that a fixed portion of income in certain jobs is earned in the form of tips, and taxes on that basis: Is this sufficient justification to continue asking for tips?

The practice in effect as of Session 241 stemmed from the fact that the IRS had been taxing for over 100 years on the basis of Income, so a lot of workers had tried to avoid tax liability by extracting certain incomes in cash, without reporting that increment to the IRS, so the IRS had imposed certain additional regulations in order to collect on the unreported income.

However, in our model system, we get rid of not only Cash, but also the Income Tax. Workers therefore have no motivation to conceal their income sources, and employers have no reason to conceal incomes earned by workers on their premises.

Question 484

But, we can currently use withholding of tips as a sign that we were dissatisfied with the service: Is this sufficient justification to keep at least some expected tipping?

If we are dissatisfied with a given worker's service, then there are other means of expressing such disapproval than by paying less than the requested amount of additional money. You can contact the employing vendor with your complaint, or the vendors can volunteer to solicit input from the customers on all their staff. These things already happen now, so we can simply continue them, and not require or expect or ask any customer to pay more than the advertised price.

One specific opportunity for communicating service levels in restaurants, very easily and conveniently and confidentially (ideated in October 2017, ratified in Session 241), is if we include a tear-off tab at the bottom of the restaurant check, showing the server's name: Don't require the tab to be marked with a pen, because not all customers carry pens with them, and because we are no longer going to be loaning pens to customers because we are no longer going to be begging them for tips. Also don't use punch-hole dots, because they create a mess requiring further clean-up. Instead, have small tearlines at the top of the tab, as in this sample:

| | | |
|--------------------------------|------|------|
| | | |
| EXCELLENT | GOOD | POOR |
| Please tear above the | | |
| rating which describes | | |
| the service performed by _____ | | |

Pick an option that you like, make a small partial tear above the label for that option, and drop it in the restaurant's lockbox on your way out. Server does not need to know how you voted. Restaurant gets to add the ratings for each server, and can set working hours and wage rates accordingly. You get to express your opinion very quickly and easily, without ever needing to pay one cent above the advertised price.

Question 485

Any other suggestions as to probate, inheritance tax, or anything else on personal/family economics?

A brief word of caution to the upper-middle class: If we do go forward with a 'wealth tax' on the upper class, as described in Section II-C above, then at some point you may be called upon to remit a certain amount of your excess personal wealth for redistribution among the poor. The threshold for who shall be considered rich enough to need to participate in wealth redistribution will vary over time within any community, depending on how much help the poor require at any given stage of time, on how much excess wealth is concentrated among richer individuals, and on the pendulating political sentiment within your community as to how much the rich should be helping the poor. As your personal wealth increases over time, you would be well-advised to monitor how close you are getting to the then-current redistribution threshold. If you find that you are beginning to get very close to it, then you should actively consider donating significant chunks to worthy individuals and charities of your own choice, before the Government takes some of your wealth away and redirects it to their own purposes.

Or, you may prefer to keep your excess wealth where it is, and to allow the Government to take off the top if you are over the redistribution threshold, so that you can give without worrying about who exactly is to receive or how they do it.

Introduced in Session 241 a note handwritten in the 'black book' on 26-Jan-2008: We can make the probate process a lot easier if we announced a standard practice that each original copy of any will should have an embossed serial number with reference to how many original copies there are in all ("copy 2 of 3", e.g.). Then, keep all previous copies after any will is changed (don't destroy them -- keep the paper trail!), but mark them with a clearly-written indication (maybe in some special highlight marker) that this will has been superseded by another will of the applicable date. That way, we know when we're looking for the most recent will that this one isn't it, and that we therefore need to keep looking for the latter one, which we now know will also be marked for supersession if applicable (because we know that we will now have that habit), and which we can presume is current if no such indication of supersession appears on it when we find it.

Rent control was an issue as of Session 241, because of inflation, but should become less of an issue once we settle on a level value of currency per Answer 368.

As we had noted back in Session 168 while discussing law expiration, heirs shouldn't be held responsible for any debt of deceased ancestors.

PART III - THE SOCIAL ANSWERS

SECTION III-A: BASIC PRINCIPLES

Generally, this Section will include the basic questions regarding Rights and Responsibilities and other human interactions which we addressed in Section I-A.

We had had considerable difficulty with the placement of those questions at that time, because we had correctly seen them as fundamental to the rest of the Outline, but we had insisted that all the Political questions should come before all the Social ones, so we treated the questions on Rights and Responsibilities as Political questions, which probably was not the correct thing to do.

Rather, we have learned through experience that the three main types of questions in the Outline will need to be jumbled up in order to get everything into a logical sequence, so okay to treat the questions on Rights and Responsibilities as Social questions, insofar as the distinction may make any difference in the final packaging.

However, in Session 242 (April 2018), with no other specific questions needing to be addressed in this Section, we reviewed the notes entered by hand over the years in our 'black book', as rephrased into our standard Q&A format during the Third Pass:

Question 485.6

Should we allow slavery anywhere in the world?

We heartily affirm as of Session 242 the permanent global prohibition of any kind of slavery, finding that it logically follows from the idea expressed in Answer 475 of The Individual not belonging to The State.

Question 16 (continued)

Even if it were possible, though, is it desirable for all people to remain totally isolated?

We amended A16 in Session 242 with a note which had been offered by one of our participants when we were discussing Trade regulations back in Session 109 (recorded only in 'black book' and not in meeting notes), that having more means of mutual alliance makes us into a 'web of interconnectedness', and makes it harder to go to war. It is 'the ultimate feature of a peaceful humanity'.

Question 485.7

If there is or should be an 'implied social contract', then what terms does/should it include?

We included in Session 242 the basic expectations of Truthfulness, Courtesy, Cooperation, and Compassion as part of an overall 'implied social contract', which all residents of an area are expected to observe (whether written into any local statutory code or not) as a condition of your living in our cities and towns, but we also observe that some people want to live in the city while behaving like assholes.

Question 485.8

What should we do when someone calls us an asshole?

When someone calls you an asshole, let your next words be an offer of peace.

SECTION III-B: SEX, MARRIAGE, & FAMILY LIFE

Subsection III-B-1: Sex and Relationships

Most people seem to have some impulses for some flavors of sexual expression at some stages of their lives, but there has been much disagreement and debate over the centuries as to what forms or circumstances of sexual expression are considered either 'acceptable' or 'unacceptable'. We will address each such question in turn:

Question 486

Under what conditions is it acceptable for two unmarried people to have sex with one another?

We saw a situation in the phrasing of this Question (remember, we drafted it more than 20 years before we formally addressed it in Session 242) which suggested that we may need a certain other Question in our Basic Principles, viz.:

Question 18.3

To what extent does Society get to have a voice in the regulation of our individual behaviors?

As a general philosophical position, we felt in Session 242 that it depends on the collective preference of a given culture at a given stage of its history. We are

tempted to default to the traditionally American (and Libertarian?) viewpoint of "Don't Tread On Me", and basically allow me to do whatever does not hurt or threaten others unduly. However, we recognize that there are numerous examples within history, and several still today, in which large numbers of people not only allow themselves to be told what to do by remote political or military or ecclesiastical leaderships, but actively wish it. It seems to give some people comfort and satisfaction to feel that they are part of a culture which agrees to forgo certain freedoms and pleasures in favor of some common purpose or ideal. If that helps them to become a happier and healthier society, then we will not be the ones to stand forward and assert that they are doing it wrong, and that they should not be allowed to live their lives that way, let alone go to war with them over it.

This general Question therefore will need to come somewhere before Question 38 in the final Outline, because we will then be addressing the general topic of what kind of country we want to have in America, at which point we can argue as planned that we generally want broad liberty here, even if certain other countries want to experience more individual regimentation in their daily lives.

Therefore, if we can't establish it as a general social principle, then hopefully in our Answer 38 we satisfactorily established for America that we want to have a society in which the standard default expectation is that we each get to do whatever we want, except where it injures or threatens injury to one or more others against their will.

To return to the original Question, then, we claim generally that -- for America at least -- any behavior is 'acceptable' as long as it is not 'inappropriate' for any reason.

Question 486 (continued)

Under what conditions is it acceptable for two unmarried people to have sex with one another?

On the basis of Answer 18.3 recorded in Session 242, we claim that the partners of a marriage contract should be the ones deciding which conditions of sexual interaction are or are not accepted under that particular contract, and that unmarried adults generally get to have sex with other consenting adults at will, with certain specific exceptions and circumstances to be noted hereunder. [Reexamined in Third Pass.]

Question 487

By what means shall we determine whether an individual (male or female) is physically and mentally and emotionally mature enough to handle sex?

As a general philosophical foundation, we appear to have near-universal consensus that people generally should not be engaging in sexual activity before they are mature enough for it. But, by what criteria do/should we make that assessment?

A standard paradigm observed in much (but not all!) of America as of Session 242 had been that anyone at least 18 years of chronological age was considered mature enough for sex, regardless of any individual attributes. This same paradigm held that no one under chronological age 18 was considered mature enough for sex, unless she was married and maybe fulfilled some number of other conditions.

While we understand the convenient appeal of a fixed number of chronological years to define 'presumptive maturity' (certainly saves us from needing to think!), yet we have a hard time accepting that this really is the best criterion on which to depend.

On one side, there are numerous examples -- both in history and within our own modern communities, maybe you remember some from high school (Moderator certainly did!) -- of individuals who were below chronological Age 18, but who yet managed to engage in perfectly happy and healthy and responsible sex, including by properly raising any children coming from the unions. On the other side, we also have observed that some individuals are never mature enough for a happy and productive sex life, so simply reaching Age 18 should not mean that all individuals should be engaging in sex indiscriminately.

On the other hand, if we decide to completely abandon the chronological parameter, then we are faced with needing to make a subjective decision as to whether someone else is ready for sex. Or, are we? Again, maybe it's none of our business what other consenting individuals do, provided that they are not injuring or threatening injury to others in the process. Hmmm.....

As a general social standard, we do have a legitimate interest in requiring a basic understanding of the biological consequences of the act as a minimal condition of engaging in sex. In the specific case of mixed-gender interactions, unplanned pregnancies can result from uncontrolled sex, and Society definitely should have a voice in any social paradigm which has a direct impact on its population level and sustainability. In the general case, many kinds of diseases can be transmitted through sexual contact which would have remained more confined without it, so again Society gets to have a say as to the general conditions of sexual acceptability.

In both cases, we establish through a process of education that all individuals who would ever engage in any flavor of sexual activity must first know at least the basic biological potentials of the act. This can be a single course from a sufficiently-reputable education outlet, or else we can presume from a primary-school diploma that the bearer has been sufficiently schooled in the basics. Such a course should include the fact that any individual is entitled to refuse any unwelcome sexual advance, and what to do in case an unwelcome advancer persists.

We should not have a squadron of 'sex police' going through our neighborhoods looking and listening for sex, and then interrupting the partners to check for educational credentials. However, we do see it as the responsibility of each partner to check up on the other in advance of any sexual interaction, if there is any question as to the prospective partner's level of sexual knowledge: Same as you might ask for an ID now in order to establish chronological age, you would ask for that course certificate or primary-school diploma, because Society would have every reason to pounce upon you if you engage with a partner who is not thus certified.

Educational knowledge is not enough, however. One must also have gone through the physical process of puberty in order to engage in adult sexual acts, or else all manner of physical and emotional problems may ensue, and in any case we don't want to take the chance of any twisted old farts preying upon pre-pubescent children just because those kids may happen to know the medical basics.

However, any physical criterion which might apply after puberty would probably need to be a chronological age (because what else is there?), but again that would be

completely arbitrary, and would often be an inaccurate and misleading indicator of a given individual's receptivity to sex. We are all different, and our group claims that there is no valid reason to assume that being 18 years and 0 months old is always good enough, and that being 17 years and 11 months old never is.

And, it's not just unfair to the pre-18 individuals who would be ready for sex in all other respects. It's also dangerous to the overall Society to make that kind of pronouncement, because it drives those individuals underground who desire to have sex anyway: They don't feel that they can buy condoms, or use the ones which some schools give out for free, so again more pregnancies and more disease propagation might occur than otherwise would. They will not feel as comfortable seeking obstetric and other medical care, and they might feel the need to go to unqualified practitioners for their abortions, or else have kids whom they cannot take care of. This places us all at risk.

Also, the 'black book' of preliminary ideas reminds us that the 'Keep Off The Grass' syndrome applies here, where the very act of prohibiting somebody from doing something often makes them want to do it when they otherwise would not, just to be rebellious and disobedient, so choose wisely when considering whether to establish or maintain a sex prohibition for individuals under some arbitrary chronological age.

In sum, then, we claim that anyone generally should be allowed to have sex who has passed puberty and has established a basic grounding in the social and biological implications of sexual activity, and that there should be no other physical or mental requirements.

The only other aspect of the Question is the emotional side, but of course this is the toughest one to adjudicate with any level of objectivity. We thus might presume that anyone who meets the above physical and mental criteria also possesses the emotional capacity for the act. But again, that's very tough, because a lot of folks don't handle the situations all that well, especially during breakups, even after they get past Age 30 or 50 or 80. We all can face some severe emotional challenges dealing with our various sexual impulses and experiences, so we generally cannot see any practical way of delineating that only certain individuals are emotionally mature enough for sex, so we do not recommend the adoption of any such criterion.

We would make exceptions only for those individuals who have been established by competent psychiatric professionals as not having the sufficient emotional grounding even to attempt sexual interaction, but then such individuals would need to be kept in protected living environments, so that they would not have the opportunity to approach or be approached by individuals who would have every other reason to expect that they would be legitimate sexual prospects. [Amended later via Q580.]

Question 488

What limits, if any, shall we set on how closely related two people may be in order to have sex, assuming that they are not married and are avoiding pregnancy?

Addressed in Session 243 (May 2018): Even if they are trying to avoid it, pregnancy sometimes happens anyway, so best not to take the chance if the would-be partners are of opposite genders and have a common ancestor who is one or two generations above at least one of them. (Thus, first cousins would be ineligible, as well as

uncles/aunts with nephews/nieces.) When relations are closer than that, we experience a much greater risk of genetic deformities, as we have seen within certain royal families and in some rural communities within our own country.

An additional argument might possibly be available as to the potential of psychological harm which may come to one or both partners when a previous fraternal relationship becomes a sexual one, particularly if some kind of problem develops from the sexual dynamic, as of course often happens in the normal case. However, such an allegation could possibly be refuted by pointing out that many millions of us have undertaken a psychological risk by beginning or attempting to begin a sexual interaction with someone, and in many cases have experienced varying levels and flavors of psychological harm when things turned out not to go as idealized. That doesn't mean that nobody should ever be permitted to have sex, because then of course our species would die out pretty quickly. The potential of psychological harm from sexual interaction cannot be completely avoided if our species is to survive, and for a lot of people constitutes a big part of the allure of romance. If the potential of psychological harm cannot be used as a valid reason to prohibit sex in the general case, then we probably would have a tough time justifying its use to prohibit sex among closely-related partners.

However, we hope that the risk of pregnancy and genetic deformity will be enough to maintain reasonable limitation on the filial relationship of legitimate sexual partners.

If it is not enough, then we might also note the possibility of undue influence by an elder relative upon a younger one. Sex must always be consensual as a minimum condition of acceptability, but a parent or grandparent usually has exerted so much authority over their kids and grandkids as they were growing up that it can be pretty difficult (in some cases impossible) to eliminate that dynamic even when the younger individuals pass puberty and achieve a basic educational grounding in the social and biological implications of sex. Because the danger is so prevalent of undue pressure being present when a suggestion is offered of sex between a child/grandchild and a parent/grandparent, even if it is the younger individual making the offer, we would need to assume for safety that it is always present in such situations. We must therefore establish as a matter of public safety that sex between any individual and his/her child or grandchild is unacceptable on its face, even if the individuals are of the same gender and thus not subject to pregnancy.

Question 489

Is it acceptable for an individual to experience sexual attraction for a person of the same gender?

[We will need to place this Question higher in the final Outline, because same-sex interactions have already been assumed as part of earlier Answers. For purposes of Session 243, though, we pretended as though we had not so assumed.]

A lot of people say no, that it is not acceptable, but we must say that yes it is. It's really hard to argue against the acceptability of something which occurs within Nature. What else do we observe among Nature's creations which we consider to be so vile and evil that it cannot be allowed to continue to exist? Even certain plants which we know to be poisonous are still allowed to exist, because trying to eradicate them would be too much trouble, and because the resulting imbalance in our ecosystem could easily produce more problems than it would solve.

Similarly, you would have a really tough time eradicating homosexual attraction forever if you tried, because even if you killed everyone currently living who has ever experienced a homosexual feeling, such individuals would still spring up later, as evidenced by the millions of homosexual men and women living today and throughout history who each came from two completely heterosexual parents.

Beyond the practical impossibility of enforcing a hypothetical ban on homosexual feelings, we also claim that the notion can be defeated on philosophical grounds. For, we have previously found that people generally should be allowed to do what they want if it does not injure or threaten others (see Answer 12), so that policy must extend to any kind of thought or feeling.

Besides, during those times when homosexuality was widely considered to be evil and depraved, a lot of individuals (particularly teenagers) experienced grave levels of guilt and self-loathing for their homosexual feelings, either from their own reflections and/or through the criticism of others. As a result, a lot of those individuals committed suicide or became serial criminals or caused some other kind of blight upon society, and we now claim from historical hindsight that we would have been a healthier and happier society if we had simply permitted everyone's homosexual feelings in the first place, instead of trying to guilt them into non-existence.

Question 490

Given that an individual is experiencing sexual attraction toward another person of the same gender, is it acceptable for him/her to act on it?

Again, we generally should be allowed to do what we want if it does not injure or threaten anyone else. Specifically, if the partners have reached puberty, have been educated as to the social and biological potentials of sexual interaction, have fully consented to the actions in question, and are acting responsibly to mitigate the spreading of any kind of disease, then they generally should be permitted to engage in sexual actions of their own choosing, same as with heterosexual couples.

There were those in society as of Session 243 who claimed that homosexuality is an 'abomination' and a 'sin', but many of those individuals believed that way simply because they had been taught that way, by individuals who themselves had been taught that way, going back numerous generations. One significant source of this viewpoint is the appearance in the Mosaic Law of prohibitions against homosexual action (see Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13), but as with any Biblical regulation we should consider the source and the circumstances of its creation:

If we are to believe the story told in Leviticus, God was having a really hard time getting the Israelites to behave themselves and refrain from worshipping false gods, so He presented them all with a severely regimentive code of conduct, covering everything from farming and diet to shaving and dress. It would be a thin argument to suggest that these numerous rules were intended to apply for all time regardless of what ever happens, as opposed to lasting only as long as necessary for the people to become upright and cooperative and 'holy' in all ordinary respects. In any case, we know that they were not talking about all people everywhere, because it is established repeatedly within those chapters that the intended audience comprised only the "children of Israel".

Another source of religious objection is the general idea that something created by God should be used only for its originally-intended purpose. Specifically, this belief holds that the act of sex was intended for only mixed-gender couples, and only for the purpose of procreation. If you believe this idea, then let us please remind you that humans modify God's creation all the time, utilizing the intellects with which God has blessed us. Trees existed long before humans, and could be argued as having been created for the 'purpose' of providing oxygen to the atmosphere and food for numerous animal and avian species, but we also have figured out that we can use the timber to create housing and baseball bats. We have sewn together leaves and grass in order to make clothing. Rivers could be argued as having the 'purpose' of draining water and sewage from inland areas to the ocean for recycling, but we have built dams on our rivers to facilitate irrigation and electricity and flood control. Were the star Polaris and the constellation The Big Dipper created for the purpose of allowing humans on Earth to identify north and navigate the seas? Seems unlikely, since those stars are so far apart, did not always maintain that same alignment, and will not always do so in the future, so that would be another example of humans using natural resources for new purposes. Even the Amish, and other communities who eschew modern conveniences, still use tools and furnaces to fashion horseshoes and nails and plowblades and other metallic implements, and then they plow fields to grow crops where they would not have grown otherwise.

Clearly, the act of finding ways to utilize our natural abundances in new ways is not generally an 'abomination'. In the specific case of sexual desire, all biological species are hard-wired to experience sexual desires so that they can continue to thrive. Some species may do it for species propagation alone, some may do it simply because it feels good, and others (including Humans) manage to 'combine business with pleasure'. It so happens, however, that the neural connectivities within some human specimens cause/allow them to experience sexual urges toward other specimens of the same gender. Again, this has been happening for several millennia now, and we have every reason to expect that it will continue to happen, so it would be highly impractical to try to eliminate it, it is dangerous toward our society to try to 'guilt' it away, and beyond that it's another example of humans using our various natural resources in different and creative ways. What can be wrong with that?

Question 491

Shall we establish as either socially or legally unacceptable for certain sexual positions to be used?

Astonishingly, numerous States and Counties and Townships within America actually have had laws on their books prohibiting sodomy between consenting adults, even if they were married and of opposite genders. Our group found no philosophical justification in Session 244 (May 2018) for the prohibition of any such harmless consensual activity, not only generally but especially within a Nation which pretends to glorify the concept of individual Liberty.

As with Question 490, there may still be some who would argue that certain sexual positions (possibly including sodomy) constitute 'perversions' of the biological structures and desires which God gave to us. However, if in fact the biological urge for a man and woman to engage in missionary-position sex came from God, then so must all the other flavors and combinations of sexual activity, so those cannot be held to be 'perversions'.

A lot of other people might continue to hold that certain sexual positions (possibly including sodomy) should be considered unacceptable because the one-and-only alleged purpose of sex is to procreate, and that any sexual variation which cannot result in pregnancy constitutes an abuse of the natural order, or some such bullshit. This argument also fails, however, if we allow other expressions of physical or romantic affection such as hugging and kissing. If you want to have a culture where couples are not allowed to experience or express any manner of physical affection except when they are trying to produce a child (such as certain communities in 17th-century New England, where married partners routinely placed a wooden plank between themselves in bed to discourage non-procreative contact), then we guess that you can do so, but we don't see why you would want to do that, and we don't recommend it. Neither does the Roman Catholic Church, which has long 'allowed' married partners to engage in romantic sex when not actively trying to reproduce, because even they -- with their huge history of social repression -- recognize that it would simply be unrealistic to try to prohibit things beyond that point.

Then there are those who believe in the unacceptability of such activities simply because that's how their parents and teachers taught them, or because they think that they read it in the Bible at some point. We have observed over the years that many such individuals hold onto such beliefs dogmatically, basically because they are unwilling to accept the possibility that they may have been wrong all this time, and that their parents and teachers may have been wrong as well. They may also be reluctant to acknowledge that there are multiple ways to interpret one's particular translation/version of the Bible, or that some of the clearer passages should not be expected to apply in today's world. There's not a whole lot that we can do about any such closed-minded individuals, except to ignore them whenever they try to convince us of some particular paradigm simply because that's the way that they were taught, or because the Bible allegedly says so.

For the rest of us who are willing to question authority, and even willing to question the Bible, we feel that we should observe the rule of personal liberty (at least in America, but preferably everywhere), being that we all should be allowed to do what we want if we are not injuring or threatening someone else, unless there is some other specific reason why a particular action should be considered inappropriate.

Question 492

Should any and all laws prohibiting sexual positions be expunged?

Yes, forthwith.

Question 493

Is it acceptable for an individual to feel sexual attraction toward multiple individuals concurrently?

As with homosexual attraction, it is very hard to find this unacceptable, given that it is and has been such a common and widespread occurrence. Even if you could once convince yourself that it was philosophically inappropriate (whatever that means), how could you possibly hope or expect to eradicate it among the entire global population, even for just a day, let alone for all time, and let alone for non-humans?

Not only would it be eminently impractical to try to eliminate concurrent sexual attractions toward multiple individuals, we claim as of Session 244 that it is actually a biological necessity: For, if there could be only one person in the World toward whom you could be 'allowed' to experience a sexual attraction, then what happens if you never find her among all our billions? What happens if she dies before you meet her? What happens if she never gets born at all? What happens if you do meet and do have a relationship, but at some point she decides to break up with you? If we all held to that rule, then our species would die out very rapidly.

Far better biologically to allow each individual to form sexual attractions toward multiple individuals, if only so that we have a much better chance of finding a suitable mate with whom to start a family.

Question 494

Is it acceptable for an individual to have sex with more than one person in his/her lifetime?

Moderator was brought up to believe (like the fundamentalist Catholic foot-soldier that I was) that it was appropriate to have sex with only one individual in your entire life, and then only when you were married. I even spoke and wrote in defense of the concept during high school. When I finally got a serious girlfriend as a college freshman, she actively wanted to have sex (even though she also had been raised Catholic), but I repeatedly and stubbornly refused, because as college freshmen we were not yet ready to get married. The issue tremendously strained our relationship.

I eventually gave in, after a long period of self-examination, rationalizing that it was okay to modify the basic rule slightly, since I had committed to this one partner but it was simply impractical for us to marry yet. When she later broke up with me, I was faced with the dilemma of holding out for her to come back someday (she never did), or remaining celibate and childless for the rest of my life, or modifying the basic rule one step further. After another long period of self-examination, I concluded that holding on to the basic rule would create more problems in my case than it would solve, and that I should go ahead and allow one more sexual relationship in my life.

When that second relationship ended up not working out either, I eventually concluded that it should be considered acceptable to engage in varying levels of sexual experimentation with different partners, until you find one with whom you are sufficiently compatible to establish a permanent relationship.

The next logical step after that was not a difficult one. If it is okay to experience sexual attraction toward multiple persons in your life (A493), and if it is okay to engage in sex for the purpose of pleasure as opposed to procreation (A491), and if it is okay to have sex with more than one person in your lifetime (above), then it must be okay for people to have sex for pleasure with any consenting adults that they wish, provided that they are responsible about birth control and disease mitigation.

Question 495

Is it acceptable for an individual to have sex with multiple concurrent partners at different actual times?

In other words, is it okay to juggle multiple relationships at once?

There are two possible scenarios to consider here: One is where you are actively searching for one permanent partner, and you find that you can conduct that search more efficiently if you overlap the times that you are spending with your various prospects. The other is where you are doing it simply for pleasure, with no immediate intent to convert any of your partners into an exclusive mate.

Either way, we must conclude that yes it is all okay, based upon our previous philosophical findings. The only condition which we would impose is that you should disclose to any prospective partner before having sex that you intend to concurrently carry on with one or more other partners, just in case the new prospect wants to make monogamy a condition of any sexual interaction, which sometimes they do.

Question 496

Is it acceptable for an individual to have sex with multiple partners at once?

Again, yes by all means, again as long as everyone is acting responsibly as to birth control and disease mitigation. Sex for pleasure is okay per Answer 494, and sex with multiple partners concurrently is okay with disclosure per Answer 495, so sex with multiple partners at once must be okay. In fact, it must be even more okay than the scenarios treated in Answer 495, because disclosure is not necessary when the other partners are right there in the same room with you.

Question 497

Should any of these paradigms be different for males and females?

We didn't see any reason in Session 244 to make any such distinction. We are all individuals, and we all deserve to have whatever personal liberties attend to all humans generally, or to Americans specifically.

There have been those cultures -- and some still exist today -- where women are treated as second-class citizens, with few or none of the rights which typically extend to the males of those cultures. We find no philosophical justification for this practice, and estimate that it was invented by men a long time ago, because they were physically able to enforce it, and because they were unwilling to allow any challenge to their 'gender authority'. In an enlightened technological society, however, where we can share with each other the fact that no women need any longer feel imprisoned by such sexist and imperialist dogma, we figure that anyone who claims that all women should have fewer rights and liberties than all men should be ostracized from polite society, or at least ignored. [Trans treated in Third Pass.]

Question 497.5

Is bestiality always okay, or sometimes okay, or never okay, or what?

That's a restriction which we actively support. Even in our libertarian model, a key component of 'acceptable' sexual activity is that it is consensual. Because animals are not able to speak our language in an independent and intelligent manner, we must assume for safety that they are not consenting to any inter-species sexual act, so such an act must always be considered unacceptable on its face.

If a sheep ever comes to your front door with a dozen roses and a diamond necklace, and offers to take you on a dinner date at an expensive restaurant for the purpose of romancing you into a sexual encounter, then we might re-evaluate our position. Until then, we must assume that any hypothetical sex between a human and an animal would be the human's idea, and that the animal has no voice in the matter, so to protect the animal from abuse we must consider it an inappropriate act.

Question 498

Should there be any legislation at any level of government to prohibit certain inter-human sexual activities which do not create unwanted pregnancies and do not spread disease and do not violate formal or informal covenants?

We found in Session 244 that this Question is very similar to Question 492, and so we produced a very similar Answer: No.

The only provision which we might make even remotely along these lines is that you probably do want to have a society where contracts of all kinds are expected to be honored, and that civil judgments can in some cases be enforced upon any parties who willingly violate any kind of contract, including those between sexual partners as to the conditions under which they may or may not have sex with other individuals, as discussed in Answer 486. However, the language of the present Question is that the activity being considered would not violate any formal or informal covenants, so that provision would not apply here.

Question 499

To the extent that any of the above is done or threatened, what level of government is best to administer justice?

County level is probably best for this in most cases. Federal judiciaries have enough to do regarding America's position as a Nation in the World. State judiciaries are concerned with large-scale policy decisions for their jurisdictions. Municipal judiciaries would be unsuitable because the partners in question may easily reside in different Cities which might develop different sexual paradigms if they were allowed to do so. County is best, because in most cases the partners will live in the same County even if they are in different Cities, and as of Session 244 we generally want to keep adjudications local if they have only local influence.

Subsection III-B-2: Marriage

Question 500

What is 'marriage', really?

Addressed in Session 245 (May 2018): A lot of people think that they know what Marriage is, and some of them may be right, but they can't all be right, because some of them claim that their definitions are the only correct ones. If such a Person A is correct in claiming that any other definition is invalid, then the contrary definition offered by Person B would be incorrect. Either that, or else Person A was incorrect in the first place, and maybe both are.

Laws and court rulings and Constitutional amendments have been proposed -- and in some cases enacted -- to legally define 'marriage' in one way or another. These various proposals do not always agree with one another, so we feel that it would be very helpful to define what 'marriage' is -- or should be -- in our model society.

One big clue which can help us figure out what Marriage is is to look at what it has been. Marriage has taken many forms in different cultures and in different centuries. Sometimes the partners got to choose each other, and sometimes the marriages were 'arranged' by parents or civic leaders. Sometimes a man paid for a bride, and sometimes (as depicted in *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Shakespeare in Love*) he was paid to take the woman off her father's hands. Sometimes the partners were decided in adulthood, but sometimes when they were as little as seven years old. Sometimes (as related in *Fiddler on the Roof*) they never even met until the wedding ceremony. The Egyptians of Cleopatra's time were famous for marrying siblings, before they understood about genetic deformities. Mormons and some Eastern potentates (like the Sheik in *Ben-Hur*), as well as the Hebrews of Jacob's time, have been known to carry multiple wives concurrently.

Whatever forms Marriage has taken throughout history, it did always seem to have two fundamental elements in common. First, it seemed always to be intended that children would result from the unions, and that no children should be created outside of such unions. Second, it seemed generally to be intended that the marital partners would reside within the same household, and somehow help to raise their children.

There is a certain amount of logic behind this paradigm. In order for our species to survive, we need children to be born on a continual basis, and we also need for them to be taken care of until they are old enough to take care of themselves. It may theoretically be possible for all kids to be raised by 'the village' in some sort of common nursery (such as that depicted in *Logan's Run*), but it seems to make more sense in most cases for children to be raised by their natural parents wherever practical, because the individuals who contributed their genetic material to the kids are most likely to understand how those particular kids act and react and think and communicate, so they usually will be in a better position to raise them effectively, and successfully instill them with their values as may be needed. Doesn't always work out that way, of course, but it seems to do so on average.

Also, as genetic contributors they have a certain level of investment in the children, and of course the mother has an additional investment for having endured pregnancy and childbirth, so in many cases they will be more motivated to raise the kids properly than an unrelated 'village' might.

We have seen that numerous children have been raised successfully by single parents, and we certainly do not seek to abridge the right of parents to raise children singly if they sincerely feel that they can, but we generally recommend that both bio-parents be involved in the child's upbringing (unless in an individual case it is impractical or net-undesirable for some reason), if only because the workload of bringing up a child has a greater likelihood of being managed adequately if it is split somehow between the two bio-parents.

But, does arranging to raise one or more children together imply that the bio-parents should be married to one another? Again, we have seen that it is not always required, but it does seem in many cases to be highly helpful. If the bio-parents are not married, and if they therefore are free to mate with other partners and create

children with them, then that could create some conflicts of interest, or some divisions of attention, meaning that some of the kids in question -- perhaps all of them -- might get shortchanged in their parental care. Generally better for the kids if their parents don't have any other kids living in other households. In order to make that a more secure scenario, we have come to expect that the parents should be in a committed marital relationship with one another, witnessed by the public and by the local civil authorities.

More recently, of course, we have also seen a rapid rise in demand for weddings and marriages between partners who for some reason cannot have any children of their own, either because they are of the same gender, or because at least one partner is too old to have kids, or because at least one partner has some medical problem preventing conception or pregnancy or childbirth. Or, even if they physically can have children, they simply don't want to do so, or don't feel that they can afford it. All these people have other reasons for wanting to get married and stay married.

This is where opinion begins to diverge: Do personal partnerships count as 'marriages' if the partners cannot or do not wish to have children of their own?

While there may have been a separate reason for marriage initially (being to facilitate the bearing and raising of children in a secure and genetically-bound environment), it is quite understandable that some people might want to experience the same kind of living conditions without any children being present, or perhaps with the presence of one or more adopted children. Is there anything wrong with this? Assuming not, is it valid to refer to such an arrangement as a 'marriage'?

We claim that there is nothing wrong with it, and that yes it is valid to call it a 'marriage' even if no kids are involved, or if only adopted kids are involved.

Reason is that -- even though the purpose for that marriage may be different from the classic standard model -- yet the arrangement would have all the same descriptive characteristics of a classic child-bearing marriage. Specifically, they want to live in the same household, they want to share somehow the responsibility for maintaining the household, in many cases they want to be together as a romantic and possibly sexual couple, in many cases they want some level of limitation in place as to how sexually active they can be with other individuals, they want a level of security and commitment that the arrangement will remain in place until one partner deceases or they agree to dissolve, and they want their union to be recognized by the public and the civil authorities. What can be wrong with that?

The question then remains whether we get to call such a union a 'marriage'. For that, we offer that the *American Heritage* dictionary (1981 edition) allows "Any close union" as a valid definition of the word 'marriage', as in the expression 'a marriage of minds'. Linguistically, then, we claim that it is appropriate and valid to describe as a 'marriage' any personal partnership where the participants formally agree to live together in a committed emotional or sexual bond.

There still may be some who stubbornly hold to the classic paradigm that Marriage must be between exactly one man and exactly one woman, either because Marriage supposedly is only for the purpose of creating and raising children, or else because that's the way that God allegedly ordained it. To this claim, we offer that this is another example (see Answer 490) where something created for one purpose (even if it was created by God) gets to be used in another way or for another purpose,

because we clever humans are using our intellectual gifts to discover new and creative ways to do things which enhance our collective quality of life. Just because Marriage may originally have been intended only for partners of opposite genders, why shouldn't homosexual partners be allowed to experience the same level of love and satisfaction and security and happiness which many other people derive from being in a committed relationship with a committed partner?

Besides, the Bible-based claim that God intended Marriage to apply to only one man and only one woman fails on its face, because otherwise Jacob and Solomon and other patriarchs of the Hebrew nation would not have been allowed to carry multiple wives concurrently, let alone some number of supplemental 'concubines'.

Another objection comes from those who suggest that only certain flavors of committed relationships should be called 'marriages' because married partners get to enjoy certain tax benefits which supposedly should not apply to everyone. However, we can look at all such situations separately, without undermining our basic conception and definition of 'marriage'.

Question 501

What would motivate two (or more?) people to enter into such a contract, as opposed to simply hanging out?

Many people feel that it is an ultimate (or near-ultimate) expression of their love and affection for someone to agree to establish and maintain a contracted personal relationship. Some of the same people, and many others, feel tremendous satisfaction and self-fulfillment when they are chosen to be part of a contracted personal relationship with a worthy partner.

A few do it to bolster their public image somehow, maybe for political gain, or maybe because they just don't like being thought of as 'single'. However, we recommend against both these approaches. Non-nuclear households were more prevalent as of Session 246 (May 2018), with single parents, same-sex parents, childless households, and other variations becoming far more commonplace, so such conditions shouldn't factor into one's electability or castability or other public concern. A lot of people also seem to enjoy being single these days, so if you give off that vibe then other people will not know otherwise; you therefore don't need to marry an inferior partner simply in order to get the locals to quit giggling at you.

There may be other reasons held by different people. This is just a sampling of the more common reasons which we could think of quickly. Point is, there are several different reasons why people might want to marry even if they are not having children, including if they are of the same gender, so it would be foolish to try to deny this reality, for those of you who still want to do so.

Question 502

Can all of these functions be fulfilled in the absence of marriage? If so, then do we still need marriage as a social institution?

Several functions can, but no not all. Marriage is a level of commitment beyond a mere informal covenant, and partners have much more reason to feel secure and

happy in their relationships when married than they would if either partner gets to leave at any time on an 'at will' basis.

The second element of the Question therefore is not really applicable: Whether we really 'need' marriage or not, as of Session 246 it does seem in many cases to be highly helpful, not only for the raising of children (either bio or adopted) but also to allow an additional level of depth in our personal relationships.

Question 503

Is it possible/acceptable for two (or more?) people to be married who agree not to have any children, or is receptivity to children a necessary condition of marriage?

The first one. We established in Answers 500 and 501 that people might want to be married for all kinds of reasons other than having and raising children.

Question 504

Given that marriage is still around, is there any reason why marriage must be between individuals of opposite genders?

No reason that we could make out in Session 246, as discussed in Answer 500. Even if it was originally intended to be that way, either by people or by God, we have the (God-given?) right to use things in different ways, as long as they are not net-destructive to the society. In this case, any institution which encourages and deepens Love and Peace and Fidelity and Happiness cannot be unholy, so we strongly believe that Marriage should be recognized and applauded and celebrated among any combination of consenting adults.

Question 505

What limits, if any, do we want to set on how closely related two (or more?) people may be in order to get married?

Basically the same limitations which we established in Answer 488 (however that model may be refined later) for the level of 'familial proximity' which would disqualify two prospective partners from being an acceptable sexual couple. Main idea here is that we can expect any married couple to have sex with each other at least once in their lives, so they would need to meet those minimum conditions. We could not immediately think of any particular reason in Session 246 why any additional restrictions should be imposed for marriage beyond those established for sex, so until we are persuaded to the contrary we will assume the same levels of restriction.

Question 506

Is there any reason why marriage must involve only two partners, or can we allow one principal to have multiple spouses, or can we allow three or more individuals to commune together in a group marriage?

The fact that some people have done it in the latter two ways, or at least tried to do it, or at least wanted to do it, means that those concepts clearly exist, at least in some people's minds if not yet in law, so we would be foolish to try to deny their

existence. Question then is whether the latter two variations are validly appropriate (whatever that means) in our improved social model.

We claim as of Session 246 that we should not be abridging the right of individuals to commune in marital relationships involving three or more partners, whether one of the partners is a 'principal' or not. First reason, we generally approve any action which does not cause net-destruction to the community. Second, the levels of commitment and satisfaction and security can easily be achieved in a multi-partner household, perhaps in some cases at an even deeper level. Third, with the various responsibilities of maintaining the household divided among more than two people, the bio-parents of any children will have more time available to spend with their kids, so hopefully the kids will have happier and healthier lives.

There may be other reasons why multi-partner marriages can be actively good, or at least acceptable, but we feel that these should be sufficient.

Question 507

Whatever laws we have which restrict or otherwise regulate various types of marriages, what level of government should enact and administer such laws?

State level is best. There seems to be enough demand for variations that we should not try to legislate one paradigm of marriage for the entire Nation. At the other end, having some 3000 different marriage codes would entail a lot of wasted effort, and cause a great deal of confusion, so County level would be too small.

Question 508

Should it continue to be expected that the wife will/should change her last name to that of her husband?

This seemed to be happening with decreasing frequency as of Session 247 (June 2018), and we certainly could understand why: In the classic nuclear model which we saw portrayed in TV shows from the 1950's such as *Father Knows Best* (really?), the husband was the one-and-only wage-earner, and the wife was expected to bear his children and cook his meals and clean his home and basically take care of him. In addition, as also portrayed in such plays and films as *Life With Father*, the man was generally/always considered to have supreme executive authority within the home, at liberty to overrule any decision made by his wife whenever he felt like it.

Paul wrote in both Ephesians and Colossians that wives should submit themselves unto their husbands, and Peter likewise admonished in his first Epistle. Genesis 3:16 allegedly ordained that the Man shall "rule over" the Woman, presumably for all time and everywhere, although this was not explicitly stated.

It therefore stood to reason that women would typically change their last names when marrying, in order to show that they were attaching themselves to the men's households and families.

More recently, of course, we have observed an increasing proportion of dual-income households, with the woman often earning more than the man in the specific case of dual-gender couples, perhaps still not as often as it properly should be, but yet often

enough that this Question becomes very relevant in our modern age, and more relevant as we continue to evolve as a society.

With women on the rapid rise in terms of economic prosperity, executive/military authority, and sociopolitical influence, it makes total sense that we have observed more households (particularly within the entertainment industry, but also elsewhere) in which the wife kept her own last name, as has already happened in numerous Spanish-speaking nations.* [*Mensa Bulletin, Jan-Feb 1998, p.31]

We also have seen some instances (there was one within the Moderator's own extended family) where the man changed his last name to that of his wife, for whatever reasons he may have had.

We certainly will not attempt to stop this rate of social progress, for we find that we all benefit as a society when more adults get to share the responsibilities of wage-earning and decision-making, and when fewer intelligent and capable adults are subjugated into subservient roles without their consent.

But, neither shall we seek to abridge the right of wives to go ahead and take their husbands' last names, either generally because they are traditionalists, or else for some combination of specific personal reasons.

We therefore feel that couples generally should have the right to choose for themselves whether either partner is to take the last name of the other. (Maybe they even switch!) They may want to keep separate surnames if they are wanting to maintain separate professional identities. Or, they may want to use one single surname between them, perhaps because they may have a sole/primary wage-earner, or because one partner is significantly older, or because for some other reason one partner is considered to be net-better at decision-making than the other.

If none of these specific conditions applies in a particular household, then they may want a single surname anyway, simply because it 'feels' more like being married. It may also be more convenient for any children if there is only one surname in the household, but we will look at that during Question 535.

In summary, then, each partner gets to decide whether to take the last name of the other, and his/her decision not to do so should not be treated as a 'dealbreaker' for prospective married couples.

Question 508.1

To what extent -- if at all -- should modern marriages be arranged by either parents or civic authorities?

We have a hard time as of Session 247 getting behind this practice in a modern and ideal and hopefully-enlightened society. We understand that some families might want to ally themselves maritally with certain other families, either out of friendship or for reasons of business or politics. Whatever their reasons may be, though, the model assumes that the parents know best which pairings will be the most mutually compatible, whereas the children may develop different ideas and preferences as they grow older and learn more about themselves.

Marriage arrangement also serves as a means of ensuring that the kids will marry an adequate partner at some point, instead of rolling the dice that they will end up with inferior partners, or decide not to marry at all. Certain individuals might want to make sure that their genetic characteristics and family fortunes carry on constructively after they decease, so arranging marriages for their kids can help with that. We wouldn't want to abridge the right of such parents to at least attempt to arrange suitable marriages for their kids.

However, in the end, it really should be the kids' decisions, for once they become adults they become the owners of their own lives (see Answer 11), so it would be inappropriate for any parent to attempt to force a child into any decision -- especially Marriage -- which would have continuing effect after the child reaches majority.

To harmonize these potentially-conflicting motivations, then, we recommend that parents should be allowed to identify one or more particular candidates for the child's consideration, and offer any specific reasons why they think that those candidates ought to make the child's 'short list'. In the end, though, it really should be the child's decision, to be made sometime after he/she reaches majority, however we define that condition while considering the upcoming Question.

Question 508.2

What set of conditions should exist in order for a child to be properly considered to have reached majority/adulthood?

We understand the temptation to use a simple and convenient chronological age such as 18 or 21, but we generally recommend against it, because it is inaccurate and sends the wrong message. It says that anyone who is at least that chronological age is mature enough to make adult decisions, and that anyone less than that chronological age is not, but we know from experience that neither of these assumptions is always true: Numerous individuals under Age 18 have been spouses and parents and soldiers and professional entertainers and professional athletes; some even have been kings and queens. Conversely, numerous individuals over Age 21 have shown themselves to be incapable of holding down a job or balancing a budget or in any other sense maintaining an independent adult existence.

It's even funnier that different States have different chronological cutoffs for when someone reaches adulthood (either generally or for specific reasons like Gambling or Drinking or Sex), as if people mature faster in one State than in another.

If we deny the title of 'adult' to all individuals who are under some fixed chronological age such as 18, then we lose many of the professional contributions which they might otherwise make to society. We also risk sending them 'underground' to engage in certain adult behaviors without proper education or counseling or other assistance, causing many of their lives to be destroyed with addictions and unwanted pregnancies and other bad things.

Conversely, if we forcibly impose the title of 'adult' to all individuals who are over some fixed chronological age such as 21, regardless of their mental capacities or educational achievements, then we risk allowing (perhaps even encouraging) them to engage in behaviors which may be legal but still potentially dangerous to society, such as gun ownership or again with the unwanted pregnancies.

Therefore, rather than pick some arbitrary chronological age and assume that everybody will fall into that model (either generally or within some particular civic jurisdiction), probably best to rely on a combination of physical and educational conditions, same as we recommended in Answer 487 for the specific topic of sexual activity: First, they must have gone through physical puberty, because that process often results in a 'quantum leap' of maturity and understanding. Second, they should have acquired whatever primary educational knowledge we may decide as needing to be possessed as a minimal requirement by all adults within our society.

On the latter point, if we make the educational requirements any more stringent than primary level (such as needing a 'high-school diploma'), then some individuals will not be both willing and able to achieve them, and we would have numerous physical adults running around who do not possess the basic knowledge needed to live safely and peacefully and constructively within a civil society, which would be bad. We therefore concluded in Session 247 that we should establish (as planned for Section I-C upcoming) what primary levels of knowledge should be possessed by everyone in society, and then accept as a full-fledged adult anyone who has achieved that primary requirement and also passed physical puberty.

Question 508.3

Should a 'dowry' be expected or required as a condition of marriage within our modern environment?

In addition to the references previously cited, the 1952 film *The Quiet Man* contains a major storyline in which the Irish bride is insisting that her brother pay a dowry to her new American husband, the brother doesn't want to pay it because he dislikes the husband, and the husband doesn't care about it because as an American he had his own reasons for marrying the colleen which had nothing to do with money. The local vicar explains to the husband that it's an old Irish custom, and a good one, with the dowry meaning "more to her than just the money."

There may have been a certain amount of logic behind this custom in the past, when unfortunately the woman was afforded far less opportunity to make any money on her own, so her father or brother needed to provide her with financial support until she could get a husband. The father or brother therefore had a financial incentive in seeing the woman wed expeditiously, but to a good provider so that the marriage would remain stable indefinitely, so he would often contribute some amount of 'dowry' as a financial inducement in order to lure a satisfactory husband.

As the vicar explained, however, the bride in *The Quiet Man* attached a far greater significance to the idea of a dowry "than just the money." To her, it was a major part of the expected experience of being married, to be a vested partner in the marriage and not just a servant, such that she would not find it proper to perform all the acts typically expected of a wife, until the dowry were once paid as due.

That film depicted how things were back in 1952. As of Session 248 (June 2018), while some regions and some cultures and some industries still had quite a ways to go, we were yet seeing a major rise in the prominence of women in education and business and politics and other areas, so it now should be a reasonable expectation (shouldn't it?) that adult women with at least a secondary level of education should be able to earn a direct living, whether they are still residing with family or out on their own or sharing a household with a spouse.

This being the case, it should not typically be expected that a woman's family will financially support her indefinitely, any more than they would let their male offspring hang around the house forever. She's going to need to either get married or move out on her own at some point, so it should not be expected that the family will need to save up a 'dowry' for the purpose of luring a husband, so we should no longer consider a 'dowry' as an essential ingredient of marriage, insofar as we ever did.

Subsection III-B-3: Having and Raising Children

Question 509

How do we feel about the current population and growth rate, both in the U.S. and in the world?

On a worldwide level, we seemed as of Session 248 to be making it so far, knock wood. If our global population were too large, then Malthusian mechanics would correct it to a sustainable level without any conversation on our part.

Besides, it is easy by inspection to observe that many people in many nations have far more to eat than they need, so if there is any large-scale problem with population then at least we know that it does not affect all people in all communities.

That said, it also is easy to observe that some nations face poverty and hunger among almost their entire populations, and that some more affluent nations (particularly including America) have pockets of poverty even within their most prosperous cities.

As we discussed in Part II within the context of Economics, it may possibly be that we would be net-better with a lower global population, or at least a lower regional population, so that it would be easier to sustain the people who remain, but it is also possible that our problems with poverty and hunger may simply mean that we need to do a better job of connecting people with resources.

As long as we continue to have all-you-can-eat buffets scattered around the country, and as long as people continue to throw away substantial amounts of leftover food, this will probably need to remain our group position, that we have enough resources to support our still-increasing population, and that we simply need to do a better job with distribution in order to alleviate our societal problems of poverty and hunger.

Question 510

Insofar as we may have or ever develop a dissatisfaction with the state of the population, what steps might we wish to take in order to make it more to our liking?

As of Session 248, we are seeing three basic categories of approach:

- (1) Persuasion -- Encourage couples to plan for no more than two live births, in the hope of keeping our population at a known-sustainable level.
- (2) Incentives -- Provide tax breaks or other rewards for smaller families (including free surgeries for voluntary sterilizations), and/or penalties for excess births.

(3) Sterilization -- If the above methods prove not to be good enough, then local or national jurisdictions may require sterilization of one or both partners after some given number of live births, probably starting with a high limit such as eight, in order to get everyone accustomed to the concept, and then gradually decrease the limit if problems continue which cannot be solved by simple economic reconstruction.

Question 511

What are the reasons why individuals might want to have children?

Numerous reasons were noted in Session 248, including but not necessarily limited to: Perpetuating the species, maintaining a sufficient population to run the world as our generation gets older, having responsible and capable younger family members to take care of us individually as we get older, carrying on the family name (whatever good that does), providing the world with our genes or value structure, having someone to take care of, having more company around the house, exemplifying to others how to raise their kids, expressing or incarnating love with a partner, leaving an heir to carry on the family business or the royal succession or to hoard the family wealth, and proving or 'fulfilling' one's manhood or womanhood.

Question 512

Given what we've resolved about population, how important are these goals today, and how important is it for a given couple or a given individual to have one or more children?

It is still fairly important on an overall basis, for a number of reasons and on a number of levels, but it is not essential on an individual basis. We easily had enough babies being born as of Session 248 that we do not need every adult to reproduce even once, let alone more often, but it certainly is reasonable to expect that many adults will still want and have children of their own, for some combination of the reasons stated in Answer 511 and maybe some others.

Question 513

If a child is born into the world, do we as a society have an ultimate responsibility to see that it is taken care of and brought up properly?

Our group feels that we do not have any such responsibility intrinsically, because in most cases we are not the ones who decided to create that particular child.

However, even if the responsibility does not rest with us intrinsically, we may wish to undertake it voluntarily. For, as a pragmatic society, we recognize that our successors will do a much better job of tending our economy and taking care of us in retirement, if they grow up happy and healthy and well-educated. As an ethical society, we find that it makes good sense to help take care of other adults and their kids now, in the hope and expectation that they will return the favor and help us and our kids later. As a moral society, we cannot stand to see anyone suffer undeservedly (especially a child) when it is within our power to make things better.

Thus, for one reason or another, we generally are going to want to provide backup care to our children as needed, but the primary responsibility for raising the children will typically remain with the bio-parents or their legitimate assigns.

Question 514

Normally, whose primary responsibility should it be to take care of a child's day-to-day physical and emotional needs until he/she reaches majority?

As previously discussed, the standard default expectation is that the two bio-parents will have the primary responsibility of raising the child until majority, because their genetic bonds will often help them to understand and communicate with their kids, and because their physical and emotional investment will usually provide them with better motivation to raise the children better than an unrelated 'village' would.

However, there can be numerous exceptions, including if the bio-parents are poor, or if they're mentally unfit, or if they simply are not very good parents, or maybe if they legitimately agree to allocate the parental responsibilities in some other manner which will be either net-advantageous or at least net-neutral to the child.

Question 514.3

Who is considered to be the biological father when a married woman is inseminated (either naturally or artificially) with sperm from someone other than her husband?

Biological father has to be the one who donated the sperm, however it was done.

Question 514.6

In that case, or in the case of an unmarried woman specifically requesting an insemination from any man, does the sperm donor have any measure of responsibility in the raising of the child?

This is one of the several variances to the standard default model which was described in Answer 514. In this case, a decision is being made by the man that he is willing to donate his sperm but does not wish to undertake any share of responsibility for raising the child, and the woman is deciding that she can raise the child on her own, possibly with the help of a separate partner.

As long as all of the child's basic needs are satisfied, and she is growing up happy and healthy and well-educated, we feel as of Session 248 that this sort of arrangement should be perfectly okay. If hypothetically we were to disapprove of such arrangements for any reason, then either the sperm donor would be forced into a domestic and/or financial relationship under duress, which could end up being net-detrimental to the child's emotional well-being, or else the would-be parents would need to agree not to have the child at all, so she's dead before she's even conceived.

Question 515

What if a sperm donor wishes to have some presence in the child's life?

This generally should be up to the mother's discretion. She is the one assuming full responsibility for raising the child until majority (possibly with the assistance of a separate partner), so she generally needs to be empowered to make all decisions concerning the child's well-being, including as to how much time the child is allowed

to spend with a sperm donor or former husband. This power should be taken away from the mother only if there is a specific and reliable finding by the proper authorities that she is unfit for some reason to make those kinds of decisions.

Question 516

Based on these considerations, should sperm donation (either natural or artificial) always be legal, or should it be legal only under certain circumstances, or should it always be illegal?

Our position as of Session 248 is that sperm donation should always be legal unless there is some individual exception, but the parties to the transaction should be sure to set down the various terms of the agreement in writing, including as to the source(s) of the child's financial support, and as to the allocation of authority to make decisions concerning the child's welfare. No such agreement is valid and enforceable unless it establishes (either explicitly or implicitly) that all the child's basic needs are to be taken care of somehow until majority, and that the parties expect for the child to be raised in a happy and healthy and well-educated manner.

Question 517

Based on these considerations, do we want to make any adjustment to our paradigm about who has the primary responsibility for bringing up a given child who comes into the world?

No big change. It is the primary responsibility of the bio-parents unless they validly agree to some other allocation, or unless they are duly found by the civil authorities to be unfit either to undertake parental responsibility or to assign it to others.

Question 119 (continued)

What role -- if any -- should the Internet play in voting, either now or in the future?

Following paragraph added during the week, and officially ratified in Session 249 (June 2018): When we thought about this subject more during and shortly before 2018, we figured out that a good checking mechanism to facilitate electronic balloting is to assign a unique identifying number to each registered voter in each election. The number would appear on the official Sample Ballot which is postal-mailed to each voter, and nowhere else. When it is time to cast official votes, each voter would enter her assigned number (which should be long and complex enough to mitigate counterfeiting, but also short and easy enough that most voters can enter it into the system without misspelling) on the system, and thus be authorized to vote. Then, after the election, she can look up an official list of votes with all their unique reference numbers, scroll to the page containing her vote, confirm that all the indicated votes match up with her Sample Ballot, and thus be assured that her vote has counted. It still would be theoretically possible to add some fictional votes to the real ones in order to skew the outcome, but the number of any such fictional votes would need to be small enough to keep the total ballot count less than or equal to the number of registered voters in the precinct. When more registered voters actually vote in each election, it becomes much harder for any would-be counterfeiters to make a substantial difference in the election outcome, which is yet another good reason why people should always vote in each election.

Question 518

The surrogate-mother question: Who is considered to be the biological mother when an egg (fertilized or not) from one woman is implanted in another woman's uterus for development until birth?

Potentially tricky: Answer 514.3 defined the 'biological father' in terms of who donated his genetic material to the child, so in Session 249 we were naturally tempted to apply the same logic to the definition of 'biological mother'. However, there is a key difference.

The woman donating her genetic material can be called the 'genetic mother'. But, it is the woman who is actually carrying the child to term who has been providing her nutrients to the child throughout pregnancy. In many cases, she is also going through the arduous process of natural childbirth. She therefore has had far more of a biological connection with the child, and must therefore be considered as the 'biological mother'.

Some people may initially prefer to accord the title of 'birth mother' instead of 'biological mother' to the woman carrying the implanted egg, but we recommend against it for a misnomer: The phrase 'birth mother' implies that the carrier has shown up only for the act of childbirth. As it is, she was carrying the fetus for most or all of the gestation period, providing a critical biological connection the whole time. Thus, the phrase 'biological mother' implies a much broader and deeper and longer-lasting connection than just 'birth mother'.

This means that we need to modify slightly our previous argument about the bio-parents having primary responsibility to raise the kids because they share genetic material. We thus must place this Question before that one in the final packaging.

Question 519

Does the carrier of another woman's egg have any measure of responsibility in bringing up the child?

This should be left up to the parties to establish by agreement on a case-by-case basis. Some women simply want to create genetic extensions of themselves, but may prefer to relegate the children's day-to-day care to other people, whether they might be relatives or 'nannies' or in this case whoever carried the babies to term. Other women are eager to carry children to term even if the eggs come from elsewhere, or else they may be willing to do so in exchange for monetary payments, but either way they may not be interested in raising the children after birth.

We recommend that any such agreement should be in writing, and should cover as many terms as the parties can think of, in order to mitigate the necessity later on of a lengthy court proceeding which could be emotionally stressful for the child.

Question 520

What if the carrier wants to have a presence in the child's life?

Again, generally, this should be up to the parties to establish by advance agreement. However, if primary custody is to remain with the genetic mother, then we generally

recommend as of Session 249 that some ample provision should be made to allow the biological mother to visit with the child from time to time. As previously discussed, when a woman has invested so much of her time and physical effort into pregnancy and childbirth, it is perfectly reasonable that she would want to see how the child turned out whom she labored so hard to produce.

We understand that the genetic mother who has primary custody might be reluctant to allow the biological mother to have any ongoing presence in the child's life, on the possibility that the child might bond with the biological mother more than with the genetic mother. However, the child's needs should come first, and one of those needs is that we should be honest with the child, and explain when she is old enough how she was conceived and birthed, and that there are two women who played roles in her creation and who will therefore want to see her occasionally.

Therefore, any sense of threat or other selfish reluctance aside, for the sake of the child as well as that of the other woman who helped to create her, there should be a standard expectation in any such egg-implantation agreement that the biological mother (i.e., the woman carrying the child to term) should be allowed some reasonable presence in the child's life if desired.

Question 521

To the extent that there are any problems with this system, should surrogate motherhood even be legal, or should it be legal only under certain conditions?

As with the sperm donation discussed in Answer 516, we feel as of Session 249 that surrogate motherhood should always be legal unless there is some specific reason why certain particular individuals are duly found by competent authority not to be suitable candidates to participate in such a process.

Apart from the general rule of Liberty which we have recommended since Answer 11, the specific act of surrogate motherhood provides those women who desire it with a biological fulfillment which they might never have enjoyed otherwise, and it helps to increase the proportion of our children who are planned and who we know will be raised in homes filled with loving care.

If any people still have a hang-up on this sort of action, either because it's non-traditional or because it is not explicitly permitted in the Bible, then they need to get over it. Our evolving technologies are continuing to provide us with numerous opportunities to do things which we never could before, and which the writers of the Bible did not anticipate, but which yet help to make us a happier and healthier and holier society. This is one of those things. Accept it. Embrace it. Celebrate it.

Question 522

Based on the above considerations, do we want to make any further adjustment to our paradigm of who has primary responsibility for bringing up the child?

Only that if multiple fathers and/or mothers are involved in the bio-genetic process of creating the child, then they should agree very early in the process how the responsibility for the child's care is to be allocated among the parties. Any such

agreement should be considered fine and legal if it clearly expresses the expectation that the child's needs will be duly accommodated somehow until adulthood.

Question 523

What happens (or should happen) when one of the responsible parties in such a multi-parental agreement decides to bail?

There are two main levels of enforceability here. First, in any contract involving two parties, in which each party is giving up something in order to get something else, the standard presumption is that either party is injured somehow if the other party bails on the contract prior to any established expiration, and that the injured party is due some amount of compensatory and/or punitive damages from the bailing party.

Second, and perhaps more importantly in this case, the specific abandonment of contractual responsibility for the raising of a child places that child at risk, and in some cases will cause actual injury of some kind to the child. In such a case, the bailing party owes some additional level of damages to the child and/or to the community, as compensation for the extra stress and time consumption which we all need to suffer as a result.

Once you locate and apprehend the would-be bailer, you probably want to leave him unincarcerated so that he can continue to work and provide the agreed-upon level of child support, but you get to tag him with an electronic bracelet or anklet to prevent his trying to escape again. You are also entitled to garnishee his wages as needed.

Question 524

Shall we designate for the child any maximum age, education, testing, or other cutoff when such parental responsibility automatically terminates, or is lessened to any degree?

Observed in Session 249 that this is basically the same as Question 508.2, on when an individual should be considered to have reached adulthood or 'majority'. Parental responsibility is generally presumed to continue all the way until those conditions are all satisfied, unless some other legitimate provision is made in an individual instance, where the qualifier 'legitimate' implies here as a minimum condition that the child's needs are still being adequately satisfied.

Question 525

Looking now at the opposite direction, shall we designate any minimum age below which such parental responsibility does not yet kick in?

In other words, at what point in a child's development does parental responsibility begin? At conception? At birth? Somewhere in between?

We read through the 'black book' notes in Session 249, were only partly satisfied, and decided that we needed to meditate on the topic, and perform some fresh research as indicated, and come back to the Question when our minds were fresher.

We noted preliminarily, though, that the child presumably belongs to the mother until adulthood, so the mother gets to make most decisions concerning the child's

well-being. However, she violates that power if she abuses the child, so we also need to consider when such abuse is allowable and when it is not.

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We received a notice in June 2018 from the Global Challenges Foundation (sponsors of the 'Swedish project') that they had awarded 600k USD to each of three finalists for getting closest to the established criteria, but that none of the 2700+ entrants appeared to meet all of them. We therefore pledged to continue dialoguing with them as the opportunities may be presented, in the hope that maybe we could then express certain concepts more clearly than we may have done in our original paper. And, of course, we would proceed with our A2E end-around if that didn't work.

Question 525 (continued)

Looking now at the opposite direction, shall we designate any minimum age below which such parental responsibility does not yet kick in?

We did meditate on the Question between meetings, such that by Session 250 (June 2018), a couple of key points had occurred to us:

First, notwithstanding the original phrasing of our Answer 524, responsibility for the child's needs probably does not need to be considered as belonging 100% to the parents until the child reaches majority. Rather, it makes more sense to us that the responsibility would shift gradually to the child as she gets closer to majority. It would be strategically unwise to do absolutely everything for the child until some particular point in time, and then suddenly throw her into the water to do everything for herself by herself with no training or other assistance whatsoever. Strategically better to allow/encourage/require her to assume more adult duties over time, from accepting light chores around the home (I always had the trash detail at our Sylmar house, pretty much from the time that I was big enough to move the cans to the curb with the handtruck by myself), to doing more of her own homework without assistance, to driving herself instead of being driven everywhere, to earning an income. Then, by the time that she fulfills the conditions of majority, she will be much better prepared to face the outside world successfully.

Second, in similar manner, while it may possibly be correct that an embryo technically qualifies as 'life' under certain definitions, yet it is also true that an embryo cannot survive for long outside the biological mother's womb or an artificial equivalent. The separation of Birth creates a new and biologically-independent life form, of an order significantly higher than that of a fetus who is still biologically connected to her mother from the inside. Rather than create an unnecessary debate for ourselves by arguing over whether a particular subject at a particular time is either 'life' or 'not-life', with no other options available, and with a very sudden and severe break between those two conditions, it may make more logical sense to consider that a baby growing inside her mother is a 'partial life' or a 'pre-life' or a 'developing life'. In other words, the fetus is in the gradual process of transitioning from non-existence to an independent life form: Because that process generally cannot happen instantaneously (except for a few times in the Bible and in a few science-fiction stories), the child is occupying a transitional level of existence during that transitional term.

In both cases, during gestation and during childhood, the individual is gradually growing from one level of life to another, like driving a truck up a long hill instead of somehow trying to make the climb in a few giant steps. As these processes progress, the child is gradually assuming a greater share of responsibility for her own existence, and the mother is gradually assuming less, until the moment of majority, when the mother's share of responsibility finally reaches zero.

Thus, modifying any previous definitions to the contrary, we are now considering that the mother at the moment of birth possesses 100% of the responsibility of bringing up the child (again, unless satisfactory alternate arrangements are made in advance), and that her share gradually diminishes (maybe at a straightline rate, or maybe in some other pattern) until it reaches zero at majority. Similarly, again notwithstanding any previous definition to the contrary, while a baby does jump from Non-Existence to Existence at the moment of conception, yet she does not become a full Life form until birth, and is only gradually transitioning from Non-Existence to a biologically-independent Life form during the period of gestation, so she then is neither Life nor Not-Life, but rather some third transitional level of Existence.

If we agree on these perceptions, then they can help us to understand the evolving roles and powers of mothers better. After birth and before majority, the mother generally possesses a level of authority over the child's actions, but the child also has a level of ownership over her own life, such that it would constitute a breach and a violation if the mother were to terminate the child's life before majority without her consent, or to abuse the child as the Turpins of Perris (*i.e.*, the 'House of Horrors' couple from the 2018 headlines) allegedly abused their 17 children their whole lives.

Before birth, however, the child is still biologically dependent on her mother, and is fully contained within her mother's body, so it could be argued that the mother has complete ownership and control of the child until birth, such that she is fully empowered to terminate the child's existence before birth if desired. However, it could also be argued that the child is developing an increasing share of ownership over her own life while she is in the womb, such that it still would constitute a violation if the mother were to terminate the child's existence shortly before birth.

For, just as a baby is very close to being a life form shortly before birth, close enough in fact that she can often be delivered prematurely by Caesarean section with a high likelihood of survival and decent health, she does not change in a mere moment from Not-Life to Life. (Remember that news story from a few decades back? Or was it an 'urban legend'? Obstetrician failed in completing a late-term abortion, and then tried to choke the child, shouting "This baby won't die!".) If she is close enough to being a full Life form that it would be possible to deliver her successfully by Caesarean section, then she is also close enough to being a full Life form that it should constitute a criminal violation to terminate her existence without medical necessity.

Back at the other end of the spectrum, then, at the starting point shortly after conception: It often takes women several weeks before they learn that they are pregnant, and it sometimes takes several months. Some women don't find out that they were pregnant until they experience a miscarriage. That being the case, there is not nearly as much difference in a woman's body between pre-pregnancy and early pregnancy as there is between pre-birth and post-birth. It therefore means that there is far less biological consequence when an embryo is either miscarried or aborted at an early stage of pregnancy. There is some consequence definitely, both

to the mother and to the embryo, but still not nearly as much change as occurs to both mother and child as a result of Birth.

Thus, during the very early stages of pregnancy, it could be argued that the mother has a much greater share of ownership over the existence of the child, who presumably would experience little or no suffering or other sensation as a result of either miscarriage or abortion. If that is the case, then it follows that the mother during early pregnancy has a much greater right to terminate the embryo's existence as she deems appropriate.

However, even if the mother enjoys a large majority share of ownership over the child's life during early pregnancy, then that model implies that the child still has some non-zero share of ownership, like the 'junior partner' in a law firm or other closely-held corporation. If that is the case, then doesn't it still constitute a violation to terminate the child even while she is still in an embryonic state?

On a purely philosophical level, yes that might possibly be arguable. However, this is where we need to bring in an additional point of reasoning: In numerous cases, it would be far better for all parties -- including the child in particular -- for the child not to be born than to be born. This may seem like a harsh sentiment, and maybe it actually is, but let's face it some women are not cut out to be mothers, while others are thus cut out but simply are not ready yet. Some women are too poor to support children in a happy and healthy manner. Some women are substance abusers. Some have violent tempers. Some have serious congenital diseases. Many simply do not have enough education or life experience yet on how to be good parents.

That is why we try to teach our kids not to risk pregnancy at all until they are ready to accept the consequences. If we want our kids to abstain from sex until they're old enough, then we must want no children to come from them until later in their lives. If our teenage daughter does get pregnant anyway, then maybe it is in everyone's interests -- including the younger child in particular -- if we abort the fetus in order to recreate the same set of happy conditions which existed in the first place. If it's not unconscionably evil not to conceive the child in the first place, then how evil can it be to abort the child shortly after conception? We claim that it is going to be net-better in many cases, and that we should generally leave it up to the mother's discretion as to whether she should or should not be bringing the child to term.

If we are agreed up to this point, then what we have so far is that it would constitute a severe violation to abort the child in late term because she is very nearly a fully-developed Life form with a high share of ownership over her own life, and that it may constitute a net-good act to abort an embryo during early term when the mother possesses a much higher share of ownership and authority over the child's existence.

If that is the case, then at what point do we change from the mother having power to terminate the embryo to the pre-natal child having a civil Right to Life? We claim from the previous reasoning that there is no one quantum point, but rather that it is a gradual process occurring throughout the pregnancy. The longer that the child is developing, the greater the share that she is accumulating of her Right to Life, such that it gradually will require much more in the way of 'extenuating circumstances' to morally justify the premature termination of the pregnancy.

In sum, there is no set moment -- either at conception or at birth or anywhere in between -- before which the mother always gets to abort and after which she never

does. Rather, her authority to terminate her pregnancy begins at near-100% immediately after conception (so she could take an anti-pregnancy pill the morning after unprotected sex in order to recreate the conditions which were in effect before the sex), and only gradually diminishes to 0% at the time of birth. During that transitional period, her moral power to terminate her pregnancy gradually diminishes, such that she would require increasingly-compelling reasons to justify an abortion as her pregnancy becomes more advanced.

We realize that this may be a disappointment to those of you who prefer for each Question and each Answer to be either Yes or No, Black or White, Right or Wrong, Left or Right. However, we're not creating the Answer, we're just reporting it.

We also realize that it's strategically questionable for our group to adopt a position which is guaranteed to piss everybody off, by suggesting that everybody has been wrong for years on this topic. However, we're not here to be popular, and we call it as we philosophically see it.

There's that. Abortion tackled. Check. Next.....

Question 526

In a case of unplanned pregnancy, during the period after conception and before any decision is made to keep the baby, under what conditions (if any) would aborting the embryo/fetus be either specifically acceptable or specifically unacceptable?

Found in Session 251 (July 2018) to be 'not applicable'. There can be numerous circumstances which in various combinations can indicate that an abortion is clearly warranted, or that it is clearly unwarranted, or that it is a matter of judgment by either the mother or a civic authority of competent jurisdiction. Those decisions need to be made on a case-by-case basis according to the unique combination of circumstances in each individual situation. We therefore do not see that there can be any set rubric beyond the general principle defined in Answer 525.

Question 527

Suppose that a newly-pregnant woman decides that she wishes to have the baby, but the father disagrees: Who gets to decide?

It depends.

The mother generally owns a newly-conceived embryo, and generally gets to decide whether or not to take it to term, because the decision to go forward would require the mother to endure the major discomforts of pregnancy and childbirth. We don't see as of Session 251 that we can morally force anyone to undergo these ordeals if she doesn't want to, although she properly should make that decision very early in the term if she is going to make it at all, before the embryo has a chance to develop any sense of existence or ability to feel pain.

She also gets to decide unilaterally to carry the baby to term, if she is planning to provide for all the child's financial needs between birth and majority, in which case we generally don't morally get to stop her from giving birth unless there is some enormously-compelling exceptional circumstance.

However, if she is expecting the father to provide any level of child support, then he has a financial stake in the decision of whether or not the child should be carried to term. He may not have total veto power, because even a majority of financial share may not fully offset the physical discomfort which the mother could expect to endure if proceeding with the pregnancy. The father's financial investment cannot be directly compared with the mother's physical investment, they are 'apples & oranges', so it is difficult and probably impossible to create a single formula which would apply in all instances, of how much of a financial stake the father would be expected to invest before he gets to decide uh-uh we are not going to have the child.

Even if he doesn't have total veto power, though, he certainly does have a voice in the conversation, and the bigger his voice gets to be as we expect more of a financial investment from him.

We therefore can imagine that there might be some hypothetical set of conditions under which the prospective parents would come before a judge of competent authority, and make their respective cases as to why the child should or should not be carried to term, such as for example if a serious disease in the child is discovered during pregnancy which would mean a far greater financial investment from the father than he was originally anticipating or is now in a position to undertake.

Generally, though, when two fertile individuals of opposite genders decide to have unprotected sex together, a major element of that decision process should be what happens if the woman conceives. Unless the parties make some other arrangement in advance, the standard default expectation is that the father should provide the majority (if not the entirety) of the financial support needed to take care of the child, not because he is expected to have a higher earning capacity than the mother (we want this paradigm to go away), but rather in order to offset at least partially the physical investment which the mother is making in pregnancy and childbirth, in addition to any personal care which she may provide to the child after birth.

If you are a man who wants to have unprotected sex with a fertile woman, then you should be expected to know this, either from the above reasoning or else because we make sure to teach it to you as part of the primary-school curriculum. You therefore should generally have no valid excuse if you have unprotected sex without having reached an alternative oral or written agreement with your partner, and if she comes up to you in a couple of weeks and announces that she is pregnant. You may have a shot at convincing a judge that the pregnancy should be stopped, or that it should proceed only without any financial support from the father. In most cases, though, you're going to be stuck. If you don't want any financial responsibility for the child's upbringing, then don't have unprotected sex without having reached a prior agreement with your partner, expressly absolving you from any such responsibility.

Question 528

If a woman has the sole or greater power to have a child, or even to be pregnant at all, then does she also have the sole or greater power to abandon the pregnancy without cause prior to some given cutoff time?

Also N/A, just like Question 526. It's all a sliding scale, where the requirements for aborting very early in the term are very light, and where increasingly-compelling

reasons are needed in order to justify abortion as the term progresses, so there is no set cutoff or other universal parameter.

Question 529

Should this completed paradigm be enacted and enforced worldwide, or nationwide, or left to smaller jurisdictions to tweak as desired?

The moral and fiscal principles driving our previous discussion apply to all people everywhere at all stages of history, so that is a factor arguing in favor of universal legislation. However, abortion understandably still is a very sensitive and controversial topic, and it might not be net-good to try to force all people in the World to forever adopt any position on the topic which is different from what they grew up believing, so that argues against any kind of one-size-fits-all legislation.

Even the national level probably would be too big for this topic, because we had already seen in our real world as of Session 251 how polarizing it can be (certainly within America), and it's critically important that we are able to live together as a peaceful and civil Nation if we are to remain happy and prosperous.

Conversely, if you allowed Localities to decide for themselves, then it would be too easy for girls to drive secretly to the neighboring City or County in order to get the abortion which is denied in their hometown, so it would not really achieve anything.

State level probably is net-best, then. That level is large enough that traveling to obtain secret abortions would be non-trivial, but it's small enough to allow moral variations to exist within our harmonious society. Also, as judges decide whether the financial concerns are too severe to allow different pregnancies to continue, they will have a sizable sampling of similar cases within that State to help guide them, whereas cases from outside those jurisdictions might be based on different economic criteria, and may therefore have limited applicability.

Question 530

To the extent that abortion is allowed anywhere in our society at any time under any circumstances, to what extent -- if ever -- should it be funded at any level from public resources?

The initial temptation is to say no, you're on your own. If the two of you were irresponsible enough to conceive a child without having sufficient resources between you to raise her in a happy and healthy manner, then you shouldn't expect the rest of society to bail you out. Besides, in most cases an abortion is not a medical necessity, so it usually would not fall under the normal conditions of universal healthcare. Finally, if we were to subsidize all abortions fully, then people would keep having unprotected sex whenever they want, knowing that The State will always be there to kill the children resulting from the unions.

However, there's another key point to consider: If the parents are collectively too poor to afford an abortion, then they also are too poor to undertake the far greater costs of raising the child after birth. Any child born into such a poor and undersupportive family is likely to grow up very unhappy, and possibly unhealthy, so that suffering alone may be sufficient to justify a publicly-funded abortion before the child is old enough to know or feel anything. In addition, a poor child like that could

easily end up turning to crime at some point in his life, and/or may draw monetary assistance from public programs, or in some other way may present a net-blight to society. Thus, as distasteful and expensive as those repeated abortions may be to us, they may yet end up being in our collective self-interest.

So okay, with a certain amount of reluctance, we agree as of Session 251 to provide some funding of abortions among our poorer citizens, in order to help prevent a far greater social cost later. However, we shouldn't fund the whole thing, for otherwise the pregnancies and abortions would continue without letup. We will still therefore charge a 'deductible' or 'copayment' to the parents for each procedure. If they can't afford it now, then they will owe it to us, to be collected by wage garnishment once their income eventually reaches some particular level to be determined.

Question 531

What should happen if a financially-incapable parent or couple continues to crank out kids, placing a growing drain on the resources of The State?

As we indicated in Answer 510, we continue to feel as of Session 251 that couples should generally aim for no more than two live births per family, and we get to impose penalties if they insist on reproducing at a higher rate.

However, we can exempt from punishment those couples who establish through bonding or insurance or income verification or some other means that they are both willing and able to undertake the extra responsibility of extra children.

If you are not in a position to establish sufficient financial means for more than a certain number of children, but you insist on having additional children anyway (we have heard of some families doing this deliberately in order to claim additional Welfare benefits, but some other families might simply be irresponsible), then at some point we can resort to the third option presented in Answer 510, to sterilize the offending individuals, although the concept is understandably distasteful to some.

Question 532

To what extent shall it be considered socially or legally acceptable for a child to be raised by a single parent?

It has been asserted by many people (and we often hear the assertions repeated near both Mother's Day and Father's Day) that a child requires -- or at least strongly benefits from -- the strength of a male father and the tenderness of a female mother. There may be a level of logical merit in this assertion, but as of Session 252 (July 2018) we could not positively conclude it, because there were far too many counterexamples of children who had been successfully raised in a happy and healthy manner by single parents, or by two parents of the same gender.

Conversely, whereas numerous serial killers and other serious criminals grew up without a combination of male and female parents, numerous others did grow up with that combination, so we know from experience that having both a male and a female parent is no guarantee that the child will not turn to crime at some point.

Finally, with all the children still living in foster homes awaiting adoption (a problem which has existed now for many decades), we should not make the solution more

difficult by denying adoption to prospective parents who are single but who otherwise possess all the right qualifications to be good parents. In some cases, it might even be net-beneficial to the child, because a single parent could devote more of her love and attention to the child, instead of dividing her time between the child and a domestic partner.

Question 533

To what extent shall it be considered socially or legally acceptable for a child to be raised by two homosexual parents?

Basically the same reasoning as Answer 532: If the prospective parents are deemed by proper authority to be qualified in all other respects, including as to their financial means and their emotional capacity to love and care for the child, then we should not allow their genders or their sexual preferences to be a dealbreaker.

The only caveat which we would add is that any such parents should not be seeking to teach the child that homosexuality is the one and only correct way to go (not that any of them would, for I have never heard any gay person express this concept, but some other folks seem to fear that, so it's stated here just as a precaution), just as heterosexual parents should not be seeking to prohibit the child from developing any natural homosexual tendencies. It's all good, it's all okay, any love is better than any war, and those are the lessons which we should be teaching to all our children, regardless of the gender identities or sexual preferences of their parents.

Question 534

To what extent shall it be considered socially or legally acceptable for a child to be raised by more than two parents concurrently?

There is a certain amount of traditional charm associated with the idea that any child must have a maximum of two parents, and as of Session 252 most of our civil records and genealogy charts have been set up to allow for a maximum of one father and a maximum of one mother.

However, it seems to us from a philosophical perspective that the welfare of the child should be the predominating factor. If it so happens that you have a 'threesome' or 'foursome' or 'N-some' living in a single household, and if they wish to adopt a child, or if a child is born naturally to some combination of the adult residents, then we see no reason why they should not be allowed to proceed.

We recall from the earlier discussion our finding that the two bio-parents are usually going to be more poised to love and care for the child than an unrelated 'village' likely would be, but of course there can be numerous exceptions. Allowing more than two adult caregivers within the child's home often enables the child to benefit from more levels of financial support, and also enables the specific tasks of childcare to be divided among more caregivers, thereby making it more likely that all those tasks will be duly discharged.

Only caveat which we would offer is that there probably should be a clearly-defined 'chain of command' among the parents, whether any of them are biological parents or not, so that it will always be clear with minimal argument who has final authority if there ever is a difference of opinion as to where the child goes to school or what

subjects she should study or what foods she should eat or what clothes she should wear or what Internet sites she should visit or anything else. If there is any doubt or disagreement as to who should have authority over whom, then we suggest a default model in which the bio-mother has the highest authority, the bio-father has second-highest, and any other parents are ranked according to their chronological ages, on the presumption that older parents are likely to have greater experience and education and maturity to make those kinds of decisions in the child's best interests. However, the parents may agree to any other arrangement if they can.

Question 535

What last name should the child get?

As the original paragraph in our 'black book' of preliminary ideas observes, there are numerous possibilities here, including to take both last names somehow, or to allocate the last names of the parents according to the genders of the kids.

As that paragraph also observes, though, it's probably a good idea here to consider the essence of why we have last names in our culture at all. It may not make much difference within a small tribal culture, but in a large and complex society like ours we have often found it helpful (including for purposes of disambiguation) to associate children with their parents and siblings through the use of shared surnames.

Trick is, whereas it's pretty easy to combine the surnames of both parents if you want to (either through hyphenation or by using the mother's surname as the child's middle name, as in the example of Lyndon Baines Johnson, who was the son of Samuel Johnson and Rebekah Baines), you can't keep doing that throughout all generations indefinitely, because the names would eventually get impossibly long. At some point, if you are going to continue having last names at all, it will be necessary to decide which of your ancestors' surnames should survive in yours, and which should be jettisoned as being insufficiently relevant.

That can be a very difficult choice to make, and can also be a very unfair one. Children often possess some combination of attributes from dozens of known ancestors, and to glorify any one ancestor over any other through surname survival can be perceived (understandably enough) as an insult to whichever ancestor gets 'marginalized' by having her surname jettisoned from the name of the child.

One possible alternative which we considered in Session 252 would be to have each offspring take the surnames of both parents, and then decide at the time of marriage which of the two surnames should be passed to the next generation. This has some merit, but it only delays the 'marginalization' problem and doesn't solve it, and you very easily could have a living grandparent who would feel slighted by not being selected to 'survive' within the grandkids' names.

Thus, if we are to keep the practice of surnaming our children at all (and we see no reason not to), then we need a standard convention which can be easily understood and accepted by everyone, so that no one need feel insulted or slighted as a result.

Many modern cultures have resorted to using the domestic father's surname for all his kids, even if (as in the case of the Brady girls from TV) some of them had different biological fathers. This convention appears to have stemmed from the long-standing paradigm that the father basically 'owned' his entire family (wife and

all), either because he usually was the physically strongest and/or because he usually provided most or all of the family's financial support. However, this paradigm is beginning to have less applicability in our modern culture, because there are more children being raised by single mothers, or by dual parents with dual significant incomes.

We don't want to perpetuate any model -- either at the family level or among Nations or anywhere in between -- in which the physically-strongest entity gets to 'own' and control everyone else, because that simply leads to the perpetuation of wars and bullying and domestic violence and other very bad things.

Assigning surnames on the basis of financial investment makes a certain amount of logical sense, but it also carries a couple of problems. One problem is that the proportion of financial investments by the parents can change over time, and we wouldn't want to confuse the child and rewrite all the civil records every time that it does. Another problem is that (as we noted in Answer 527) it is difficult (if not impossible) to compare any financial investment by the father with the physical investment made by the mother as a result of pregnancy and childbirth, in addition to any hands-on care provided to the child after birth. Thus, financial investment may not be a satisfactory measure for determining the child's last name.

There is a certain amount of charm to the idea of giving the father's surname to all the male children, and the mother's surname to all the female children, on the premise that boys are more likely to take after their dads while girls are more likely to take after their moms. We have no strenuous objection if any particular family decides to do things this way, but we recognize that it carries the flaw that it can be confusing for two or more full siblings to go through the same school with different surnames. Besides, some of those kids may decide when they reach majority that they identify more with their opposite-gender parents, such that they would prefer to change their own surnames to match theirs, which of course we should always allow on an exceptional basis, but which we generally should discourage as requiring too much extra administrative effort on the part of the local Records departments.

What may therefore be net-best overall is to presume that the mother's surname generally should apply to all her kids. We have previously found (see Answer 525) that the mother generally has (or should have) supreme control of the child until majority, owing to her huge physical investment of pregnancy and childbirth, which as a matter of standard definition we are recognizing as generally overriding any financial support which may be provided by the bio-father and/or any other adult caregiver(s). Her prolonged intimate contact with the child will very often exert an influence over that child's personality and 'identity' which can add to -- and in some cases even supersede -- any influence which may come from simple genetics.

In sum, we perceive as of Session 252 that the mother generally has considerably more influence over the child's personality and 'identity' than the father has, because of her far more extensive biological connection as well as her genetic contribution, to say nothing of any additional care which she may provide to the child after birth. It therefore is more likely on average that the kids (even the male ones) will take after the mother more than the father. Therefore, if we want to use surnames to provide convenient labels of who people are and where they come from, it seems to make more sense to default to the mother's surname, although couples get to arrive at alternate arrangements if they can.

Adoption of this standard convention would make our culture 'matrilineal' instead of 'patrilineal', which many men would naturally view as a threat, and would try to defeat with all the testosterone which they could muster. However, we are finding that this probably would constitute a net-improvement in our society, for a couple of key reasons (and maybe y'all can think of some others): One key reason is that it would help to offset and countervail the centuries of domination which males have unfairly exerted over females, simply because the men had the physical strength and the moral weakness to do so. Another key reason is that our male-dominated society has been responsible for numerous wars and genocides and other civil calamities, whereas a society dominated by women might stand a greater chance of fostering love and nurturing over war and conquest.

There, how's that?

Question 536

Given that many households now (and will continue to) contain single-parent or double-income families, and that it is increasingly unlikely that a party of primary responsibility can stay with the child full-time, shall we expand our child-care infrastructure, and if so then how shall such expansion be managed?

We feel as of Session 253 (July 2018) that this should be decided at the local level, and implemented by local authorities as may be desired.

For those children who are too young to attend an actual school, some localities may already have enough facilities open for enough hours that most parents can drop off their kids on the way to work, and pick them up on the way back.

If a particular locality appears to be deficient in this important area, then there may be an opportunity for private industry to step in and offer additional facilities in exchange for reasonable compensation by the participating families. Or, if the local free market is not responsive enough, then local government may wish to make this a taxable function, probably organized at the County level within the Employment Development Department, because we need adequate child-care options in order for families and localities and our Nation to perform all the work which we need in order to be happy and prosperous.

From our 'black book' of preliminary ideas, a certain early consultant recommended that larger companies may wish to provide child care on their own premises as an employee benefit, and take the expense for qualified professional monitors as needed, in order to help attract the best employees, who would get to reduce their driving times and be closer in the event of any emergency. Sounds good to us.

Question 537

To what extent does a parent or other 'responsible party' have authority over what a child in his/her care does or does not do, prior to majority?

We treated this before, but to summarize: Mother has 100% ownership of child at conception, and ownership level gradually diminishes to 0% at birth. As the responsible party by default (unless other arrangements are made which are not net-

dangerous to the child), she also maintains a level of control over her child's actions, beginning with 100% at birth, and gradually diminishing to 0% at majority.

Question 538

How shall any such parental authority be enforced or otherwise enacted, in the event that the child refuses to obey?

This is a very tricky area. The idea of 'corporal punishment' was long accepted within our culture as being within the province of the parent to decide. In more recent years, the perception has developed that spanking and other such inflictions of physical pain constitute abuse, and therefore are not within the parent's province.

In the face of what appears to be a significant and highly-important social progress, we certainly are not going to come forward and assert that we should go back to spanking our kids. For, not only should we not be causing our kids to suffer, and not only can such abuses create a long-term emotional scarring, but (as we noted in Session 39 while considering Question 34) inflicting corporal punishment sends a message to the child that physical force is an acceptable way of getting what you want, a paradigm which we are seeking to program out of our entire global society.

On the other hand, though, parents do need some way of impressing upon the child which behaviors are acceptable and which are not.

Reasoning with the child usually works better when the child is older, but often doesn't work when the child is too young to understand complex decision procedures. Parents have therefore often felt it necessary to resort to the old 'because I said so' response to the child's inevitable query as to why he needed to put away the bright shiny sharp thing that he had just found in the kitchen.

No one participating in our group when this Question was raised in Session 253 was an expert in child psychology or anything like that, so we could form no precise and authoritative recommendation for the uncertain parent reading this passage. Probably best to simply follow the recommendations offered by the preeminent child psychologists of the day, which we would seek to make a standard element of our primary-school curriculum, and which could be updated in the 'continuing education' which we might make available (probably through a combination of churches and civic organizations) to young couples who are closer to becoming actual parents.

When in doubt, though, resist as much as you can the urge to strike with physical violence. You may feel momentarily better, but the child is likely to feel far worse. Also, you may succeed in stopping and discouraging the specific unacceptable behavior in question, but you are also likely to instill a sense of fear and resentment and retaliation in the child, which could create far greater problems in the long term.

Instead, when the child is still too young to understand straightforward reasonings and explanations, and when some kind of punishment is still needed in order to 'get the child's attention', probably better in most cases to use more passive and less traumatic forms, such as the denial of allowances or other privileges which the child would ordinarily receive.

Also, in some cases it might be useful to look at why the child is acting out in some unacceptable manner, because there might be destructive or artistic aptitudes being displayed which maybe can be channeled to useful purposes.

Question 539

If corporal punishment is seen to be generally bad, then what amount or degree -- if any -- shall be judged legally acceptable?

As indicated in Answer 538, this may need to change over time as we learn more about what works and doesn't work when it comes to the behavioral development of a child, including as to the hypothetical possibility which we may discover someday that we have collectively been too lenient in the upbringing of our children.

We feel as of Session 253 that legislators should review this matter on a periodic basis, and take testimony from psychologists and child-care experts and any other individuals who can provide authoritative education or experience as to whether our then-current legal standards need to be either tightened or relaxed.

The standards can apply differently in different States, so that we can all see over time which standards tend to be net-best overall, and which need to be adjusted.

Question 540

What sort of penalty or other remedy shall we consider applicable to the parent or caregiver who violates such a law?

Absent any specific protest or counter-suggestion from anyone, we are content as of Session 253 to defer to the federal Sentencing Guidelines referenced in Section I-F.

However, parental abuse is different from ordinary child abuse, because removing the parent by incarceration might actually create additional problems for the child, whereas in other cases it could be the best thing that you could possibly do.

Also should remember, though, that you are unlikely to get the parent to stop using force by using force yourself. It simply reinforces the same tired and dangerous paradigm. Set the example for how you want the parent to behave by using the same tactic yourself, counseling as to why the behavior in question is unacceptable, and training on more constructive and less harmful ways of interacting with the child.

Question 541

What corrective action -- if any -- shall a parent or other responsible party take when a child expresses a preference for writing, drawing, eating, etc., with his/her left hand?

Some psychologists have asserted (at least as far back as 1914, by Lewis M. Terman (1879-1958) in his book 'The Hygiene of the School Child') that forcing a child to write with her unnatural hand can cause stuttering and cognitive dysfunction and other neurological problems. Others have debated the assertion, and as of Session 253 the jury apparently remained open. However, it does seem to be generally accepted that the different halves of the brain generally perform different functions, and that the functionality of a natural lefty is different from that of a righty.

The fact that one 'handedness' is more predominant in our current gene pool does not signify that it is 'correct' or 'net-better'. To the contrary, we observe that some of our most brilliant people (including Franklin and Da Vinci) were natural left-handers.

Although the expert opinions still appear to differ, it seems intuitive to us that trying to reprogram a child's brain and body to operate in an unnatural way is liable in many cases to create more problems than it might solve, so on the side of caution we strongly recommend: Leave the kids alone!

Besides, if there still is insufficient evidence to conclude definitely that changing hand emphasis can lead to brain damage, then there also still is insufficient evidence to conclude definitely that it does not. Thus, those of you who would ever consider telling a child to change her hand emphasis would be operating on the basis of an unproven scientific assertion, and who are you to be taking those kinds of risks with a child's mental health?

Nature has done a pretty good job of allowing the continued physical and mental development of the human species over the last several millennia, and as far as we can tell left-handedness has been a part of this natural order for all that time. It even seems to have done some people some good. Therefore, in the absence of a conclusive scientific finding that left-handedness is *de facto* bad, we strongly suggest that you defer to our common Mother, and let Nature take her course.

Question 542

What should happen when it is discovered that a parent or other responsible party has attempted to force a child to write with her unpreferred hand?

That's easy. Any parent or teacher or other monitor who attempts to force a child to write with her non-natural hand should be well, actually, probably better not to complete that thought. As a natural left-hander, who needed to learn to throw with his right hand because gloves for lefties were not readily available at that time, but who otherwise was lucky enough to escape the trauma of being forced to write with the 'correct' hand, the Moderator confessed in Session 253 to having some pretty strong personal feelings on this topic, and to finding it easy to slip into the temptation of recommending the most severe punishments possible upon those who would mess up a child's brain like that in the name of abstract social conformity.

However, we must follow our own advice from Answer 538, and not resort to physical torture (no matter how good it may feel to us in the face of such evil) when saner methods of dealing with the problem are available.

We should make sure that we write it into the first-grade curriculum that it is okay to write with whatever hand feels more comfortable. Don't ignore the point if you are the teacher, but make sure to express it proactively, even if you don't think that it's going to apply directly within your classroom, and even if it actually does not. Even if all of your students happen to be right-handed, it still is important to teach that writing with one's left hand is okay, so that they will not be inclined to bully a lefty for being 'different', and so that they will be more likely to carry on that critical idea if they later become parents or teachers themselves.

We should also reinforce the point in any adult classes which we offer on Parenting, in either public or private venues.

In case some particular school or some particular teacher may ever drop the ball on this one, we suggest that the point should also be emphasized in whatever children's programming may serve the purposes in future which *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* and *Sesame Street* and *The Electric Company* served during the latter decades of the 20th century. The shows can point out not only the idea that writing with the left hand is okay, but also what to do if anyone tries to convert you, namely to feel free to report the problem to other competent authorities. Yes. Tattle. Kids have suffered far too much for generations because they felt that they should not tattle on the adults and other kids who were abusing them in different ways, and we need to get away from that whole mindset forever.

So yes, do tell someone if anyone ever tries to make you write with a hand that is not comfortable for you.

When we do catch a parent or teacher or other perpetrator who is guilty of trying to make a child write with an unnatural hand, probably best to require counseling to correct the behavior, instead of giving in to our more visceral temptations.

Subsection III-B-4: Divorce

Question 543

Are we content with the divorce rate in this country?

Before we can consider this Question, we need to define our terms.

As of Session 253, different people used different methods to derive the current 'divorce rate', and the different methods tended to result in different rates.

According to the article "What Is the Divorce Rate, Really?", appearing on 2-Feb-2017 in *Psychology Today*, the rate of divorce at that time was probably in the range of 42-45%, and rose closer to 50% if you included marital disruptions which didn't lead to formal divorce.

According to the table "Marriage, Divorce, and Widowhood Rates Per 1,000 Men and Women Aged 15 and Over* for the Nation, Regions, and States: 2009" [*The minimum age which they selected for this survey is very interesting for our discussion as to Question 487.], appearing in the publication "Marital Events of Americans: 2009", posted on the website of the United States Census Bureau, the marriage rate was 19.1 per 1,000 for men, and 17.8 per 1,000 for women. The divorce rate was 9.2 per 1,000 for men, and 9.7 per 1,000 for women.

Because the marriage and divorce figures were looking at different sets of people (that is, those who were married at that time and those who were divorced at that time), it probably would be a mathematical 'leap' to conclude that the rate of married people who get divorced is equal to the above divorce rates divided by the above marriage rates. However, it can serve as an approximation and a general 'order of magnitude', so we are looking at approximately $9.2 / 19.1 = 48\%$ for men, and $9.7 / 17.8 = 54.5\%$ for women.

The website for the Census Bureau went on to indicate (when you searched on the term 'divorce') that the primary data on divorces came from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), you tell me why if you can. We therefore followed the link to <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/marriage-divorce.htm>, which led to a page showing the current rate of 6.9 new marriages per 1,000 of total population (total of 2,245,404 out of 325M of population), and 3.2 new divorces (827,261 divorces in 44 reporting states and DC), all occurring within the year 2016.

The source table for the preceding years showed that the annual marriage rate remained at 6.8-6.9% since 2009, before which it declined from 8.2% in 2000. Meanwhile, the divorce rate for the reporting jurisdictions had decreased some to its recent 3.2% from 4.0% in 2000.

With both rates declining fairly steadily over a 16-year period, it becomes a little more reliable to take the quotient of the two figures as the approximate likelihood that a marriage starting today will eventually lead to divorce. This figure would be $4.0 / 8.2 = 49\%$ in 2000, and $3.2 / 6.9 = 46\%$ in 2016.

Thus, while specific formulas and criteria may differ with different sources, a preponderance of the figures suggests that we are looking at a divorce rate of between 40-50%. Question now is, how do we feel about that?

We suggest a two-fold response: On one hand, we're glad at least that it's not over 50%, at least not yet. If it were, if we could expect more marriages to lead to divorce than not, then the contract and ceremony of marriage would have very little real-life value. We therefore can at least comfort ourselves that most marriages will be successful.

On the other hand, the effective divorce rate is still way too close to 50% for our liking. Our 'inner libertarian' tells us that we should be respecting people's right to divorce, just as we respect their right to marry (!), and that we therefore should not be experiencing or expressing any hangup about the divorce rate, no matter how high it is now or ever becomes in the future. However, the high divorce rate -- even though it still is blessedly less than 50% -- yet gives married people an increased level of insecurity and anxiety.

As we explored in Answer 501, one of the reasons why people formally marry in the first place -- instead of informally 'hanging out' -- is to create a greater level of security and stability in their domestic environment. They don't anymore want to be living day-to-day, with their partner free to bail without penalty at any time, and they would like to rest with the comfortable knowledge that they never again need to worry about 'dating' new people from scratch. This goal is not fully achieved if the chances are still quite high that their marriage will end prematurely, and that people might need to endure the 'single' experience again earlier than they anticipated.

We therefore guess that we are looking at a level of mixed feelings. If that many marriages are turning out to be unsustainable, then it probably is better to allow the partners to sever the contract than require them both to suffer. But, we still wish that the divorce rate were not quite so high as it is, so that marriages can be more reliable and therefore more meaningful. We also are concerned about the emotional impact of divorce on any children who might be involved.

Question 544

What steps -- if any -- can we take to reduce it?

We are not entirely sure as of Session 253 that that's within our province. Even when there are kids involved, and even if we are agreeing as a society to assume backup responsibility for their welfare (as we stated in Answer 513), it yet may not be our place to try to reduce the divorce rate artificially, by requiring some couples to stay together who would be better off apart.

We are okay with having divorce cases decided by a judge if kids are involved, and maybe even if not, so that an objective and disinterested and educated outsider can assess from the facts whether a divorce is actually indicated, or whether the partners should try again to keep it together. And, perhaps we can agree, at least within a particular Region or State or County, that our judges generally should aim for fewer divorce grantings and more marriage re-tries. In the end, though, a decision must be made which is in the best interests of all the parties actually involved (including any kids), whereas any designated social aim (such as reducing our overall divorce rate) should take a secondary priority.

Question 545

What do we consider divorce really to be, in light of our earlier definition of marriage?

Divorce is a premature termination of the marriage contract, and so it attempts to recreate the conditions which existed before the marriage. This is not always easy, if any children have resulted from the marriage, and/or if the partners have made unequal financial contributions to their joint assets and expenses. However, the general aim is to allow the partners to lead separate and independent lives going forward, at least to the extent that they practically can.

Question 546

Do we want to establish a standard mechanism -- possibly to be adopted or rejected or modified by individual couples at their discretion -- whereby a party that abrogates the marriage contract, either by filing for divorce or by committing some act (infidelity, physical violence, abandonment, etc.) that violates the terms of the contract, is liable for civil and/or criminal penalty?

We probably don't need to establish such a mechanism, because the expectations and legal precedents seemed largely to be in place already as of Session 253. Any party who breaches any contract can owe damages to the other party, with the amount of damage varying according to the relative severity of the breach, and how much damage it caused (either monetary or otherwise), to be determined by an objective judge or jury if needed.

In the specific case of a marriage contract, any party can be sued for damage who violates any element of that covenant, or who unilaterally files for divorce. The suit can assert that additional damages were perpetrated upon any children by the alleged actions of the defendant. In any case, the suit should be adjudicated by an objective judge or jury of competent jurisdiction, and the outcome should be subject to appeal, under the terms established in Section I-F.

Question 547

If the remedies for unilateral divorce are left up to the parties to decide in prenuptial agreements as they see fit, then doesn't it make the whole scene very unromantic?

Not really. The prospect of divorce is already pretty unromantic as it is, but apparently it's going to continue to happen, so we felt in Session 253 that we just need to manage it as peacefully as we practically can. For some couples, that is going to mean that they should execute prenuptial agreements (that's pronounced *pre-nup-chel*, not *pre-nup-choo-el*, there's no extra 'u' in that last phoneme, even the attorneys in 'L.A. Law' were guilty on that one), establishing as many conditions for bilateral or unilateral divorce as they can successfully manage to anticipate.

Question 540 (continued)

What sort of penalty or other remedy shall we consider applicable to the parent or caregiver who violates such a law?

Amended in Session 254 (July 2018): In addition, parental abuse is different from 'regular' child abuse in that the parent occupied a position of trust, and then betrayed that trust as well as the child, potentially damaging the child's willingness to trust anyone ever again, so an appropriate addition to the normal sentencing guidelines for 'regular' child abusers will probably be in order in most cases.

Question 548

Are we happy or unhappy with the current community-property laws on the books of many States?

This is another area where we started out with mixed feelings.

Moderator noted that he was a professional accountant at the time when this Question was considered by the group in Session 254, and that he naturally took to the idea that in a dual-income household, the incomes of the two partners should be tracked separately, as well as their respective contributions toward any assets (homes, bank accounts, etc.) owned by the community, and/or any expenses (rent, utilities, etc.) incurred by the community.

From that angle, it makes it a lot easier to consider the partners as having equivalent operating authority over the household, if they are contributing equivalent amounts toward their joint assets and expenses, and if the household chores and any other responsibilities are likewise split in some equivalent manner.

However, while this model may work for some couples, it probably would not be applicable to everyone. The partners may not be both willing and able to split their financial contributions 50-50, and there may also be a significant difference in the distribution of household responsibilities, especially if one of the partners is getting pregnant and having babies.

As we discussed in Answer 527, it would constitute a difficult 'apples-to-oranges' comparison to try to represent anyone's physical efforts within the household in

terms of financial dollars. For couples in that position, it doesn't do a lot of good to track their incomes separately, or to try allocate their overall contributions to the household in monetary terms. A community-property approach may be better for those couples, where the partners earn whatever financial dollars they can but everything is considered as joint income, and where they come to some kind of case-by-case arrangement as to allocation of any household responsibilities.

So, different approaches seem to work for different couples, with the primary differentiating factor appearing to be whether or not the couple has one or more children. If they do not have any children, then they probably can earn independent incomes and make independent household contributions, which they can track separately as though they were unmarried housemates, so that neither partner is assuming an excessive financial burden. If they do have one or more children, then the mother will have exerted a much greater physical investment in the household than the father could ever expect to manage, and so the father will generally be expected to excel significantly in income-earning and in financial contributions to the household, again as we established in Answer 527, so a community-property approach might be more applicable, in which all incomes and expenses and assets and liabilities belong jointly to the community, regardless of individual source.

Trick is, several States within the U.S. have attempted to pigeonhole all their residents into one particular category. Specifically, as of 1984, the States of Arizona, California, Idaho, Louisiana, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, and Washington (interestingly, all along the western and southwestern borders of our Nation) had community-property laws on their books [source = Janice E. Grieder *et al.*, "Law and the Life Insurance Contract", Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1984], and all other States did not.

In sum, then, no, we are not happy with most/all of the community-property laws currently in existence. We feel that they are okay to apply to families with children, but that childless couples should not be required to abide by those standards if they prefer to track their incomes and community contributions separately. In our opinion, any community-property laws currently in existence should be rewritten as needed in order to reflect this option.

Question 549

When a unilateral divorce happens to a couple with one or more children, who normally should get custody, or should it be shared?

The group's first thought in Session 254 was that the mother generally should be granted custody by default, again because she exerted by far the greater amount of physical effort in the creation of the children, and often more in their upbringing as well. The father could apply for a modification to this default, if he could make a case before a court of competent jurisdiction that the mother was somehow unfit to maintain primary custody, and then the court could decide, subject to the appeal procedures described in Section I-F.

However, our 'black book' of early notes reminded us of a point which we had conceived more than 20 years earlier, that a mother who unilaterally terminates a marriage contract has shown herself to be incapable of living up to every commitment made, and therefore can present a negative influence upon her kids.

Upon further reflection, this latter point made a lot more sense to us, and not just for that reason. If we have a standard rule in place that the party who comes out and announces 'I want a divorce' -- or who unilaterally files for divorce -- immediately and automatically and permanently waives any rights of custody of the couple's children, then we might see a lot fewer divorces in this Nation (which would help us with our Answer 543), so that now is our primary recommendation.

In this case, it would be the partner seeking a divorce who would be asking a judge to consider modifying the default model, on the basis of an alleged showing that the other party is somehow unfit to be the primary parent.

Question 550

Should the guilty party (that is, the partner filing unilaterally for divorce) be required to pay child support?

Addressed in Session 254: Primary scenario to consider is the 'ordinary' case of a hetero couple who had one or more biological children of their own. (Other scenarios may use these principles as a general guideline, to be modified by the court on a case-by-case basis if applicable.) Primary scenario breaks down further, according to which party files for divorce, and whether either is alleged to be an unfit parent.

If the father is the one initiating a unilateral divorce, then the mother has primary custody by default, to be modified only if she is duly shown to be unfit somehow. If she is not unfit, and if she therefore is retaining custody of the children, then the father is still liable for whatever child support he was contributing before the divorce. He does not get to escape responsibility for child support by also escaping from the marriage. If anything, as indicated in Answers 523 and 546, the father who bails on the contract may owe some additional damages to wife and/or children, to offset the emotional and logistical difficulties which the remaining parties will need to endure.

If the father is the one initiating a unilateral divorce, and if he successfully demonstrates that the mother is too unfit to retain primary custody, then he is assuming the primary financial responsibility for the child's upbringing, so the question of additional child support is not applicable to him. It could be argued in some cases that the mother should provide some level of supplemental child support if she can, because it's not fair to make the man do everything if she effectively bails on the contract to raise children together. However, in many cases, the mother will be unable to contribute any supplemental child support, if for example she is an alcoholic or a drug addict, and therefore is unable to hold down a steady job. So, do get the judgment for supplemental child support from the mother if you can, but don't assume that she will always (or ever) be able to satisfy the judgment.

Now then, let's look at the other side:

If the mother is the one initiating a unilateral divorce, and if the father is not duly shown to be an unfit parent, then by Answer 549 he generally should have primary custody of their children. Again, though, as in the above paragraph, it's generally not fair to make him do everything when the original idea was for the couple to raise their kids together. And, since she is unilaterally filing for divorce, we may assume that she is able to hold down a steady job, and we therefore may expect her to contribute a substantial amount of supplemental child support to the father.

Finally, if the mother is the one initiating a unilateral divorce, and if she does duly demonstrate that the father is unfit to be a primary parent, then she generally should retain primary custody. However, the father doesn't get to escape his child-support responsibilities by being enough of an asshole to warrant the granting of a unilateral divorce, so he still should be liable for some amount of child support to the mother. However, as in the case of the unfit mother, the unfit father may have some problem which prevents him from holding down a steady job, and from being able to satisfy a child-support judgment. The mother therefore may need to be prepared to do everything alone, so you would be wise to consider this possibility before you marry the jerk in the first place.

Question 551

What should the parent without custody have in the way of visitation rights?

If the party being divorced has been duly shown to be unfit, then he/she has basically waived any visitation rights, so it is up to the party with custody to decide how much visitation (if any) by the other party is to be permitted.

If neither party has been duly shown to be unfit, then the party initiating a unilateral divorce has broken the marriage contract, and therefore could be argued as having effectively waived any visitation rights, such that it would be up to the party being divorced to decide how much visitation (if any) the divorcing party should be allowed. However, it's easy in such situations for the divorced party to feel vindictive, and to want to deny all visitation rights to the divorcing party, which actually might not be in the best interests of the child, so the divorcing party may at least ask an objective judge of competent jurisdiction whether any visitation rights should be granted notwithstanding the wishes of the parent with custody.

Question 552

What if a couple with children bilaterally agrees to terminate the marriage contract? Who gets custody?

In this case, with nobody violating the marriage contract, and nobody shown to be unfit in any way, as of Session 254 the mother should have primary custody by default, again because she made far the greater physical investment in the creation and care of the children. The father can try his luck convincing a judge of competent authority to override the mother's wishes, but he shouldn't get his hopes up.

Question 553

What if parents wish to consider negotiating extra child support for extra share of custody, possibly by pro-rating according to time spent?

Couples generally get to agree upon any special conditions which they can, and should not be legally prohibited from doing so, provided only that the arrangement allows for all the child's financial needs to be satisfied until majority. Those terms should be written into the divorce agreement, to be affirmed as applicable by the divorce judge, who is to check only that adequate provisions are being made for the child's ongoing care, and not whether it allegedly violates some silly law from 1893.

We understand from a certain early objection recorded in our 'black book' of preliminary ideas that some folks may be unhappy with the idea of allowing couples to negotiate extra child support for extra custody, on the grounds that children are not 'for sale', and that custody battles often are more about power or retaliation or revenge than about love of or caring for the children. However, we hopefully can all agree that the child's needs are (or should be) the predominating concern. So, if any objective judge concurs that some particular modified agreement is in the child's best interests, or at least is not net-destructive of them, then we feel as of Session 254 that such an arrangement generally should be allowed to move forward.

Question 554

In light of the above decisions, do we want to make any recommendations as to how the procedures on filing for divorce and/or custody should best take place?

The judges tasked with considering divorce applications and custody petitions probably should be organized at the County level, so that the residents of each locality can have one central place to go for their filings, without a bunch of adjacent cities wasting their administrative resources on duplicative judicial structures.

The judiciary of each County should have an office designated and duly advertised to receive all divorce applications and custody petitions. The cases can be assigned to their judicial personnel according to their own internal standards and preferences, but the decisions should always be subject to appeal, according to the provisions established in Section I-F.

As each divorce is granted, the Clerk of the Court should communicate the decision to the County's Department of Records, which should promptly update their databases as applicable. Section III-B was thus concluded in Session 254.

SECTION III-C: EDUCATION

Question 555

Do we need to continue to have mechanisms by which children are (or have the opportunity to be) formally educated?

This seemed as of Session 255 (July 2018) to be universally agreed. We all seem to want our kids to receive some level of education, both for their own sakes and so that they can better help to keep our society running in our retirement. We may have some initial differences of preference in terms of delivery systems or curriculum content or other issues, but we pretty much all seem to agree with the general goal, so that's our starting point for discussion.

Question 556

Should such education take place in the home, in schools, or both?

Generally, we are suggesting both. We have observed many times -- and the Moderator has experienced it personally -- that formal schools do not always teach our kids everything that they need to know, and that parents don't do so either.

On the scholastic side, the shortages may be due partly to funding limitations, which result in inferior facilities and underqualified teachers. It may also be due partly to a misplaced emphasis regarding what actually needs to be taught, and/or to limited understanding of how to make kids not only willing but actually eager to attend school. We will go through some of these issues in the course of this Section.

On the domestic side, a lot of parents assume that the schools will eventually be teaching their kids everything which they will ever need to know, so they don't exert much or any didactic effort on their own. Others try to help their kids with their learning, but simply don't have the necessary teaching skills to be very effective. Others may have both the desire and the teaching ability, but just don't possess for themselves (because of their own inferior education, nothing personal, society's fault) all the facts and skills and values which we need to impart to our kids.

Both sides also seem to suffer from a reluctance to discuss certain sensitive subjects, such as Sex, so they tend to avoid them as much and as long as they practically can, effectively leaving the child to learn about them 'on the streets'.

In sum, we are observing that neither Homes nor Schools can be relied upon to assume the burden of education all by themselves. It requires a combination, a partnership, a team effort. Each side must teach as though the other sector did not exist, so that between them they can make sure that all the key areas are covered.

Naturally, parents will not want to completely duplicate the efforts of the schools, and we may not need to make our kids sit through all lessons twice from different teachers. Therefore, parents should make a checklist of the specific subjects and facts and skills and values which they want to have eventually communicated to their kids [noted in Third Pass that we will create a draft listing later], and then question the kids over time as to what they are learning and doing in school. Any items on your checklist which are covered by the school you can skip, and then you can give your supplemental teaching focus to any areas not (yet) covered by the school.

We are concerned as of Session 255 about the idea of having all education conducted in the Home, because we have observed in some cases (such as the Turpins of Perris CA) that the in-home teachers exert little or no actual didactic effort, or else that they are simply programming their kids to believe certain extremist values instead of teaching them to function within our civil society. We therefore are recommending that complete Home Schooling should be permitted only on the condition that the kids are periodically tested as to the facts and skills and values which are expected of all children at their respective grade levels, and that they should be allowed to remain in the Home School only if the test scores are sufficiently high.

Question 557

Should education continue to be supervised by government?

Yes, as of Session 255, we want a public entity to be in charge of public education, and of the periodic testing of all kids, whether they attend public schools or private schools or home schools or their own personal libraries. We want Government to have the power to dismiss teachers and decertify schools found to be doing an insufficient job. We want one or more public officials to be subject to periodic election and re-election, so that We The People can have the option to de-elect our Superintendents of Education if they are not delivering the results which the parents

and voters expect, and so that those officials therefore will have an ongoing motivation to deliver good education in order to keep their own jobs.

Question 558 (continued)

At what level of government should education be supervised?

We like keeping most of the management at the State level, for a few reasons:

Our nation is too large and diverse to make it practical or desirable to manage education at the Federal level. We have regions where certain industries are more prevalent, so those areas should emphasize the skills and knowledge needed to obtain and maintain gainful employment there. We also have regions where certain languages other than English are spoken more frequently than in other areas, so local residents should gain some familiarity with those neighboring languages in order to facilitate economic commerce and social peace.

Finally, we have observed under the old political system which existed as of Session 255 how quickly and dramatically the political climate could change when different 'parties' grasp control of the different Branches of government. Hopefully, these wide ideological swings will happen far less often under our system, which promotes the election of moderate candidates who can represent and lead our entire Nation, but even then it still makes sense to devolve Education to lower levels of government, so that we can all observe what works and what doesn't work in terms of curriculum content, didactic methods, funding levels, and other attributes.

However, we don't want to push the responsibility for Education management too far down in our bureaucratic structure, because we don't want 3,000+ Counties separately needing to figure out what elements should be included in the standard curriculum, and how best to deliver those elements to the students. That would constitute a huge and unnecessary duplication of effort, and it would make it far too hard for us to compare the relative effectiveness of different jurisdictions. Far easier to compare 50 States than 3,000+ Counties, so best to keep it at the State level.

OK to devolve Administration down to the County and/or Municipal level, or to some arrangement of 'school districts', but policies should be established at the State level.

Question 559

To what extent should formal education be publicly funded?

Education is an investment in our future, not just for the kids or Society or Humanity generally, but also for ourselves as Individuals, whether we have kids or not, for we all want to live in a comfortable retirement, so we all have an interest in making sure that the next generation has what it mentally needs to maintain our industries and our governments while we take a well-deserved rest from our own years of labor.

We therefore have a strong motivation to fund Education liberally but responsibly. We generally don't want to fund any function much beyond the levels of general necessity, at least not until we can feed and shelter all our poor people without imposing a 'wealth tax' on anyone. However, we also have observed the effects of trying to 'skimp' on Education, particularly in the hiring of teachers who have good hearts but not the knowledge and didactic skills needed to deliver a satisfactory

quality of education, and also in the inadequate provision of physical resources like books and computers and musical instruments and functional air-conditioning.

It also has happened that a lot of public funding gets wasted in administrative bureaucracy which does little or nothing to advance our actual education. Some amount of administration is necessary, especially to make sure that payrolls get issued and that budgets are properly monitored, but it certainly is easy to go too far.

For this reason, we recommend as of Session 255 that the Legislative Branch of each State should maintain a committee or other office to observe and report on conditions within the Education Department of the Executive Branch. The office should be both evaluating the quality of the process by assessing how well the kids are doing in their test scores and job placements, and also inspecting the ledgers to make sure that public resources are not being wasted. It then will be able to make informed recommendations to the full Legislature on whether current Education funding for that State should be increased or decreased or reallocated or left as is.

Question 560

At what level of government should education be funded?

Already established as State level in Answer 559.

Question 561

Why in heck does education cost so much, and how can we mitigate the expense?

Some of it may be Administration, but that may not be the biggest culprit, if there is any culprit at all.

A425 proposed a model in which Education costs \$2100 per year per individual in the population. Thus, a childless couple should expect to pay \$4200/year for Education (through their Sales Taxes), whereas a couple with three children should expect to pay \$10,500/year. That \$2100 per person per year is only \$175 per person per month. We're not sure that this is really so much of a burden, considering that it is an investment which we are all making toward a comfortable retirement.

We therefore are not making any adjustment to our proposal as of Session 255, although again the State Legislatures should be monitoring the local Education Departments on an ongoing basis, and determining at each budget cycle whether the current actual funding should be modified at all.

Question 562

Since public education is essentially a state-run monopoly, and not subject to all of the normal free-market elements which determine appropriate wage levels, how shall we make sure that teachers are adequately compensated?

That's a tough one, because as of Session 255 that clearly had been a very big problem in our society for several years, if not several decades.

Unionizing teachers seems to have helped some, but we still have the problems of teachers not getting properly compensated for the amount and intensity of work which they perform, of salaries being too low to attract good-quality teachers, and of some teachers getting paid without delivering good-quality education.

This last point might be a supplemental response to Question 561: If we are paying too much to teachers who are not delivering satisfactory results, then that is taking resources away from teachers who really deserve higher compensation.

Perhaps we therefore should be evaluating teacher performance more critically than we currently are, and adjusting teacher compensation according to student performance. That way, dollars could be taken away from teachers who apparently still need to improve, and could go toward the teachers who are currently delivering solid results in real life.

This concept may make the teacher unions unhappy, because naturally it always feels better for everyone to have a guaranteed steady income than to live in continual fear that your wages will be cut if some other entity is deciding that you're not doing your job well enough. However, this is no worse than what happens in many sectors of business and industry, where your compensation goes up when you are delivering high value in whatever your job is, and goes down when performance fails to achieve certain standards which develop over time according to the experience of each given business or industry.

Question 563

Shall we also continue to allow private organizations to create and maintain schools, for either children or adults?

Yes. We may not be able to completely relinquish the duty of Education from the public sector to the private, but we certainly can allow --and would welcome -- any efforts which private organizations may wish to exert in order to help us out. If more students are educated privately (both children and adults), then fewer students need to be educated publicly, which can either save us money or allow improvements in the quality of education toward the remaining students, or both.

Only condition as of Session 256 (August 2018) is that we need to make sure on a periodic basis that the private schools are teaching everything which we want to have taught (same as we recommended for Home Schools in Answer 556), and are not teaching any disapproved material.

Question 564

What kind of accreditation process should be required of private schools?

Accreditation should come from the Education Department of each State.

The initial application should identify the private organization which is seeking to operate a private school, the names of any major shareholders in the organization, the names of any trustees appointed by the organization to operate the school, a recent set of financial statements, and a proposed operating budget projecting the sources and destinations of all large sums of money.

We are suggesting as of Session 256 that each Education Department should include an Accreditations Bureau. One office of the bureau should be for Accreditation Applications, and their job should be to evaluate all applications, checking for the satisfaction of any criteria which may have been established by the Legislature of that State, and any non-contradictory supplemental regulations which may have been established by the Education Department or the Accreditations Bureau.

They should prepare a report recommending either for or against accreditation. Primary addressee of the report should be the Bureau Director, but a copy should go to the Superintendent of Education, so that the Bureau Director will not have the option to bury or modify the report.

Generally, the Bureau Director is at liberty to accept or reject the recommendation of the Accreditation Applications Office, and to perform additional research as desired before reaching a decision. The report containing the Bureau Director's decision should be communicated to the Superintendent of Education, and should specify the reasons if the Bureau Director ever elects to override the recommendation of the Accreditation Applications Office.

Similarly, the Superintendent of Education should have the authority to override the decision of the Bureau Director, but should be prepared to defend such an override before the press if anyone complains about it.

Another office of the Accreditations Bureau should be for Certification Renewals. One section should be for Public Schools, one should be for Private Schools, and one for Home Schools. They should review each school on a rotating basis, and make sure that it continues to comply with any standards established by the State, including as to academic achievement, fiscal responsibility, and student well-being.

If a particular State considers itself too large and/or diverse to manage the entire function of Education oversight, then it may wish to devolve the responsibility to the Counties, or else to a separate network of School Districts. If so, then the State still should maintain an oversight office within its Executive Branch, to make sure that the County Departments or School Districts are all operating properly.

If any irregularity is found after the initial accreditation, then the school should be promptly notified, and given an appropriate time window for correction, according to the specific nature and severity of the problem. If practical, notification should also be sent to the homes of the parents of all children currently attending that school, informing them of the finding, and suggesting that they consider making alternative arrangements in case the school does not perform the required correction in time.

This would mean that the State should know which school is being attended by each of its younger citizens, so the County Registrar should be tracking that information for future referral as needed.

Question 565

Since government is sponsoring public education, to what extent -- if any -- should it also sponsor private education?

As of Session 256, this has been a tricky issue for some time in some States. One side claims that private schools which seek to supplant the efforts of the State

should do so with all their own resources, without requiring the State to provide funding where it has little or no control over what happens within the private facility. Other side claims that the State has budgeted a certain amount of support money for the Education function based on its current population level, and that they should continue to provide that funding (possibly through the use of 'vouchers') to any organization which is performing the desired function of Education, as long as the State's various standards are still being maintained.

Both sides have some logical merit, so the correct Answer probably is somewhere in the middle.

On one side, the State should not be required to provide the full amount of per-student funding to the private school which it would have provided to the public school, because one of the reasons which we established in Answer 563 to justify the existence of private schools is that they could save us some money by taking some of that burden out of our hands.

On the other side, the private school is (at least in theory) performing an important function which the State actively wants to see done, so it is reasonable to expect the State to put at least something into the pot.

We therefore suggest as a starting point for consideration that the State should supply the private school with exactly one-half of the per-student funding which it would have provided had the child gone to public school. The specific proportion observed within each State can be negotiated among the various stakeholders according to evolving local conditions, and then we can all see what works and what doesn't work at any given point in our economic history.

Question 566

Should formal education in schools be made compulsory, or shall children and/or parents have the opportunity to pass or self-educate?

We have thought about this one for a long time, and as of Session 256 feel pretty strongly that there should be a combination of compulsory and optional education.

There should be a 'basic' or 'primary' level of education, comprising certain facts and skills and values which we want and expect all citizens to possess, so that they can function safely and independently within our society, and make intelligent decisions when it comes time to vote. This level should be compulsory, because our society has a strong and ongoing interest in making sure that all its citizens know at least the basics. The process can happen either in schools or elsewhere, as long as we are sure that it is happening.

There also should be a secondary level which teaches additional facts and skills on top of the minimum standards. This level should give students a small taste of a wide variety of different subjects, so that they know what is out there to be done and/or to be studied further. This level can help older kids to decide which types of jobs they would like to undertake, and/or which areas they might like to study in greater depth for any reason, whether for professional advancement or simply for either artistic expression or athletic achievement or some other goal outside of regular employment. This level should be made available to everyone, but it should be optional, because we may not need all of our citizens to be obtaining this

supplemental education if some of them already have decided based on the primary level what they want to do with their lives, and also because we don't want to crowd our classrooms or endanger our actual students (remember the 1989 film *Lean On Me?*) by forcing -- or even allowing -- kids to be taking up valuable space who don't really need or want to be there.

The third level (equivalent to what we customarily call 'trade school' or 'college') also should be optional, for only those young people who have the time and resources and desire to undertake further specialized study in one or more subjects in which they have demonstrated a special aptitude.

Question 567

Are we basically happy with the educational system as currently constructed?

This is another area where we started out with mixed feelings: Some states and school districts and schools and teachers are doing excellent work, as documented by various awards and surveys and student testimonials. However, we also see demonstrations over and over again (notably in Jay Leno's classic 'man-on-the-street' interviews) how little grasp many adult Americans have over some of the basic facts which we expect everyone to know by Age 13 at the latest.

We also have painfully observed many jobs and many businesses going to non-Americans, in many cases because those folks are better educated than we are.

It's also a national embarrassment when your own President stands up at a public pep rally and reveals that he doesn't know the differences among England and Great Britain and the United Kingdom.*

[*See www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-britain-england-1055423, www.dailykos.com/stories/1785574_deadline.com/2018/08/president-donald-fake-news-pennsylvania-1202439433]

In sum, then, no, we are basically unhappy with current educational conditions in America, and feel that it's one of our more urgent priorities to begin to get right.

In case they don't get addressed elsewhere, some other specific grievances which we have against current Education include, in order as handwritten in the 'black book':

-- We need a better recertification process for adults who have already completed their basic educational credentials, but who maybe could use updating on technical advances, historical developments, scientific discoveries, and social reconditioning.

-- Making kids wait until Age 18 to graduate from high school deprives us of their contributions to our economy, places undue pressure upon them to get prematurely intimate with students of their preferred genders, and contributes to a common teenage problem of still being treated as a kid when at least in some cases you deserve to be taken more seriously.

-- Schools definitely were guilty of corporal punishment back when the Moderator attended, and as of Session 256 some schools still may have been. If so, then as described in Answer 538, we generally should avoid such tactics in favor of more passive and less harmful methods of obtaining the child's cooperation. And, when it

happens to you, or if it is even threatened, please do tell your parents or the principal or the police or some other responsible authority.

-- We had seen a big upturn in mass shootings at schools and other public venues in the years directly following the 2016 Presidential election. It could have been just coincidence, but it wouldn't surprise us to learn that there was a causal connection. In any case, the increased violence appeared to stem from a broader culture of hate. If we can take steps -- both politically and educationally -- to foster a Culture of Love instead of a culture of hate, then we stand a much better chance of decreasing these random acts of violence within our society, and making everybody net-happier.

-- Just speculating here, but what if the Government is deliberately maintaining an inferior educational system, in order to keep people stupid enough that they will continue to vote for the same idiots that they keep pushing on us, support the two-party system, go to war whenever they tell us, and do everything else that they ever want? That would explain (among other things) why they keep teacher salaries so low. If that is true, then we'll have that much harder of a time implementing our revised education system after we construct it.

Question 568

What are the main goals of education?

It might seem to some that this Question should have been addressed at the beginning of this Section. For, shouldn't we consider the goals of Education before we even ask ourselves whether we still want/need to have it? Possibly a valid point, but in any case it also is critically important for this entire Project that we start with topics on which we can all immediately agree, and then tackle the more controversial subjects more gradually. That's why we started this Section with our Question 555, because even if we may initially disagree on the goals of Education, at least we can pretty much all agree that we still want to have it.

It also might seem to some that this is one of those Questions which are so elementary and trivial and silly that they insult the reader's intelligence, so we totally understand if some of you reading this happen to experience that initial reaction.

However, it turns out that it's not quite as trivial as some of you might suspect.

The focus of Education appears to have evolved over time. Prior to the 15th century, the leaders of several cultures in Europe and elsewhere sought to restrict Education (even the simple skill of Reading) to only the wealthy few, so that only they could keep the 'secrets' of maintaining the *status quo*, and keeping their families in positions of wealth and prestige and power. When the printing press was developed by Gutenberg in 1439, the ruling classes were afraid that the availability of mass-produced essays might motivate their serfs to learn to read, and then open their eyes as to the different ways that a society might choose to run itself, a prediction which proved to be all too accurate.

In more recent centuries, with widespread literacy being an undeniable reality, certain political and ecclesiastical regimes (not naming names here) have sought to regulate the 'group narrative' by making sure through formal Education that their children learned only a particular set of facts and values which supported the continued existence and predominance and actions of those regimes.

As frighteningly dehumanizing as such a strategy might seem (and may actually be), there actually is a level of logical merit to it: If we are expecting The State to give of its own resources in order to help educate our children, then isn't it reasonable to expect that it would want to promote its own values within its curriculum? If it does not have that option, then in many cases it will not want to expend any of its money or effort toward helping our kids get educated.

Come to think of it, even if we take The State and The Church and The Wealthy out of the equation, and come up with some other strategy and curriculum which better serve the interests of The People, then in the end we'll be doing the same thing that they are, preparing a curriculum which will communicate the various facts and skills and values which we think that kids ought to have.

However, there is a key difference. Those of us involved in this Project are not out to benefit some group of humans at the expense of some others. We favor a universal access to Education, including access to ideas which challenge all those which we are proposing here.

Even if we did not want to engage in Education voluntarily, though, we probably would need to do it as a simple response to what is happening in today's real world: More individuals in more cultures are gaining easy access to the Internet, where they can read all sorts of articles about different models which are being attempted or ideated in other cultures, and where they can communicate with one another on how to create real-life change within their own communities. Any government or other entity which seeks to participate in the Education process needs to plan its purpose and strategy with this important fact in mind: Do feel free to use Education as a means of establishing your 'group narrative', whatever that may be, but be prepared going forward that many of your pupils are going to have access to competing narratives throughout their lives, so prepare your presentations accordingly.

That all said, we proposed in Session 257 (August 2018) a two-part Answer to this Question: The first part is What It Is, and the second part is What It Should Be.

For the first part, What It Is, we suggest from our extensive human history that the purpose of Education is to communicate whichever facts and skills and values the sponsoring government or other organization currently considers to be the most important. That was true before we introduced this model, and it will be true after. Nothing which we ever do or say will change that basic and timeless reality.

For the second part, What It Should Be, we seek to add to the basic definition a statement that an 'enlightened' society (whatever that means) recognizes that more Education to more of its people will generally result in a happier and healthier society for everyone, with the possible exception of the current ruling classes.

This goes to the last point raised in Answer 567: What if the Government is deliberately trying to 'dumb us down', in order to help perpetuate the current system with two political parties, war whenever the rulers feel like it, inflation and the national debt spiraling out of control, and the bulk of tax support coming from the Middle Class instead of the Super-Rich? Just in case that is actually happening, we are here offering two suggestions.

First suggestion is to those ruling entities, that you can generate even higher GDP and higher tax revenue if we allow (1) a fairer trade environment, (2) a better system of public education so that the graduates can better utilize and improve our various life-enhancing technologies, and (3) a political process which delivers sane moderate leaders instead of extremist demagogues whose only diplomatic skills involve managing to piss off everybody in the rest of the World.

Second suggestion is to the American People: Both for yourselves and for your kids, insist on an Education system which teaches all the facts and skills and values which you feel should be communicated to everyone, as well as those other facts and skills and values which you feel should be made available to everyone on a voluntary and supplemental basis. Both for yourselves and for your kids, make lists (as described in Answer 556) of what areas you feel should be covered at some point by your particular school or school district or State, and quiz them periodically if you ever develop any doubt that they are planning to get around to some particular area eventually. If they tell you that they are not planning to cover that particular area at any point, then please feel free to raise a loud-but-peaceful stink about it.

In sum, we conclude that there are two main sets of goals for Education, the first being for the sponsoring organization to communicate its 'group narrative' to our trusting young minds, and the second being for parents and other concerned citizens to watchdog the sponsoring organization to make sure that their kids are being educated in accordance with their own standards and expectations.

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During the week, we reviewed the essays of the three finalists in the 'Swedish project', which the reader may recall was a competition initiated in 2017 by the Global Challenges Foundation, based in Stockholm. Stated goal of the competition was to identify an ideal approach of Global Governance in our modern world.

First finalist was the essay "Global Governance and the Emergence of Global Institutions for the 21st Century", by Lopez-Carlos & Dahl & Groff. It was good that they added a second chamber to the U.N., but we still think that three is even better. Good that they had an Executive Council to replace the Security Council. Good to eliminate veto powers for single delegations in the current Security Council. Not sure that it's good to maintain a separate military force of between 500k-1m; both runs into a lot of extra expense as compared with mobilizing national units in time of need, and also creates a separately-armed 'one-world government', which we always have feared because of what happens if it falls into the hands of some faction which is opposed to the idea of permanent global peace and security. However, the I.O.O. does need an enforcement mechanism which it is currently lacking, but we prefer the idea of mobilizing national units in time of need, so that you are not duplicating any effort or staffing (after all, if everything goes as planned, then these people will never have anything to do of a global nature at all, so at least let them remain attached to their national forces during peacetime, so that they can help their nations with peacetime projects as needed), and also so that no one commander can ever have authority over a global military. We were concerned about their disarmament policy, for the only nation with the knowledge and standing to determine what that nation needs "for internal security" is the nation itself. But then, what if they say hey we need all of our current weapons and facilities and staffing for our internal security? Meanwhile, their pp. 6-7 suggested that "The GA [General Assembly] would retain its considerable power of nonbinding

recommendation in areas affecting the welfare of the world's peoples", but behold that's not global governance, that's global recommending, which is little better than what we have now. Okay with proportional representation based on population, but no indication on how those delegates are selected, whereas we actually defined the 250 population districts. Maybe okay with a cap on delegates for any one populous nation, but if they really are that populous then shouldn't they retain their full proportion of representation? Also maybe okay with allowing one vote for each small nation even if minimally populated, but then that seems like giving them an unfair leverage when their influence is not really that strong, and provides a motivation for tiny nations of 1 sqkm each to get themselves created in order to each rate a place at the table, which is one thing for a nation-based house where you want everyone to have a voice, but seems disproportionate for a population-based house. Second chamber is fuzzy, "deriving its authority directly from organized global citizenry", and "[serving] as advocates of particular issues of global concern", thus possibly creating an overlap or duplication with the first chamber, whereas our proposal makes the missions and constituencies of the three chambers very clear and distinct. Description of second chamber on p.8 seemed to indicate that the second chamber would be providing advice and consultation on some of the same issues over which the first chamber has nominal authority; in other words, they would be covering the same subject matter, whereas our proposal keeps the issues separate except for veto; their approach seemed to create potential for conflict if different chambers see things differently for a given issue while looking at it on a primary basis. However, we did like the idea of gathering experts to treat issues of a scientific or technical or environmental nature, but then maybe they should therefore be making the actual decisions, and not simply advising a different chamber with actual voting power. Curious about their 'Office of Ethical Assessment'; might be a boondoggle and might actually be a very good thng. Generally okay (we guessed) with the composition of the Executive Council, except not sure that it would be prudent to expect that 11 member nations would be able to decide upon 13 other nations to be represented for the upcoming term, or on what basis they would make that assessment, or if it's a strict methodology of some kind then why they would need to vote on it. However, interesting to require that no bases of the global military could be located within any of the eight most-populous nations. Good at least that the reserve force would still be primarily attached to their national militaries. Liked the idea of taking 0.1% of GGP through VAT to fund their budget, and also taxing spot currency transactions in order to take more from wealthy investors. Hey, they even mentioned a 'wealth tax' on individuals! They sought not to disturb the "array" of current U.N. bodies undertaking various tasks, but that system looks way too complicated for our taste, so we continued to prefer our system of special committees of our three distinct houses. They proposed a 'standing committee for disarmament', but why would they continue to exist as a standing committee once their objective has been achieved? Do we simply keep disarming forever, even after we once get rid of all weapons everywhere? Wow, they called for a scientific analysis of the self-defense needs of each country, whew good luck with that one. If it was in there at all, we're not sure that we ever noticed a specific direction that there must be no more war anywhere ever. Didn't see it clearly expressed in their Part II, but their Part III stated clearly that the second chamber is to act as a watchdog of the first chamber, so we guess that maybe that is some way to go, but it was unclear what they would get to do if they once found some particular problem anywhere. How, for example, would they be able to "force it to take decisions on pressing issues"? Wishing that they had more organization into subsections; as it was, some of the passages were lengthy and boring and repetitive and bullshit. Yeah, you work on "addressing corruption", good luck with that. We disagreed that "Creating an International Security Force

would be an important confidence-building measure"; far from "enhancing the credibility of the UN", it would just make me more scared and distrustful of it. Model did not seem to have an effective protection against abuse of power, if the global governance gets to have its own independent military force which they can mobilize whenever and wherever and whyever they feel like it.

Second finalist was the essay "A truly global partnership - helping the UN to do itself out of a job", by Samarasinghe. As with the first document, the author was afraid to make too many wholesale changes in the current U.N. environment, even though a new model was what had been called for. "This proposal [adopted] an ... approach [of] eroding the [Security] Council's importance and remit over time through more effective crisis prevention", but didn't come right out and state that we should have no more war. "This proposal [recommended] a four-way governance structure where the number of members is doubled, with states making up half, and representatives of business, civil society and youth organizations making up the other half (or close to 50%)." Maybe this proposal had merit on its face and maybe it did not, but either way it belied the title, because expanding the size and constituency of the body is not the way of doing it out of a job; to the contrary, more people must mean more work needing to be done. The suggested registration fees were way too small to be meaningful in the I.O.O.'s overall budget, and were hardly a true indication of being serious; financial investment must be multiple orders of magnitude higher in order to show that a particular entity is a serious stakeholder. If "non-state representatives" (NSR's) require a 2/3 vote of member states for acceptance, and then if no NSR ever achieves a 2/3 vote (after all, why would the member states be motivated to share their voting power with entities which are not member states?), then it would easily be possible that no NSR's ever get admitted. Correct use of 'comprises', so that's good. Good point that burden-sharing of finances and duties might be an effective motivator for states to accept NSR's as voting members, but again the financial sharing would need to be much higher than 15,000 USD. Wow, we were seeing a lot about the U.N. performing various tasks to help developing countries, but behold that wasn't what it was designed for; it was designed to help prevent all further war, a mission at which it has failed notoriously, and one which was getting practically no mention in this essay at all. Membership dues continued to be based on ability to pay, and still appeared to be largely or completely voluntary, so not really helping much with current model. By keeping all existing agencies in place with no reorganization, we are failing to solve the current problem which we perceive of having too many offices bureaucratically scattered all over the place, so that we don't know where to go if we have some question or issue which needs attention; our system is better with issues clearly divided among three houses, and then with a small number of special committees, such that you can always go to that committee's information office (including online, of course) in order to be directed more easily to the specific office which you need to reach. "It is important to distinguish between civil society and the public": Really, is that so?? "Reducing UN activity in the development sphere will enable it to focus on the political, human rights and peace and security work"; agreed with that statement, but that did not seem to be what was happening from the foregoing description, which went on and on about what the expanded U.N. would be doing in terms of development, so if anything they would be getting more into it than before, or at least as much as before. They suggested single-term tenures for consideration "to improve performance and accountability", but we have always found that the exact opposite is the case, that people have more motivation to succeed when they have the option to have their tenures extended. They were into "instituting rules and conditions that are voluntary". "The transfer of UN functions back to national and

local actors will increase the ... incentive to respect human rights"; we disagree; devolving back down reduces transparency and allows bad stuff to happen more frequently. They admitted that increasing constituencies would make the process slower. They asserted that "the creation of cross-sector cross-border partnerships should serve, over time, to improve relations between the various partners", and maybe that actually does happen, but we also see the possibilities of confusion and conflict, so a simpler structure with more clearly defined chains of command might be better. Author of the essay seemed to be willing to be held hostage to the U.N. Charter, and to the permanent members of the Security Council, as though they can't have their power taken away as easily as it was once given to them.

Third finalist was the essay "AI-supported global governance through bottom-up deliberation", by Zanganehpour. At least he opened with a reference to the original peacekeeping mission of the U.N., but claimed success simply because we had not had another World War. He wanted humanity first, and nations second; fair enough, but our model allows them both to be addressed at the same time by different constituencies. He wanted to synthesize global governance "from millions of conversations by AI"; whew that's a tough challenge, for we had a hard time getting even a few dozen to agree on the national A2E list. A lot of the language was pretty techy for our then-recent background, but we did like the idea of a budget simulator, as we had conceived in the Monday group for American jurisdictions. Their second and third proposals appeared to present good details for tackling some specific issues and challenges, but didn't really get us to the overall, and especially didn't get us to a no-war environment, which to us is a deal-breaker for anyone; it's either no-war or no-go. They may possibly have been going too far in their attempt to share and decentralize power, to the point where we are not sure who would have the final authority to say 'go' or 'no go' on any particular proposal. Wow, they wanted to "legitimize the Internet as a sovereign jurisdiction"; whew good luck with that one too, especially when it come to designating a rotating and transparent leadership. Global parliament of mayors seemed like maybe a good idea, at first, similar to our population-based house, but behold there are hundreds of thousands of cities in the World large enough to have mayors: They could vote online, but how could they engage in any constructive discussion or debate on anything? AI would figure it all out, apparently. We wondered heavily about "An open-source judicial system", "using algorithms to source the right experts for the right problem", and generally a "Crowd-Justice" where "decisions are legally-binding". We fundamentally disagreed that "the goals around preventing interstate conflict have mostly been accomplished". They were into "prioritizing [human] species preservation above a narrow set of national self-interests and benefiting all of humanity"; fair enough, but we claim that we should prioritize the preservation of the entire planetary ecosystem and not just the human species. Author criticized the U.S. a lot more than we would have expected in a document purporting to address our global problems. We also disagreed that "broad territorial distinctions are less and less important to both social and economic life"; maybe less important, but not less and less important; communities with limited resources still need to either do without or import them from elsewhere, and if it's coming from an area which is not within your own nation, then you must negotiate for it somehow, requiring continual dialogue among nations as well as corporations. Heh, he wrote this at a time of "rise of cryptocurrencies", but recent developments had mitigated against the validity of his approach. He went on and on about digital proliferation, which is fine for communities with those resources, but folks in a lot of regions don't have enough food and shelter and clean water and health care to make it for more than a few years at most, so the essay author may have been projecting a level of economic and electronic prosperity which

a lot of areas simply do not enjoy, in which case their more fundamental issues would need to be satisfied before they could even think about participating in this global digital dialogue, let alone acquire the hardware and electricity which they would need in order to access it. We also disagreed that "the rise of unchecked political dishonesty" was "a new operating norm"; we had seen it in American politics for two centuries; it was documented as far back as Machiavelli, and doubtless existed back to the Romans and maybe way earlier, maybe back to the Egyptians and Babylonians and Phoenicians. Monday group had talked a lot in the early days about the essay's proposed approach, where citizens would engage in direct democracy through the Internet, and we found that it was a charming idea which would not work in real life. Wow, they wanted a "global identification card": How is that not a one-world government, and what happens when this single global regime falls into evil hands? I tell you this, they won't be carrying around any global identification cards. He wanted "to leverage the wisdom of crowds"; wow, is that ever assuming facts not in evidence! He wanted to do stuff "in the same manner as Wikipedia": Really, are you sure? He was envisioning a whole crop of new global institutions, apparently all cross-talking over the same issues, so it would be unclear who's really in charge, or maybe AI somehow takes care of it all. Why should a dictator with an arsenal of tanks and rockets and nuclear weapons care anything about "bottom-up, citizen-led input"? "However, [they recognized that] crowds can be irrational and target minorities on grounds of race, ethnicity, ideology and other diverse factors", so that's good that they recognized that, especially after referring to "the wisdom of crowds", but then they asserted that "Participation in these new institutions will be governed by a rights-based philosophy", and again we need to come back to the question of whose rights-based philosophy we are going to be governed by, because a lot of us have different ideas about that.

In summary: Biggest problem which all the finalists shared is that they did not insist upon a no-more-war environment, thereby placing at risk every proposal which they suggested for accomplishing any other thing, and allowing the continued waste of precious labor and physical resources on military mobilizations instead of human and planetary development. Second-biggest problem was that they all seemed to be willing to have all military forces in the World under a single global authority, in effect creating a one-world government with independent enforcement power, which makes us very afraid of the very real possibility that such power could fall into the wrong hands, as we have seen so many times with different nations around the World. Third-biggest problem was that they all seemed to want to add to the global bureaucracy without establishing a clear organization of who reports to whom, and of who gets to make the final decision in case of any conflict, so the different entities do not have a clear mandate on who is supposed to do what, while citizens and other stakeholders can become very confused when trying to figure out where to address any particular concern. Fourth-biggest problem was that the additional chambers and offices would largely address the same issues as other chambers and offices, so at best they are duplicating their efforts, and at worst they are creating the potential for discord and conflict and rivalry, as we have seen in the U.S. Congress and other bicameral legislatures where the houses are covering the same material. Fifth-biggest problem was that decentralization without clear lines of authority would make it much easier for tasks to get buried, would reduce transparency, would encourage officials to misdirect any outside funding, and would decrease motivation for anyone to audit the finances of the I.O.O. for being spread out all over the place.

Recent literature from the Global Challenges Foundation had indicated that they were planning a discussion forum to consider all the proposals further, so in the meantime

we sent a private note to the organizers, summarizing our findings of the deficiencies of the three finalists. We never heard back from them about it.

Question 569

What are some of the reasons that not all children sent to school are able/willing to give their full concentration to the matters at hand, and what can we do to correct those issues?

There are several different reasons which apply to different kids, so this list which we prepared in Session 258 (August 2018) is not going to be exhaustive, but just to list a few of the most common:

1) The subject matter itself is simply too boring. One thing which we can do about this is to make sure that the curriculum always contains some 'fun' stuff, so that kids will still have a motivation to attend school eagerly, and to help balance out the drudgery of the boring stuff.

Another thing which we can do is to impress upon the kids routinely why each subject is important to them, and why each particular lesson has been included in the standard curriculum. Many schoolchildren throughout time have felt (perhaps correctly in some cases) that they were sent to school in order to sit and listen and do busy work just to keep them out of their parents' hair for a few precious hours, so naturally they would look upon any required curriculum as a drudge, and not be into it very much. Even if some parents are eager to have their kids being tended in school for a few precious hours, that does not alter the fact that our main reason for having those kids in there is for them to learn what it takes to keep our society running, as well as to help them to be successful in life. It is in the interests of both the kids and the adults for students to be actively engaged with their schoolwork. If they can't get engaged because it's fun and interesting, then at least let's keep telling them at all times not only that it's good for them, but especially why.

2) The teacher is a poor presenter. Moderator personally had had some very good teachers, and some which were not quite as good. Many of us probably have.

One thing which we can do to help this is to get better teachers in there. As in many other professions (including doctors, lawyers, airline pilots, athletes, entertainers, to name only a few), some people may want the job but for some reason simply do not possess the necessary skills to do so capably. However, a lot of these individuals manage to get selected as teachers anyway, because the salaries offered are frequently so low that the schools will be desperate to accept anyone whom they can get. This tactic may save us money in the short term, but it buys us a more poorly-educated population in the long term. [Or, again, is that the intended result?]

If your particular State or School District or School is achieving unsatisfactory results from its education program, then one thing which you might need to do is to allocate more funding toward teacher salaries, in order to attract higher-qualified applicants. Then, you could implement more aggressive filtering mechanisms in order to determine which candidates possess not only the necessary facts and skills and values which need to be taught to our kids, but also the right personalities and techniques to communicate them in an interesting and engaging manner.

If that means that you need to cut public spending in other areas, or that you need to increase your Sales Taxes (see Answer 425), or some combination, then you had better do so. If you do not, then you are going to end up with an undereducated workforce, which will generate a lower output of Goods & Services, so they will have fewer dollars available to purchase the Goods & Services which will generate your Sales Tax revenue, so you will need to cut back on your public spending anyway, and maybe eventually have your City or County or School District absorbed by a neighboring jurisdiction which is willing and able to manage things more efficiently.

Another thing which you can do is to train your teachers better. We have heard and read of several experiments conducted over the years, where they give the teachers the same standardized tests which the students receive, and a lot of teachers do no better than the students, because they do not possess themselves all the facts and skills and values which we are expecting them to communicate to our kids. Instead, they are simply monitoring the kids who are taking their lessons out of their textbooks and workbooks.

If it were possible for all kids to learn from textbooks and workbooks alone (or their modern electronic equivalents), then we wouldn't need teachers at all. And, maybe that ends up happening someday. For the present, though, it still seems to be true that many kids are not completely adept at self-education through standard reference materials, not that we expect them all to be. A lot of kids still require in-person teachers to stand up in front of them and explain to them in clearer language whatever the textbooks are trying to say, and to lead the kids in various types of games and other exercises to help them learn and retain the necessary concepts.

It therefore is important for us to make sure that our teachers already know everything which we are asking the students to learn, so they should be periodically tested themselves, and suspended for continuing education if they do poorly enough in any particular area.

One of the most important things which we can do is to impress upon all teachers during their initial training -- and reinforce in any continuing education -- that their presentations always need to include an emphasis on why it is important to the kids that they undertake the effort to learn any particular thing which you are trying to teach. If any particular teacher's response to that question is ever "That's what the textbook says" or "That's what the State requires" or "That's what you need in order to get good grades and graduate" (all of which we have heard in real life!), then that teacher needs to be trained further on the reasons for Everything which is in the standard curriculum, or else be repurposed to some other profession.

3) Didactic methods need to be improved. Even if the subject matter is actually more interesting than it may initially appear, and even if the teacher is both knowledgeable as a scholar and dynamic as a public speaker, we may yet have a systemic problem in our culture with how we are generally approaching our students with this information. Not only are we often failing to emphasize the Why's associated with the various elements of our curriculum, and not only do some teachers need better presentation skills, but our standard approach often seems to reduce to either I-speak-you-listen and/or you-do-homework-you-learn.

We are suggesting here that classrooms should have more dynamic and interactive teaching methods available for those kids who would benefit from them. Moderator remembered getting a really good feel for American and World Geography, as well as

National Flags, because his parents were thoughtful enough to buy him three effectively-designed jigsaw puzzles which he enjoyed assembling over and over. If those sorts of things could be available to everybody in the classroom, then the kids might obtain a deeper retention of where stuff is than if we simply tell them verbally that Nebraska is west of Iowa and expect them to remember it forever.

4) Physical facilities at school reduce concentration. Another area where localities try to economize is in the construction and maintenance of adequate classrooms and other didactic facilities. We hear that a favorite target is a failure to install or repair or replace Air Conditioning units as needed.

Again, we totally relate to the desire to economize, and it is indeed something which we all need to do if we are going to successfully stretch our resources to all of our planetary citizens, but certain areas need to be accorded higher priority than others.

As expressed above, if we sacrifice our quality of Education now in order to save a few bucks in next year's fiscal budget, then we are setting ourselves up for a much greater social cost later, because any children who remain in our particular locality will be more disenchanted and disengaged and frustrated and (worst of all) ignorant of the facts and skills and values which they need in order to be effective and productive and law-abiding citizens. Save a little bit now, pay a lot more later. Invest a little bit now, earn a lot more later. Up to you.

5) Some kids may be distracted by external personal problems. Maybe some kids are getting bullied in the schoolyards or in their neighborhoods. Maybe some of them are being abused at home. Maybe some of them are in the process of witnessing the breakup of their parents' marriage. Maybe a parent is unemployed, and/or suffers from a problem with drugs or alcohol. Maybe the student has developed an unhealthy addiction of some kind. Maybe something else.

Whatever the particular external issue might be, the student is going to have a difficult time maintaining focus on schoolwork as long as the issue is pending, and we risk having her academic record look worse than it actually deserves to be.

Larger schools therefore should try to budget not only for a nurse to take temperatures and bandage scraped knees, but also for a counselor with whom the students could feel free to share whatever is going on in their outside lives which is causing a distraction.

Maybe the counselor can actually point the student to a solution, and maybe not. At the very least, though, the very act of sharing and venting may help the student to feel not as stressed about whatever is going on, and may free up some mental 'juices' for at least some of the actual schoolwork.

If a particular school is too small to afford a full-time counselor, then maybe some neighboring schools can pool their resources to hire a regional counselor who could rotate to the different campuses in order to provide each student with a periodic opportunity to talk about whatever's going on.

Standard protocol probably should be that the student never should be in the same office as the counselor without some third-party being present, either the teacher or a parent or the school nurse or the football coach or somebody, because with all the recent revelations about secret child abuse we want to make sure that kids realize

early that it should be considered Never Okay for any child to be completely alone with any adult who is not a parent or duly-approved guardian.

The counselors may occasionally need to visit the student's home, to observe conditions directly and speak to the parents as applicable.

Even if certain kids never volunteer to speak to a counselor, we probably should arrange for periodic interviews with all the students, just to see whether problems are existing among certain kids who are too shy or embarrassed or frightened to come forward on their own.

Question 570

What is the best annual schedule for education?

We easily agreed in Session 259 (August 2018) that there should be multiple days off throughout the year. As long as the child eventually comes away with all the facts and skills and values which we require of everyone as a minimum standard, it is not necessary for the child to spend every day in school. By all means let her have some time off to do other things and learn from the real world and enjoy life.

We see no reason to challenge the basic Monday-to-Friday weekly schedule to which we all have become accustomed as a default standard for both school and work. Seems to strike a good balance in most cases between getting an appropriate amount of work/study done, and having some unstructured time to relax and enjoy the life which we are working/studying so hard to maintain and improve.

We also concur that those two days off per week are not sufficient to give everyone all the time off which they deserve. We find it quite reasonable to expect that anyone with a fixed weekly schedule should be allowed occasionally to enjoy travel and other experiences which can be undertaken only for periods of a week or more at a time. In other words, we all still get to have some vacation time, whether we are workers or only students.

But, how much vacation time do we get to have? That's where it seems to break down between workers and students. While there certainly are some seasonal jobs out there, and some employers who are willing to have people on their payroll for only a few months out of the year, fact is that most jobs and most employers these days operate on a year-round basis. They might be able to endure your absence for one or two or three weeks over the course of the year, but they will often encounter severe problems if you need to be out for longer than that, so there's usually a vacation cap in that range which an employer will impose upon any employee.

However, we need not be as stringent with students. Again, as long as we manage to get the complete basic curriculum communicated by the expected chronological age (to be determined later), we need to use only those weeks that it takes to get that job done, and the kids should be able to have the rest of the time off, even though that means that some parents will need to take them to work or otherwise arrange for their daycare during those vacation periods.

So, how many weeks per year will kids need to be in school in order to learn the basic curriculum? That's going to vary from one child to another, because kids learn

different subjects at different rates. It is also going to vary over time, because of both content updates and the evolving technologies of our delivery systems.

Let's therefore start with personal experience as a reference point, and see where we might spot some opportunities for improvement.

When the Moderator was growing up, the planners of the period generally felt that three seasons out of the year were needed for education, and that students usually could take some or all of the Summer off. We certainly support this general idea, both so that the kids can have some fun recreational and travel time during the warmer months, and also so that we can give our precious air-conditioning units a much-needed rest.

More specifically, we usually got out of school for the summer by around the second week of June, and we usually needed to start again on the Tuesday immediately following Labor Day. We usually got at least a week off between Christmas and New Year's. Don't remember us getting much if any time off around Easter, except that in my Catholic school they might have let us out by noon on Good Friday.

We feel intuitively that we can do better than that these days, as a result of both streamlining of our standard curriculum and improvements in the technology of some of our delivery systems.

To start with, we'd like to see if we can give the kids the entire Summer off, instead of starting up in early September as the Moderator did while growing up, or in August as many kids are doing now. It's tough to say 'we're off of school for the Summer', and it's misleading and deceptive to tell the kids 'you're going to be off of school for the Summer', if they are not actually getting those entire three months off. We are therefore assuming as a starting point that kids will generally get off the entire 13 weeks of Summer.

That leaves three seasons of the year during which Education has generally been expected to happen, and we see no reason to stray from that standard paradigm.

Also seems reasonable to expect some relatively-brief break periods between the seasons, of at least a week for the Winter Solstice, and at least another week for the Spring Equinox.

It would then be good if each seasonal trimester lasted the same number of weeks. If we were to take 13 weeks off for Summer, and only 1 week off for each of the Winter and Spring breaks, then that would leave 37 weeks to be divided among three trimesters. It would be far easier to work with 36 weeks, which is easily divisible into three trimesters. Besides, we could use an extra week off around the Winter Solstice anyway, both for all the various holidays which different cultures celebrate around that time, and because it's the coldest and stormiest time of the year in many areas of America, so it would be good to let the kids have an extra week of 'snow time'.

In sum, we are suggesting a standard schedule of 36 school weeks per year, beginning near the Autumnal Equinox, and comprising 12 weeks of Fall term, 12 weeks of Winter term, and 12 weeks of Spring term. There would be 2 weeks of Winter break, 1 week of Spring break, and 13 weeks of Summer vacation.

Naturally, if specific Schools or School Districts or States determine through experience that they need more time per year to present the standard curriculum, or that they are able to do the job in less time, then by all means adjust the standard schedule as indicated. Merely suggesting this as a standard starting point and general expectation.

As far as any Holidays to supplement our standard Weekends and Seasonal breaks, we're going to need to talk about that further, and we currently have that scheduled as a Question for near the end of our Agenda, but we may need to rearrange it for the final packaging. At this preliminary point, however, while adding Holidays probably makes more sense for workers who are on the job nearly every week of their adult lives, we were generally leaning away from adding any Holidays to our standard schedule for childhood Education.

For, if we want our kids to recognize and appreciate some Important Anniversary or some Great American, then it seems to us that we accomplish that objective more directly by having the kids in school and teaching them that lesson, rather than by allowing them to have some unstructured time away from school, where we would have no way of knowing whether they are giving even the slightest notice to whatever or whoever was the theoretical subject of that Holiday.

Besides, if schools and teachers and students develop a standard weekly schedule for the presentation of all their lesson plans, then the intrusion of one or more Holidays could tend to mess things up: A certain lesson or activity which you usually plan to happen on Mondays might need to be skipped on a certain week because of some various Holiday. Seems to us better to have that schoolday as normal, and conduct that lesson or other activity as normal, but if possible tie it into whichever Important Anniversary or Great American you happen to be celebrating that week.

In total, then, we're looking at 12 full weeks of Monday-to-Friday schooldays for each of 3 trimesters per year. That adds up to 180 days of school time per year, which intuitively seems appropriate. It's close to half of the year but is slightly less than half, so that most kids never could state truthfully that they are in school for more than half of their young lives.

Question 571

Is there any benefit to segregating students by gender?

Generally not, but as of Session 259 we can see some exceptions when it comes to certain lessons in Health and Physical Education. Especially when it comes time to tell the kids about reproductive anatomy and the biology of having sex and making babies, some kids might get embarrassed if kids from the other gender are present, especially if they start to giggle or make crude comments.

For certain athletic activities (especially Wrestling), it obviously will not do for boys and girls to be required to participate together. For certain other athletic activities (such as Golf, Tennis, and anything else where there is little or no direct physical contact), girls generally should be allowed to learn and compete with the boys.

For all regular academic subjects, we see little value in keeping the genders segregated, even though this happened in many cultures (including in America) for many centuries, on those limited occasions when girls were allowed to have any

education at all. If everyone is trying to learn U.S. History, then you don't want either gender wondering what stuff they're teaching the other gender. Better for all kids to hear those lessons at the same time, and to engage together in whatever conversations or exercises or games may be conducted as part of the lesson plan. Besides, males are going to need to interact and compete with females as they go through their adult lives, so best get used to it while growing up.

Question 572

Is there any benefit to segregating students by chronological age?

We see some benefit, but it appears as of Session 259 to be limited.

We understand that some kids may be uncomfortable in a classroom where the other kids are older and bigger. We also understand that some other kids may feel insulted when any kids in the classroom are at least a year younger than they are. It is for these reasons that many Grammar Schools and High Schools over the years have generally opted to keep together all the kids of a given chronological age, and advance kids or hold them back only under certain extreme conditions.

However, we also understand that kids generally learn at different rates, and that the learning rates for a given child will often vary according to the subject matter. As important as comfort levels and self-esteem levels may be for a child's overall psychological development, we must remember that our primary objective of having kids go to school is for them to learn our standard curriculum. If doing so requires some students to sit with older kids at least sometimes, while other students must at least sometimes sit with younger kids, then we best had get used to it, because our experience of keeping kids segregated by chronological age is that the slower kids don't get a chance to keep up, while the brighter kids are often stifled by boredom.

Question 573

To what extent shall we allow/require flunking?

We understand as of Session 260 (September 2018) that this is a sensitive topic, and that both sides make some valid and important points for us to consider:

On one side, the 'pragmatists' point out that the primary purpose of sending kids to school is for them to get educated according to our established standards, and that it is misleading to tell the student's family, the student's friends, the student's future employers, and even the student himself, that he has completed all the academic requirements for graduation when he really has not. They would have you hold the student back for as many extra years as may be needed in order to get the job done.

On the other side, the 'sympathizers' are concerned more about the student's self-esteem than about his academic progress. They remind us how badly it must feel to be told that (for whatever reason) you have not succeeded in learning as much as your friends who are all advancing in their academic careers.* [*This had never happened during grammar school or high school to anyone attending Session 260, but the Moderator didn't do as well at Caltech as most of his classmates, so he expressed during the meeting that he could relate. Not a good feeling indeed.] They would have you consider that holding a child back for academic failure might create more problems than it might solve.

Both sides have valid points. We do want everyone receiving the Basic Education which we feel that everyone should have (whatever specific elements that evolving curriculum might ever comprise), but we don't want to achieve that goal at the expense of a child's self-esteem. We therefore need some approach which satisfies both objectives.

As a key point of this Question, we recognize (as expressed in Answer 572) not only that different children generally learn at different rates, but also that many children are naturally better in some subjects than in others.

We therefore suggest that children generally (if not always) be allowed to track in different subjects at different rates, according to their different learning rates in different subjects. If a child has passed the Grade 3 requirements for English, but has failed to do so for Math, then it is both an injustice and a waste of time and resources to make him sit through the entire Grade 3 curriculum all over again. Better to have him spend whatever extra time he may need in order to catch up in Math, but allow him to attend Grade 4 classes in all subjects for which he is ready.

It would not be nearly so psychologically disruptive to have someone sitting in your Math class who is younger than you, if you may rest confident that you are still more advanced in Art or History or Sociology or some other subject.

This approach not only helps us with the short-term problems of providing Education while preserving Self-Esteem, but also helps by teaching an important long-term lesson, namely that in the future you may very easily have commanding officers or other bosses who are younger than you are, and you still need to do what they say. When that happens, it will not necessarily be because they are generally smarter than you are (although it sometimes could be), but it will often be because they have a particular aptitude for a particular subject, and/or that they simply have put in more time to learn everything needed for that position. There is no shame in this within the 'real world', so no shame need be felt when it happens in the classroom.

Question 574

What if a student at a given school flunks one course and has to take it over, but the scheduling of that class conflicts with another class which he/she is eligible to take?

Where practical, schools might try to schedule similar subjects at the same time of day, so that students could easily switch classrooms as needed. If you wish to rotate classes for variety, such that they happen in different periods during the week, then you still can do that, simply doing it for all grades at the same time.

If this is impractical within a particular school, then the conflicts will need to be resolved in different ways on a case-by-case basis, such as by (A) excusing the child from 4th-grade Math in order to work on 3rd-grade Math through supplemental self-study (possibly online) at a library or other quiet room, (B) arranging for tutorials outside of regular school hours, or (C) holding periodic 'free-for-all' sessions where students of all ages can ask general questions on any subject for group explanation. Your attendance at such a session does not imply that you are trying to make up some subject; maybe you just want to refresh on something, or just pick up some pointers to help you with future classes, or simply sit in on what could in some cases evolve to be a very fun and interactive period for kids of different chronological ages.

Other options are available besides these, so the possibility of occasional schedule conflict generally should not be treated as a reason to prohibit academic tracking and placement according to specific subjects.

Question 574.5

What portion (if any) of standard tests should include material covered in previous courses?

We very much liked in Session 260 the idea (whoever first thought of it) that some of the questions on any given test beyond Grade 1 should include a sampling of questions pertaining to courses taken in previous years.

We have often observed (and some of us have personally experienced) that students will 'cram' shortly before a particular test, remembering the material only until the test is completed, and then forgetting much or all of it afterward. In a situation like this, you have passed the test, but you haven't learned, so we are still failing in our mission to educate you.

We solve that problem by making sure that you are still 'on the hook' in later years for material which we taught you in earlier years. If you cannot answer those questions correctly when we ask you at any future time, then you have not permanently learned the material which we feel that everybody should know, and by our approach we will be able to see where we still need to apply some extra effort.

We can vary the specifics with experience, but our default recommendation is that approximately half of each test should include material covered in previous classes. The fraction may decrease progressively for the older classes.

As one possible example which might be useful for a general starting point, we might observe the following proportions for tests given at each of the first few grade levels:

Grade 1 - all Grade 1

Grade 2 - 1/2 Grade 2, 1/2 Grade 1

Grade 3 - 1/2 Grade 3, 1/4 Grade 2, 1/4 Grade 1

Grade 4 - 1/2 Grade 4, 1/4 Grade 3, 1/8 Grade 2, 1/8 Grade 1

Grade 5 - 1/2 Grade 5, 1/4 Grade 4, 1/8 Grade 3, 1/16 Grade 2, 1/16 Grade 1

... and so on.

Question 575

Shall we designate a specific chronological age when every child shall be expected to begin his/her formal education, or shall we permit each child to begin whenever he/she is ready and willing, either before or after the standard age?

Some school systems have felt that a period of 8 years is generally sufficient to teach the 'Grammar School' curriculum, while others have felt that a standard of 9 years is more suitable. Between these two standards, we are default-recommending the shorter one, on the grounds that didactic results must improve with didactic methods, and that we seemed to be achieving much more as of Session 260 with online learning and other resources which were not available even 20 years earlier.

While the Moderator's classmates in grammar school were not required to attend Kindergarten, the vast majority of them did so during the one-year period between Age 5 and Age 6. A lot of people apparently felt that most children should begin their classrooms experiences by Age 5, an assertion which we will not challenge.

To the contrary, we vigorously support it, if only because the Moderator reported experiencing extensive social problems during Grade 1, largely because most of the other kids knew each other from Kindergarten, whereas he had not attended, so he was an outsider. If you are going to have most kids attend Kindergarten at Age 5, then probably better to have all kids attend at Age 5 (unless there are special circumstances, as discussed below), so that no child is made to feel like an 'outsider' by joining the group a year later. Simply have all kids start at Age 5, and make that your new Grade 1 instead of calling it 'Kindergarten'.

It has also been widely held (especially within the Jewish tradition) that a young person should be regarded and treated as an adult by Age 13, and we will not challenge this perception either. Puberty either is happening at that time, has happened recently, or will begin shortly. Each young person therefore needs to know by then all the 'facts of life' which adults need to know in order to manage responsibly all the unique issues which attend physical adulthood.

It follows that students generally should aim to have their entire Primary Education completed by Age 13. For, it would hardly do for a young person to reach the brink of adulthood -- or to have ventured past the brink -- without knowing everything which we expect of all minimally-educated adults.

Combining these factors, we observe that lots of folks seem to want to begin Primary Education by Age 5, that they want to devote 8 years to the mission as a default standard, and that they would ideally like to have the process completed by Age 13. All these factors add up, and we have no dispute with any of them, so this is our default recommendation.

That said, we also should allow for individual variations. If some individual kids are able to start taking classes earlier, and if their parents are willing, and if no one else knows of any specific reason why there might be an individual problem, then they generally should be allowed to start early. (As we suggested in Answer 572, we see little benefit to segregating students by chronological age, so again best get accustomed early to mixing chronological ages within classrooms.) Conversely, other children may have certain medical or developmental conditions which would make it problematic for them to attend school (even by tutors or through self-study) as early as Age 5, in which case the parents can apply for a truancy exemption.

Question 576

Shall we designate a maximum chronological age beyond which individuals will not be allowed to attend primary/high school, or by which they must be allowed to 'graduate' (whatever that means), or shall we allow them to attend as long as they wish/need to, including the possibility of graduating early?

As a minimum starting condition, we don't ever want to allow a child to be acclaimed in a 'graduation' ceremony if he has failed to complete all of the academic

requirements for graduation. Such an action sends a message to the child that he does not really need to try in order to graduate, or in order to achieve any other level of success in Life. They're going to hand me the certificate whether I study or not, so why should I bother to study?? Why should I bother to do anything at all? The world will give me everything that I want, and if they ever try to stop doing so then I will merely complain that they are damaging my Self-Esteem.

Do we really want that? As of Session 260, our group thinks not. Whatever criteria you may ever want to establish as minimum graduation requirements in any level of Education, we must adhere to those requirements as conditions of participation in a graduation ceremony or receipt of a diploma, or else they are not requirements at all, and those kids who do not love learning (we have heard that there are quite a few of them out there) will not be motivated to complete the entire academic curriculum, and maybe not even any portion of it.

If this means that some young people still need to be attending primary-school classes after they have already reached physical adulthood, then that's what it means. This is one of the reasons (there are others) why kids should be allowed to accelerate in certain classes and take more time with others: If they needed only 7 years to fulfill all the 8 years of requirements in English, then they can use the extra time in their day to catch up with their chronological peers in History, and then graduate with the others as originally scheduled.

And yes, by all means, allow them to graduate early if they meet all the applicable academic requirements. The sooner that we can move a child along in her Education, the fewer resources we need in order to complete that mission, and the earlier she can progress to realize her full potential in life.

Question 577

Is there any reason to separate 'grammar school' from 'high school'?

Our preliminary finding as expressed in our 'black book' was no, we should seek to combine 'grammar school' and 'high school' wherever we practically can, so that students near the current transition point can more easily advance or make up classes as indicated.

However, we saw upon further reflection as of Session 261 (September 2018) that there is an overriding concern which suggests that we would do better to keep the two levels separate. Specifically, we established in Answer 566 that there should be a compulsory first level which teaches everybody the minimum facts and skills and values which we feel that all adults need to know in order to work and vote and generally commune safely with all of one's fellow citizens, and that there also should be an optional second level which provides glimpses into all of the areas of human endeavor which might serve as one's professions or hobbies in the future. The optional third level of 'trade school' or 'college' could present advanced levels of education in specific areas selected by the student.

This model seems (in theory, at least) to operate better on several levels than other approaches which we have tried in the past: At the primary level, we have a stronger motivation to make sure that all the classtime is filled with useful content, and that we get all the essentials covered within eight years, instead of depending upon 'high school' to cover some or all of it. At the secondary level, we don't have

kids taking up classroom space who don't really want to be there (again remembering the "expurgated" students in the film *Lean On Me*), so that the kids who really want to study and improve their life chances will be able to do so more peacefully and productively. At the tertiary level, we don't require students to take classes which have nothing to do with their declared majors, so that they are not made to look or feel dumber than they really are, and so that they will have a greater chance of graduating and living a happy and productive life within their chosen fields of endeavor.

We are sticking with this model until someone once successfully convinces us to modify or abandon it.

Question 578

If combining the two, then what generic name shall we give to the combination of 'grammar school' and 'high school'?

N/A, because we did not combine them in Session 261 as originally speculated.

However, we can use this space to discuss the standard labels for the two constituent levels.

For the first level, again intended to cover all the minimum essentials of communing within a civil society, and again aiming for chronological Ages 5 through 13 as a standard default, we are recommending the generic title of 'primary school'. We never liked the label 'grammar school', because we learn more than grammar in 'grammar school', and because one can also learn grammar (for both English and foreign languages) after the so-called 'grammar school' has already been completed.

The expression 'elementary school' is somewhat more applicable, implying correctly that we are covering the minimum standard requirements, but it also implies the most basic concepts within that set, generally intended for the youngest children, and not for those who have already reached Age 12 or 13. If you want to have both an 'elementary school' for the first 4-5 grade levels, and a 'middle school' to cover the rest of the way through Grade 8, then that might be a way to go, especially for those communities which don't have room for a single school comprising both levels. If this is done anywhere at all, then the two levels of 'elementary school' and 'middle school' still should be considered subsets of 'primary school'.

For the second level, we have no theoretical problem calling it 'secondary school', because that name correctly indicates that it is a supplemental level intended for only those kids who wish it. The expression 'high school' may be a little more romantic, however, as it conjures up all kinds of old songs and movies. Also, if we were to change all the names to 'secondary school', then the Moderator's *alma mater* would have the embarrassing initials of ASS instead of AHS, so maybe we don't really need to go there.

Couple of little problems that we have with the expression 'high school' are (1) that it does not make clear this is an optional secondary level, and (2) that it implies incorrectly that there is no school level which is higher than that. However, as long as everybody clearly understands that it is an optional secondary level, and that there are levels which are higher, we will not seek to make people switch away from the familiar and romantic 'high school' phrasing if they do not wish to do so.

Question 579

What criteria should be used to determine when individuals may begin working: age, education, or both?

We feel as of Session 261 that people generally may begin working when they have reached physical adulthood, and when they also have earned their primary-school diploma, certifying that they have learned all the minimum facts and skills and values which a given society feels at any given time in its history should be possessed by all of its adult citizens.

Some of us may feel a temptation to make them wait until Age 16 or 18 or 21 before they get to be employed as an adult, because the 'parent' impulse within some of us makes us want to keep them as 'our kids' for as long as we practically can. (Others, of course, can't wait for them to get jobs and move out of the house.) This impulse to prolong their childhoods is quite natural and understandable, but it may do a disservice to both society and the young people themselves. They may be eager to work, eager to show off what they can do, eager to earn for themselves and their families, and -- perhaps above all -- eager to be considered and treated as adults.

If a child reaches physical adulthood and has earned a primary-school diploma, and chooses to stay in school when she has the legal option to start working right away, then that choice to stay in school in order to better herself is much more meaningful than if society expects or requires her to stay in school whether she wants to or not. Again, when that happens, all the secondary-school students benefit, because they can acquire the additional education which they want without the distractions of a bunch of drug-dealing bullies who are there by compulsion.

We may continue to grant exemptions for children to work in Acting or Modeling or other such industries, on the conditions that proper provisions are being made for their concurrent education, and that their employers are duly licensed and bonded to work with children in a non-abusive environment.

Question 580

What about for driving, voting, military service, drinking, sex, and other such stuff where we have established chronological age cutoffs in the past?

In our model, different combinations of requirements are needed for different things. Some key examples are presented below, and hopefully will serve as a basis for any categories not listed:

Voting. We feel as of Session 261 that a primary-school diploma should be both necessary and sufficient for voting. That diploma suggests that you have learned enough of the basics of social economics and governmental structures to be able to cast intelligent votes. Some might argue that one should have a certain amount of 'life experience' before voting for the first time, but we don't recall ever seeing this established anywhere as a formal requirement before. To the contrary, the Voting Age has been lowered several times throughout recent history in order to get more people involved in the electoral process more quickly, and we strongly approve the concept. We are merely suggesting that it be extended downward one more level.

Sex. Sex is far trickier. We postulated in Answer 487 that physical puberty and a primary-school diploma (with the understanding that the primary-school curriculum will include all the necessary 'facts of life') should be considered the only two requirements for any male or female to engage in adult sex acts. However, we saw numerous news reports and Twitter reactions during 2018 criticizing certain celebrities or other public figures for engaging in sexual intercourse with females who were several years younger than they were, but still of legal age, or in certain 'pre-sex' acts with females who were legally old enough for those levels.* [*One prominent example was 31-year-old entertainer Drake allegedly 'dating' 18-year-old model Bella Harris (with the term 'dating' often translating within the real world to 'having adult sex with'), although the allegation was denied (according to www.cosmopolitan.com/entertainment/a23125213/drake-dating-teenage-bella-b-harris), and allegedly having lunch with her when she was as young as 16.] One tweet from that period of targeting celebrities for their sexual pasts and presents asserted that there is a big difference between 'legality' and 'morality', and that some things still could and should be considered morally wrong even if they do not violate any laws or cause/threaten any injury to others.

That's a tough one for some of us to accept. When some of us are trying to figure out what is morally 'right' or 'wrong' when it comes to sexual interactions, not all of us have had the luxury of having it all explained to us in school or in church or by our parents or on TV. However, those who have not had that luxury still have had the recourse of the laws which have been passed within our communities, and the key legal precedents showing how those laws have been applied locally in real life.* [*Examples include Sections 261 and 261.1 of the California Penal Code, to be reproduced with their case histories in an appendix during final packaging.] If the laws and the case histories indicate that a particular action is to be considered legal under certain conditions, then it sure would be nice if we could rely on those legal findings, and engage in those legal actions without fearing that a tidal wave of Twitter users is going to come along at some point and decry our legal actions for still being 'immoral'.

Although we generally recommend in favor of more liberality when it comes to non-injurious activities among consenting adults, if you yet feel strongly that our current laws need to be made stricter, then we wish as of Session 262 (September 2018) that you would please go ahead and make that happen, and perform a big public outreach to make sure that everyone 'gets the memo' on your new social order. Until then, we wish that you would quit criticizing people for any acts which they may have committed which did not violate any laws or cause/threaten any 'injury' according to our standard definition. For any other alleged acts which yes would have been against the law, or yes would have caused/threatened some 'injury' to one or more others, we also wish that you would observe any statutes of limitations which might be in effect for such actions, because we should not be forming any accusations which we cannot reliably prove in a court of law*. [*Such unprovable accusations may in some instances rise to the legal definition of 'slander', but we will research that later for the final packaging.]

That said, we did seem to be observing a shift in the public sentiment, toward greater prohibition of actions which currently do not violate any laws. If you are going to tighten the laws accordingly as requested above, then we're going to need to come to some level of consensus on exactly what the new laws should state.

As we noted in Answer 487, any chronological cutoff which we establish after puberty is probably going to be pretty arbitrary, and could be dangerously misleading, in that it would suggest that everyone reaching that chronological age is ready for sex in every respect, when they actually may not be.

Besides, even when we have had strict chronological-age cutoffs in the past, they were not always observed in real life. For example, a lot of guys in my high school would often either show off their girlfriends, or else brag about their various alleged sexual exploits, sending the express or implied message to all observers: If you weren't having sex, then you weren't cool. As for the girls, even though it was a Catholic school (or perhaps *because* it was a Catholic school?), where the official teaching was no sex with more than one person in your lifetime, and then only when you were married to that one person, we yet frequently observed girls suddenly disappearing from campus, and then showing up again a few months later carrying their new babies. Individuals under Age 18 were having sex, and lots of it. Are you also going to hang all those individuals for things which they did 40 years ago??

One possible way to approach the problem is to amend our Answer 487 to require a diploma from secondary school instead of primary school, on the grounds that the primary level could still be going over the biological basics, whereas the secondary level could get more into 'responsible parenting' along with the other areas of human endeavor, to help young people decide which areas they wish to pursue in their own lives. That's a maybe, but then that would mean that any individual who graduates from primary school but not secondary school would never be legally able to have sex, and it can be awfully hard to convince anyone to suppress his/her sexual urges for life. Such people might then feel compelled to go 'underground' for their sexual satisfactions, and we will not really have accomplished or improved anything.

Maybe we therefore should not be extending either the chronological requirement or the educational requirement of Answer 487. Maybe we should instead be allowing those people to engage in consensual sex who have reached puberty and graduated from primary school, as Answer 487 indicates, but allow for the fact that some individuals meeting both conditions still are not emotionally ready for sex, and should be sheltered from any would-be suitors until that condition changes.

Specifically, if a given parent or other guardian of a post-pubescent primary-school graduate feels that he/she is still not ready for any sexual interactions, then they can do two things: First, make sure that the young person in question is interacting with older age groups as little as possible (including not attending the same school or going to the same party or engaging in the same community activity with significantly-older people), except when properly supervised. Second, it might help everybody out if the youngster could be encouraged to wear an inexpensive ring or bracelet in public, preferably on or near the same finger where we are currently trained to check for marital status, and with some distinctive color or texture or design (perhaps a thick rubber band which is half pink and half dark-blue, to distinguish from those worn in support of various public causes?) to indicate clearly that this individual is still 'off limits' for any kind of unsupervised social interaction with a potential suitor.

In sum, the two conditions expressed in Answer 487 may continue to serve as minimum conditions, but parents/guardians may and should exercise their individual judgments to assess how much additional living and learning their charges may require before they can begin their sexual lives safely.

Driving. As with other such things, physical puberty and a primary-school diploma should be minimum conditions, the first because it may endanger the public safety to allow anyone to drive who has not reached their full height and muscular

development, the second because all drivers need to be able to read traffic signs and follow the oral directions of police officers.

In addition, drivers must have passed qualifying courses in Driver's Ed and Driver's Training (could be from secondary school, could be private), so that we know that they have the minimum informational and physical background in the art. States and localities might also wish to establish minimum height requirements, based upon local conditions.

Drinking. In addition to the standard minimum requirements of physical puberty and a primary-school diploma, we imagine that we can pretty much all agree that young people should not be drinking alcohol immediately after reaching puberty, or for a few years afterward, partly because their bodies still might not be ready for it, and partly because they may not know all the information which they should have on how alcohol affects the body.

Perhaps we can also concur that Age 21 might have been a good idea theoretically, but simply was not practical, because good luck trying to keep the college underclassmen away from the frat parties and other opportunities for alcohol abuse.

We therefore are recommending that a secondary-school diploma be considered both necessary and sufficient to be able to purchase and consume alcohol legally. This means that the secondary-school curriculum should include education on how alcohol affects the body, and how it can be enjoyed responsibly if desired. Unlike the Sex category discussed above, it's not really a big problem if we legally prohibit individuals from drinking who have graduated from primary school but not secondary school, because the purchasing and consumption of alcohol are much more easily tracked and prevented.

Military service. We have had soldiers as young as Age 15 and below throughout our history, notably during the Revolutionary War (and also dramatized in the 1981 film *Taps*, where 'plebs' as young as Age 12 were given automatic weapons to wield in defense of their campus). It sometimes was necessary in the past, but we hope that it will never again be necessary in the future, if we once successfully manage to outlaw all unilateral crossings of national borders with military force.

We also generally want to make sure that people have a good grounding in the basics of all of the chief areas of human endeavor, before they decide whether they are best suited for either one life path or another. That's the whole idea of 'secondary school' in our model.

We therefore suggest that a secondary-school diploma be considered a minimum requirement for military service in our model, so that we know that the individual in question has had ample opportunity to select from other subjects and professions, and that her decision to pursue some amount of military service has been reached knowingly and willingly. Then, the Service can act as a tertiary level of education, same as 'college' or 'trade school', providing advanced training in certain subjects and skills which are needed for longer terms in the Service, and/or which can carry over to other areas if/when the individual becomes ready to return to civilian life.

Generally, physical puberty and a primary-school diploma should be minimum requirements for any action which is commonly associated with being an 'adult', but parents or local governments or other authorities may want to establish additional

requirements for certain activities. If doing so, then please announce the added requirements very clearly to everyone (including as part of the Civics track of the primary-school curriculum), as well as the reasons why those requirements were established, in hope of getting everybody's philosophical buy-in, instead of hoping in vain that you can successfully enforce your rules upon all unwilling individuals in all places at all times.

Social Friendships. We added this category in Session 263 (October 2018), to consider ratifying notes which we had compiled during the week on polling for acceptable age differences for personal friendships. We did ratify the notes without opposition, so we can establish different standards for social friendships and actual sexual interactions. We therefore will position this category after Sex above.

We agreed that feelings on appropriate chronological-age differences for non-sexual social friendships appear to vary so widely and so arbitrarily that our group would have no basis upon which to arrive at a single definition or formula which would please everybody.

Instead, we felt that an ongoing poll should be installed on a public polling site (we will get one going as time permits if no one else takes the initiative in the interim), allowing millions of users to register their individual feelings as to what age ranges are generally appropriate or generally inappropriate for friends of a given individual of a given chronological age to have.

Said poll should actually comprise four sub-polls, one for each combination of primary gender identities (male friends for a male, female friends for a male, male friends for a female, and female friends for a female). Each sub-poll should cover all age ranges from 1 to 100, so that we can receive input on children and sexually-active adults and everybody else.

When the results of each sub-poll are displayed on a summary graph, each age range for a given subject should contain dots for 100 ages of potential friends. Each dot should light up if the majority of poll respondents agrees that the subject may freely form a social friendship with an individual of the indicated chronological age and gender identity, and should remain dark otherwise.

If the 'agree' lights are solid for that particular combination of subject and target ages, and also for all the nearby combinations, then a subject of that age may feel pretty confident that he/she may form a social friendship with a target of the indicated chronological age and gender identity, without fearing that a tidal wave of Twitter users is going to pounce at some present or future point.

Conversely, if a particular combination on the graph is lit but nearby combinations are dark, or if the particular combination is dark but nearby combinations are lit, then this might constitute a 'grey area' where public opinion is currently divided, and where the subject may therefore need to present some extenuating circumstance (such as consent of the target's family) in order to justify the social friendship. If all neighboring dots are dark, then the subject could expect widespread disapproval of any social friendship with the target in question.

If we ever want to get fancy, then we could enable more levels of indicated response in the display than just majority-approval and majority-disapproval, but probably

better to get the main polling protocol in place first, and let it get established and known and understood and read before we start thinking about enhancements.

Results of the poll should remain open and public indefinitely, with individual users able to change their responses whenever they change their feelings, so that we have an ongoing sense of any evolution which may occur in the general public sentiment.

Question 581

Should we allow/encourage a major to be declared during either primary or secondary school?

This may be tempting for certain individuals who at early ages develop passions and talents in Math or Music or Athletics or some other specific area, so as of Session 263 we guess that we should allow it when it really wants to happen, so that the student can be eligible for special schools where those aptitudes can be developed further without needing to wait all the way for college.

However, as a general rule, we are generally discouraging a major to be selected at any time prior to the completion of secondary school. For, the whole idea of secondary school in our model is to provide each student with enough of a taste of each subject and each profession that she can make a fully-informed decision.

Question 582

If college is basically for development in one or more particular disciplines, then is it worthwhile/appropriate to declare a 'general ed' major in college?

We feel as of Session 263 that it would be inappropriate in our model (and may even be inappropriate right now) for a 'general ed' major to be declared in college. In theory, all the information needed to decide upon a college major would have been presented in secondary school. If a particular secondary-school graduate is still undecided as to a college major, then we are not sure that it would be entirely appropriate or useful for him to be taking any college classes at all.

However, we can conceive of some situations where a particular student has narrowed down his college majors to 2-3 possibilities, and feels that he needs a little bit more exposure in each option in order to make a fully-informed choice. Or, perhaps a particular student is not particularly eager to declare a particular college major at all, but simply wishes to take advanced courses in numerous different subjects, either for general enlightenment or in order to maximize her ability to proceed in any of various career directions as the opportunities present themselves.

To allow for these possibilities, we suppose that we can allow students to postpone (perhaps indefinitely) the declaration of a college major, but we are recommending that any particular course which for any reason has limited enrollment should give priority consideration to those students who have formally committed to a major in that subject area, so that their career paths are not obstructed by those who are still wandering around aimlessly. Any undeclared students who thus get bounced out of a particular course due to limited enrollment will simply need to take some other courses while they proceed to 'figure things out', however long they may still need after secondary school to complete that process.

In any case, no it does not make sense in our opinion to declare 'general ed' or 'general studies' as a major, because it means that no major has been chosen at all.

Question 583

Shall a college student who declares a particular major be required to take courses only in that discipline?

No, a college student majoring in one subject should be allowed to 'minor' in some secondary subject, and also to take advanced courses in subjects which are not directly related to either her major or her minor. All subjects relate to greater or lesser extents with all others, and people who know more about numerous different subjects tend to be happier and more productive throughout their future lives, so let us by all means propagate this education insofar as we have the resources to do so.

However, as with Answer 582, we allow as of Session 263 for the practical possibility that a certain course at a certain school may be able to accommodate only some limited number of students during a particular term. When that happens, the highest priority of enrollment should go to students who are formally majoring in that subject. Secondary priority of enrollment should go to students who are formally minoring in that subject. Tertiary priority of enrollment should go to students who are seeking greater exposure to different subjects before selecting a major or minor. Students who are both majoring and minoring in other subjects should be allowed to enroll only on a space-available basis.

Question 583.5

What parameters -- if any -- should apply to the role of Athletics in college? Is it appropriate to declare Athletics or some particular sport as a major? Should college athletes receive any compensation for their entertainment? Are there any other attributes of college athletics which we wish to either allow or encourage or require or discourage or prohibit?

In common with many other subjects, the subject of Athletics can form the basis of a professional career, as well as of an amateur hobby. We therefore definitely should include Athletics as a subject to be taught in secondary school, after students have begun to go through puberty and we have had a better chance to see what physical talents they may happen to have, so that they can acquire a better sense of how much (if at all) they want to focus on that subject in their future lives.

For the same reasoning, we definitely should allow Athletics to be taught as a subject in college, and we should allow students to declare majors or minors in that subject, same as any other. And, as indicated in Answer 583, priority access in Athletics courses should be accorded to declared majors in that subject in case of limited enrollment, and secondary access should be accorded to declared minors.

We have long found it deceptive and silly when they flash a college footballer's bio on the screen during a televised game, and they state his major as being either 'general studies' or perhaps 'communications'. Tells us that he has little or no actual interest in any other subject track, but he must have been very interested in Athletics in order to have made it onto the varsity squad. Best in such an instance to simply declare Athletics as his major, if that's what's actually happening in real life.

We don't particularly care as of Session 263 if college students receive any pay for their performance in athletic competitions, or for any ancillary endorsements. We recommend against it as a practical matter, because the whole idea of college is that they are still receiving education and training in their chosen professions, and probably therefore are not sufficiently advanced yet to merit any salaries or endorsements. However, we will not stand in the way of an above-board free-market deal if responsible parties are willing to agree to it.

Question 584

What is the optimum number of classes to be held in primary school in an ordinary day? How long should they last? Should either the number or length of classes depend at all upon grade level? Any suggestions for what time to begin and/or conclude the standard school day?

As of Session 263, we usually have observed either 6 or 7 courses being offered per day, in any primary or secondary school which is structured into fixed periods.

If 6 periods are offered, then the school usually offers 3 courses in the morning, then a lunch break, and then 3 courses in the afternoon. If 7 periods are offered, then the school usually offers 4 courses before the lunch break, with a shorter 'recess' or 'nutrition' period between the 2nd and 3rd classes.

We generally prefer a greater level of symmetry in our daily scheduling if we can practically manage it, to make it easier to plan our days around the astronomical singularity of Noontime, thus to minimize the necessity that any students in northern latitudes will need to travel to or from school in the dark near the Winter Solstice, without ever needing to depend upon a disruptive 'daylight saving time'.

However, if we cannot easily condense our model primary-school curriculum into 6 subject tracks, but if we can easily manage 7, then that probably should be the way to go, so we need to consider that Question before we can finalize this one.

Generally, experience seems to have shown us that most kids may be able to hold their attention on a given subject for up to 45-50 minutes at a time, but then will need a shift to some other subject or activity. We will assume 50 minutes as a standard default if presenting 6 periods per day, and 45 minutes if presenting 7 periods per day, in order to help create a more consistent overall timeframe, but okay for schools to modify with experience if they feel the need.

We generally should allow a full hour for lunch if we practically can, to allow plenty of time for both actual eating and general running-around. May need to cut it to somewhat shorter than an hour if going with 7 periods.

Maybe should allow a break of 5-10 minutes between each pair of consecutive classes, even if most/all students are not required to change classrooms. One reason is simply to allow them to relax and clear their minds from the preceding session, and to mentally psych up for the next one. Another reason is to get different books and other materials on their desks as may be needed. Another reason is so that they can chat with their neighbors for a few minutes, so that they will be less likely to do so during any actual class. Another reason is so that they can take a quick restroom or water-fountain break. Another reason is to allow students to switch classrooms if they are on an advanced track in a given subject or else need

to catch up with their chronological peers. (This is an important reason not to vary the standard daily schedule according to grade level, unless something unusual is happening in some particular school to warrant an exception.) We will assume 10 minutes between classes if presenting 6 periods per day, and 5 minutes between classes if presenting 7 periods per day.

That all said, we are looking at two primary scenarios, as follows:

| <u>6-period day</u> | | <u>7-period day</u> | |
|---------------------|----------|---------------------|----------|
| 8:40-9:30 | Period 1 | 8:35-9:20 | Period 1 |
| 9:30-9:40 | break | 9:20-9:25 | break |
| 9:40-10:30 | Period 2 | 9:25-10:10 | Period 2 |
| 10:30-10:40 | break | 10:10-10:35 | Recess |
| 10:40-11:30 | Period 3 | 10:35-11:20 | Period 3 |
| 11:30-12:30 | Lunch | 11:20-11:25 | break |
| 12:30-1:20 | Period 4 | 11:25-12:10 | Period 4 |
| 1:20-1:30 | break | 12:10-1:00 | Lunch |
| 1:30-2:20 | Period 5 | 1:00-1:45 | Period 5 |
| 2:20-2:30 | break | 1:45-1:50 | break |
| 2:30-3:20 | Period 6 | 1:50-2:35 | Period 6 |
| | | 2:35-2:40 | break |
| | | 2:40-3:25 | Period 7 |

Either way, schools in northern latitudes may wish to offer shorter classes in the Wintertime, and longer classes in the Fall and Spring, in order to allow their students to always be traveling to and from school in the daytime.

All schools may modify this general default according to any relevant local conditions or preferences, but we recommend not varying too much from this basic model, not only for internal efficiency, but also to reduce the 'culture shock' for any student transferring in from another school.

Question 585

What shall we designate as the 6 or 7 main disciplines to be taught in primary school in the modern environment?

We were thinking as of Session 263 that we can conveniently divide the standard primary-school curriculum into 6 main tracks (which is better for the symmetry consideration discussed in Answer 584), comprising Math and Science and Art and Language and Civics and Health.

As a minimum standard, we feel as of Session 264 (October 2018) that the main tracks at the primary level should include the following specific subjects:

Math - counting, arithmetic, logic, household finance, governmental budgeting
Science - mechanics, computer tech, astronomy, biology
Language - vocabulary, reading, writing, spelling, grammar, interpretation
Civics - social interaction, ethics, geography (world, American, local), history (world, American, local), economics, government, current events [added law later]
Art - music, visual art, drama
Health - anatomy, phys ed, first aid, nutrition, sex ed, hygiene, disease prevention & treatment, drug/alcohol ed

These listings are not necessarily exhaustive, and are subject to amendment.

Question 566 (continued)

Should formal education in schools be made compulsory, or shall children and/or parents have the opportunity to pass or self-educate?

Non-author panelist in Session 264 reported that secondary school is often not compulsory in Europe. Helpful for our argument, but may need citation.

Question 592

Should computers be part of the classroom environment?

Non-author panelist in Session 264 expressed a dislike for the use of iPad's in classrooms, because he was afraid of radiation, and because he felt that it discourages learning to use pen & paper, that it discourages group participation, and that it could encourage addiction. We made a note on radiation for Question 592.

Question 71 (continued)

Who should be permitted to register to vote?

It was brought to our attention in Session 264 that our recent conclusion in Section III-C (that a primary-school graduation is both necessary and sufficient for an individual to be permitted to register to vote, with the understanding that the eight years of primary school are to be used to teach all the facts and skills and values which we expect all American adults to possess) contradicted our previous finding in Answer 71, that voter registration should be extended to anyone who has reached the chronological age which is determined at any given time and place to be standard for high-school graduation, provided that it is no higher than the minimum age for being able to be drafted.

Confirmed our more recent finding at this time, *viz.*: If an individual of any chronological age has not satisfied the academic requirements of primary school, then we cannot rely upon that individual to vote intelligently, so allowing him to vote could be very dangerous for us. This position is consistent with our drafting parallel, because we presumably will never draft into the military -- nor even induct on a volunteer basis -- anyone who has not at least graduated from primary school.

Question 586

What shall we tell children when they ask why they are learning a certain subject, particularly Math, since they supposedly are never going to use it in 'real life'?

Non-author panelist in Session 264 agreed that all the information summarized in Answer 585 will be needed in real life. Moderator added that we should be proactively telling the students during each lesson why that lesson is being taught, instead of waiting for them to ask, because they might never ask to your face.

Accepted all notes in the 'black book' re different specific subjects, including notes handwritten on the facing page, paraphrased as follows:

In the specific example of Math, there are many uses of different kinds of math in different non-math topics, particularly in Science. Many types of jobs, especially those in the ever-growing Computer sector, use different kinds of Math. Lots of situations come up in everyday life, from investment planning to taxes to checkbook balancing to real estate to games and on and on which require Math. Finally, the person who succeeds in Math is a person who is going to have clear thinking, and will approach all Life's problems and opportunities with the mental tools needed to win.

For subjects like History, Geography, and Astronomy, it's helpful -- and often desirable -- for us to know something of the world around us, and how we fit into that world. The ancients struggled to find out this stuff because they wanted to know, and now you get to know too. Further, other students in other schools and cities and nations are quickly absorbing this stuff, in order to get the maximum advantage when it comes time to get the cool jobs and the big contracts, and you don't want to fall behind. Or do you?

Generally, another useful analogy is to present a kid with a box full of new tools from the hardware store, and he says "What the heck am I going to do with these? I'm not going to be a carpenter." Well, for one thing, maybe you are and you just don't know it. For another, you may get another job that will require a knowledge of carpentry, such as building safety inspector, or union delegate, or tool designer, or architect, or construction foreman. Or, you might need to make repairs or additions in your own home, or that of a friend or neighbor. Or, you might feel inclined to volunteer to help with 'Habitats for Humanity' or a similar charitable program. Or, you might get on 'Survivor' and need to be able to build a shelter. Then again, you might land a modeling contract, or your parents might win the lottery, and you'll be lucky enough never to have to pick up a hammer or nail for the rest of your life. In that case, though, since everybody else is learning at least the basics of toolwork, do you really want to be the only one around who doesn't know this stuff? Same with Math and other academic fundamentals: The more that you absorb now, the more options that you will have later, for jobs and around the home and in your volunteer life, and just in knowing some basic stuff which just about everybody else knows.

Here's another one: Teacher walks into 3rd-grade Math class and says, "OK, I'm a manufacturer. I make and sell electric fans, but I've been losing money lately. I want to know what price I should charge for my fans, but I don't know how to determine that, so I need to hire a pricing analyst to tell me. I am considering hiring YOU [points to one student]. Now, what information do you need from me so that you can calculate the price that will earn me the most money, and how are you then going to calculate it?" After getting the expected blank stares from all the students, the teacher draws a basic price/profit graph on the board and tries to explain it, just to further dumbfound everyone, and then announces, "You guys will need the basic elements of Math before you can even begin to comprehend what the heck we're talking about here, or for many similar situations, so you had better pay attention."

Moderator added for the specific example of Spelling that what you do with your personal love letters is up to you, but when it comes time to write a big paper for higher educational levels, or to write an important report for your job, or to prepare a job application or résumé, or to post a blog entry which you hope will bring about some big social or political improvement, or to compose a campaign statement, you

are likely to get a lot of sneers and rejections if your writing contains numerous spelling errors. Readers figure, if this person cannot even master the rudiments of Spelling, then how can we expect him to tackle any greater challenge successfully? There will be times in your life when you want to be taken seriously, and when that happens you would not want a Spelling deficiency to make you look like an idiot.

Non-author panelist added for the specific example of History that we need to show everybody what has worked and what has not worked, and the consequences of various actions. ("Those who have not learned history are doomed to repeat it.") This is especially true when it comes to learning how certain dictators came to power (including recently), so that we can make sure that it doesn't happen again.

Question 587

Reading older literature, or literature written in a non-English language, is often perceived by kids as very dry and dull and boring: Why do we need to do it, and how can we make it better?

Panelist in Session 264 noted that many of these works deal with universal themes which are important for all places and all times. Discussing the lessons which can be learned from each piece can make the reading more relevant and more interesting.

Added notes from the 'black book': "Exposure to older or foreign literature can be very emotionally rewarding for the receptive mind, and can give us some insight into some of the different ways that societies evolved or were constructed, and how people felt about them, or can at least let us know that such literature exists, allowing those who are interested to explore it further. Recognizing that it can be really dry to the uninitiated, we suggest making sure that we always (or almost always) tell the story first to the student, using ordinary language, and then get into the text, kind of like reading the synopsis to a play before the play begins."

Question 588

When teaching Sex Ed, should we pass out condoms as part of the program?

We found in Session 264 that this Question needed to be split into two parts, because our model had segmented pre-college education into a compulsory 'primary school' and an optional 'secondary school'.

For the secondary level, which again we imagine will be populated mostly by students between Age 13 and Age 16, when (whether we like it or not) a lot of young people are eager to begin exploring their sexuality, we feel that we should not be distributing condoms proactively, because we don't want to appear to be encouraging young people to have sex before they may really be ready. However, we should make them available for easy pickup at school offices upon request.

For the primary level, even though we are not expecting too many kids of Ages 12 and 13 to have sex, yet some of them do, and if they do then we still want for them to maintain social responsibility. We therefore are suggesting the same rule as for secondary school: Don't proactively give away free samples, and thus implicitly encourage the students to go out and use them, but do make them easily available whenever the students decide that they are ready to begin sexual activity.

Question 589

What facts and/or skills and/or values will we want to teach in each of the subjects in each of the disciplines at the primary level, and how much time do we expect the teaching to take under ordinary conditions?

Non-author panelist in Session 264 opined that the 'Common Core' curriculum imposed too much of a workload on students, and also made Math unnecessarily complicated, by insisting on one certain set of methods which are not necessarily easiest for everyone. Panelist also objected to Common Core on grounds that it placed too much control at the Federal level. Federal action is okay for establishing certain minimum requirements for admission, but other than that we should have more control at State and Local levels.

Moderator asked if we can make this kind of recommendation if we are seeking to provide the 'Answers to Everything'. Panelist answered yes, because Variety and Diversity can be considered as being among the 'Answers to Everything'.

Panelist also asserted that different areas can have different Ethics, especially if different religions are prevalent among them. Moderator asked, Is this okay? Panelist said yes, to a certain extent.

Determined in Session 265 (October 2018) upon reflection that we should not seek to include all lesson elements for the primary-school curriculum within this space, because it would be so large as compared with the rest of this document that it probably should be considered beyond the scope of this Project, and because the curriculum needs to evolve with time anyhow.* [*There is always new History to be taught, we learn more about the old History as we go along, there is always new Science, there is always new Technology, there often are changes in how we do Government and Economics, and we generally are learning more all the time about which lessons are more important to today's kids and which are okay to be deprioritized if needed.]

Also agreed that we do want a placeholder to list out at least some elements which we definitely want to include, because there have been multiple times throughout this Project when we have recorded that we want to make sure to include some particular lesson in our model curriculum, so we should collect those elements in a central place somewhere within our Agenda, so we will park them all here.

Thus, while we should not expect this document to be the one single source for our entire curriculum content, yet parents and teachers and administrators can compare any given curriculum against our list in order to make sure that it includes all the elements which we do feel are important enough to specify within this space.

That all said, in addition to whatever lesson elements we may already have specified elsewhere in this document, or may get specified during our remaining evaluation, we now free-formed a few core ideas here to make sure that they get included:

Civics - Social Interaction

No bullying. Tattle if getting bullied. No sexual assault. Tattle if getting sexually assaulted. If tattling on anybody for anything, then better to do it sooner rather than later, because it will be much more believable, and because any personal recollections or other forms of evidence will be fresher and therefore more reliable, which is why numerous jurisdictions prescribe 'statutes of limitations' on various

criminal acts. Wait in line. Take turns. Don't yell or scream at someone except in case of emergency, or unless you're trying to get around town in Manhattan, in which case you're on your own.

Civics - Religion

Even though we are not teaching that any one religion is net-better than any other, yet people usually need to deal with adherents of various religions throughout their social and professional lives. Many of those folks will like to observe certain holidays, or maintain certain dietary restrictions, or dress in certain manners, or believe different things about our ancient history. In order to deal with those folks peacefully and productively, and not be motivated to ridicule them or assault them or murder them, it would be helpful to understand something about what they believe and how they behave, and why they have chosen to live their lives in those manners. This is especially true of the three major religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, which all had some adherents at various times who were guilty of inflicting war and terrorism and other forms of violence upon individuals not believing as they did. As a fundamental value of our model society, we want to have less violence, more tolerance, and more sensitivity toward individuals who in any way are different from ourselves, so we should learn not to disparage people for their beliefs, as long as they are observing our Basic Social Rule of not committing any action which causes or threatens undue injury upon any others.

Health - Hygiene

Wash hands before you eat, and understand why, because we did not always hear why from our parents and teachers, and it might have helped. Millions died of bubonic plague and other devastating diseases in past centuries, because they didn't have access to soap, or know that they were supposed to use it. It may seem like a drudge to a little kid, and it may not be strictly necessary in every single instance, but getting in that habit will take little effort, and will help you over time to remain free from numerous communicable diseases, which will be better for you and also for your fellow citizens, because they will not need to pay so much in insurance premiums, and we can generally do better things with our resources than cure one another of avoidable diseases. [We wrote that over a year before COVID-19.]

Also for that same objective, learn not to sneeze or cough into your palm or fist, because you will often have occasion to shake someone's hand shortly afterward, or handle a doorknob or other object which someone else will need to touch. If you cannot conveniently cover with a handkerchief, then use the inside of your elbow. [Will eventually provide a picture and citation for this protocol.]

Civics - Traffic

If the laws of your community designate that you need to come to a full stop at each stop sign, then please always do so, even if no cops are around, and even if no pedestrians or other drivers are around. Getting and remaining in that habit will make things much safer and easier on yourself and everyone else. Then, when you come to an intersection with multiple stop signs, you can easily tell whose turn it is to cross, by noting the sequence in which each driver has come to a full stop. When individuals decide to 'fudge' on coming to a complete stop, it makes this decision much more difficult and sometimes more dangerous, so please don't ever fudge.

Change lanes as little as you can practically manage, and always signal when you do, as long as any other vehicle is within your line of sight in any direction, so that all drivers can feel calmer with the knowledge that you are a safe and courteous and defensive driver, instead of stressing out from wondering what dangerous stunt you're going to pull next.

Most other traffic protocols can wait for the Driver's Ed and Driver's Training which we will offer in secondary school where practical, but we still need to stress and re-stress these basic points in primary school, because they go to fundamental issues of safety and courtesy and social patience and generally not being a jerk.

Civics - Religion

A lot of people place a great amount of reverence and reliance upon that certain anthology of Judeo-Christian lore commonly known as 'The Bible' or 'The Holy Bible', for both their History and their Life Guidance. As for the History aspects, while The Bible does state a lot which is historically true, yet its narratives of the most ancient times appear to have been largely disproven by mounds of recent evidence in Astronomy, Geology, Paleontology, and Anthropology. As for Life Guidance, there also are many truthful and useful lessons in The Bible, but we now know that we cannot depend upon everything that it says, because there are passages which state (among other curiosities) that it's okay to wage wars of conquest, that it's okay to hold slaves, and that wives should be submissive to their husbands. Anyone wishing to place any level of reliance upon The Bible for any purpose should therefore be advised to be prudent and selective while doing so.

Civics - History - World

As discussed under 'Civics - Religion', we must acknowledge that some people still believe in the Biblical narrative that the Earth is only 6,000+ years old, but we also must acknowledge the preponderance of scientific observation and analysis showing that the Earth is actually several billion years old, and that Humankind has been present for only a very small fraction of that time. This is important so that people know their proper place not only in terms of Geography but also in terms of Time: This planet was not created just for our benefit, it existed long before we did, our species will decrease before it does if we are not continually careful, and we therefore do not get to claim validly that we 'own' the Earth. However, as the most powerful species currently residing on the planet surface, we do have an affirmative responsibility to maintain proper stewardship of the planet during this our 'watch', both for our own benefit and for that of all the other species who dwell upon it.

After establishing the long history of Earth which predated the appearance of humans, we should note the places in the world where humans began to develop in terms of tools and buildings and artwork, and where the more advanced civilizations later began to develop: Did the earliest advanced humans migrate to form larger civilizations elsewhere, or did those civilizations develop independently? Note the spread of humanity to different areas of the planet, where different physical characteristics began to emerge which were passed on genetically to the present day. Such physical differences give information about our ancestral backgrounds, but they are not fit subjects for ridicule or discrimination or violence or genocide or any other bad behavior. Definitely good to discuss the various wars which developed over the years, noting the main causes of each, whether conquest or ideological variation or anything else. Communicate the key value that we are no longer

recognizing military warfare as an acceptable means of acquiring territory or other wealth, or of advancing your religion or your philosophy or your ecopolitical system to other peoples. We do need to maintain a military force in order to defend ourselves and our allies (which now include all peaceful nations) against attackers who have not yet 'gotten the memo' that War is a net-bad thing, but otherwise no nation should ever cross a national border with military force.

Civics - Social Interaction

Not only should you not ever assault anyone, whether for sexual gratification or for any other purpose, but you also should avoid making any remarks about people's bodies or their outfits or anything else which would be unduly uncomfortable for them to hear about. One real-life example that we had heard about was a certain group social activity, where one adult female attendee was wearing a low-cut blouse, and a certain adult male attendee (not me!) allegedly thanked her in front of the others for wearing such a revealing outfit. Such humor was widely considered to be acceptable up until a few years ago, when we evolved as a society enough to recognize that we should never introduce the subject of Sex into any environment (including the workplace especially) where it is not already a fundamental element.

Civics - History - American

A fundamental element of our collective national heritage is that most of our ancestors came from other nations, in hope of religious freedom or economic opportunity or other goals, so we are largely founded on ethnic diversity, which has shown itself over the years to be one of our biggest assets. When we did engage in a war to become politically independent from Great Britain, we certainly had our reasons for doing so, but many people at that time felt that our 'independence' constituted a 'grand theft', because our imperial parents had invested large sums of money into our colonial development in hope of earning a profit, which would stop if we ever quit paying taxes to them. However, the path which we have observed more recently (as with Panama, the Philippines, and several African nations) is that the imperialists get to keep their colonies for only certain limited periods of time, after which the colonists get to keep the land for themselves, because their ongoing labors eventually outweigh the original monetary investments of the imperial powers.

The more that we expanded westward, the more that we ran into indigenous peoples who had few fixed settlements, but who yet felt that their territories were being attacked by foreign invaders, such that many of them fought back as they practically could. Generals like Sherman and Custer were famous for leading the American Army against these indigenous defenders who dared to stand up to this continued encroachment by the White Man. We called ourselves the 'good guys' at the time for doing so, because throughout history many very bad people thought of themselves as the 'good guys', but we now recognize how much evil we imposed upon the Native Americans in our lust for more land and to achieve our so-called 'manifest destiny' of a nation of white immigrants stretching between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

In some of our other wars, we legitimately fought against certain neoimperialists who had crossed certain national borders with military force and without the approval of the international community, so that was good for us, but some other wars of ours were conducted in the hope of compelling certain nations to adopt Democracy or Capitalism, and we now recognize that it was not (and still is not) our

place even to be making such recommendations to other nations, let alone to be imposing our ideas upon them through the use of military force.

Question 589.2

What subjects might/should be included in the standard secondary-school curriculum for the foreseeable future?

We made a note at the end of Session 265 to list sample subjects for secondary school, but we ended up not getting to it until the Third Pass, as described later.

Question 574.6

Any other suggestions on testing protocols?

Introduced in Session 266 (October 2018): Suggesting that our Vocabulary tests should not focus so much on presenting a word and asking the student to define it, because they can look it up online trivially. Better to present a definition and ask her to provide a word that fits it, because that's not so easy to look up. Doesn't even need to be the exact same word which you presented in your Vocabulary lesson: Important point is that she has at least one word in her vocabulary which she can summon up at will to synopsize the concept presented in the test.

We also had entered a note in our 'black book' in October 2018, covering both Homework and Testing, and establishing in the second portion that Testing serves a dual purpose. One is the more obvious, to see how much the student has learned. But, the other is equally important, to see how well the teachers have presented the material. For both purposes, we don't want you to have your parents and friends fill in the test spots that you don't know, because that will not help anybody, and actually hurts us by concealing the problem. Better instead to simply write "DK" for "Don't Know" (better than leaving the spot blank, because that could mean that you simply couldn't get to the question in time), so that we know which elements we need to emphasize more clearly, and which teachers need more developmental help.

Question 589 (continued)

What facts and/or skills and/or values will we want to teach in each of the subjects in each of the disciplines at the primary level, and how much time do we expect the teaching to take under ordinary conditions?

Following points were added in Session 266:

Civics - Traffic

Do not pass other vehicles on the right when driving on a multi-lane highway, unless they are stopped or moving very slowly. We ask this partly because slower traffic generally should be remaining in the outside lanes (where cars need to enter and exit the highway, so that we can allow the longer-distance traffic to occupy the faster lanes safely), and partly because that moving vehicle on your left might merge into your lane without signaling and without being able to see you. He is supposed to signal before merging, so that any vehicles near his destination lane can know that he is intending to move, but they still do not always do it in real life, or maybe he

starts signaling as you have started passing, so for your own safety don't pass on the right. Can't teach this lesson too early, and can't repeat it too often.

Science - Chemistry

They need to know enough about Acids to know that they can form by the interaction within the mouth of natural bacteria plus external food sugars, and can be destructive to the mouth once formed, such that the sugars should first be cleaned out of the mouth by brushing. Acids exist in several other forms and are created in other manners, and can be either useful (digestion, batteries, etc.) or destructive, depending on how they are managed.

Health - Hygiene

Brush your teeth, especially after consuming sugary substances, and understand why, because they did not make it completely clear when we were growing up, and it might have helped: The sugars in many foods and beverages can interact chemically with the natural bacteria in your mouth to produce acids which can eat away at your teeth and produce decay, which needs to be fixed by dentists uncomfortably and at great cost.

Brush your gums as well as your teeth, and understand why, because they did not make it completely clear when we were growing up, and it might have helped: The same acids which can eat away at your teeth can also eat away at your gums, and if allowed to progress can reach the roots of your teeth, which would then need to be repaired by dentists ('root canal') with even greater discomfort and at greater cost.

Math - Counting

Should know all numbers up to the trillions at least, because you will be asked to vote on public budgets and bond issues and other measures involving trillions of dollars. Also should know the major prefixes (such as 'mega-', 'giga-', and 'tera-') designating large quantities, and those (such as 'micro-', 'pico-', and 'nano-') designating small quantities, because they are used in Computer Technology and other subjects, and everyone is expected to know what they mean. Even if you can't memorize them all reliably, at least recognize generally what we're talking about, and then you can look up the specifics as needed.

Civics - Economics

The 'Laffer Curve' is an important concept in planning public budgets, asserting that a certain median tax rate will tend to maximize revenue within a given community, whereas setting rates either lower or higher will tend to reduce revenues.

Math - Statistics

Need to know enough about graphing functions to understand the 'Laffer Curve' when it is presented within the Economics subject.

Math - Geometry

Need to know the basic shapes (circle, square, rectangle, triangle, sphere, cone, cube, a few others) that people normally need to deal with in their personal and

professional lives. Don't need to bother with dodecahedron or icosahedron, and probably not even the parallelogram.

Civics - Government

There are different levels of government, from Neighborhood to Global. Introduce general concept of 'subsidiarity', that the lower levels generally take care of whatever issues they can, unless there is some specific reason why certain issues need to be addressed at higher levels. Teach the different Branches of government (especially at the Federal level), what they do, the relationships among them, and how they interact in order to get certain things done. Teach the Electoral process, including when and how people can vote.

Most important specific lesson is how to read and understand and interpret a ballot, especially when they invite you to vote on certain ballot propositions. We want you to vote intelligently, with a satisfactory understanding of the facts and issues and arguments involved. We will not arrive at an intelligent collective decision unless each voter makes an intelligent individual decision. If you don't understand a particular proposition well enough to vote on it intelligently, then we would much prefer that you skip voting on it, and allow it to be decided by those voters who are better informed on the relevant issues. Conversely, if you do understand the proposition well enough to form a solid opinion about it, then by all means we would love to have your official vote, because more votes in any election generally means a more reliable overall result, as long as the votes are sincere and well-informed.

We therefore are hoping that each teacher will present the current ballot materials (i.e., sample ballot, ballot pamphlet, and a representative sampling of private advertisements) to her class at each election cycle, and explain as real-life examples the various concepts and issues as well as she practically can, not to sway her students either one way or another, but rather just to provide enough understanding that they can make up their own minds. After explaining each proposition, and possibly having a group discussion about it, the teacher can invite the class to cast secret ballots as to how they would vote if they officially could. Teacher can then compare the class result with what happens in the actual election, and then try to assess the reasons for any differences in the outcomes. Most importantly, allow and encourage the students to write 'DK' for 'Don't Know' on the ballot if -- as probably will be the case for many students, especially in the earlier grades -- they don't feel that they understand a given proposition well enough to cast a confident vote on it. Then, the teacher can evaluate from the number of such responses on different propositions which specific subject areas will eventually need additional attention before we can turn these kids loose in our actual polling places.

Math - Logic

Part of developing a child's mental powers for adulthood is teaching her how to think logically, if she doesn't happen to know already. The skill of logical thought will benefit both the individual and the society in numerous ways, including personal finance, business finance, voting, and other areas. Good way to do this is by presenting various kinds of logic puzzles for them to solve, and presenting various games (such as Checkers and Chess) for them to play. Any particular type of puzzle or game should be described and sample-completed by the teacher in front of the whole class, and then the class could work through some samples as a group exercise, with students taking turns (preferably by random selection until each

student has had a turn, then start over with a new random selection, so that everybody gets an equal opportunity to participate) either suggesting the next game move or deducing the next fact to be used in the puzzle. Eventually, they can be assigned puzzles to work out completely on a 'solo' basis, and they can be placed in tournaments to play complete games among one another.

Civics - Geography

One of our biggest failures of modern education is in numerous adult Americans not knowing where all of the States are located, or all of the major Nations of the World. Good way to teach that information is by having the students complete jigsaw puzzles where the pieces are shaped like the States of the Union and the Nations of the World. Such puzzles may be challenging at first, but that can make them more engaging and interesting, and in any case they get easier with repeated efforts, as the student eventually starts remembering where certain pieces will approximately go. Okay for them to use any physical or online reference sources if they can, because the important thing is to be able either to know those locations or to look them up easily.

Once they have good groundings on where the various States and Nations are located relative to one another, and relative to the student's home community, it would then be helpful to describe the history of how each State and Nation came to occupy that spot and end up with those borders.* [*There was a lovely TV documentary called "How the States Got Their Shapes" which was broadcast on the History Channel in 2011-2012 (www.history.com/how-the-states-got-their-shapes), and which brought a lot of those colorful stories to life.] Getting more background as to the locations and shapes will make the subject more interesting, make it easier to remember the information over the long term, and make it clearer why this subject is relevant for all adults to know.

Math - Finance - Personal

An old joke is when you are asking somebody whether he is capable of doing some given thing, and he responds, "Heck no, I can't even balance my own checkbook." Insofar as this may continue to be an actual problem with some people going forward, we must teach that skill, because any adult who can't balance his checkbook is more likely to spend more than he can afford to, and then he has to go into debt and sometimes default on his debts, and sometimes require government assistance, and that's bad for all of society. We don't want a debt-based society anymore, so we want all our citizens to be able to manage their finances, and that includes the mathematical task of tracking your incomes and expenses, and reconciling those records with all of your bank statements.

Health - Athletics

Should learn at least the fundamental sports of Baseball and Basketball and Soccer, because they help with one's physical conditioning, and because they are easy ways to learn about organization and teamwork, and because as of Session 266 they were important elements of our culture and important sectors of our economy.* [*We were still learning more as of Session 266 about Football, which certainly fits all those other conditions, but which may be too physically dangerous to teach to kids even with protective gear, although we are hoping that we can at least proceed with modified versions such as Touch and Flag without risking concussions and other injuries.] Maybe you learn to play or you just learn to watch, but either way you should understand at least the basics.

Generally, all the principles and conclusions expressed in this document should be taught to all kids at the primary level, because this document is speaking to all adult Americans of the present and foreseeable future, not just those with college degrees or who have decided upon particular educational majors. If a child reaches the end of Grade 8 while still finding that some particular word or concept in this document is still too complex for him to understand, then we have left out some key component of that child's basic education, and we don't ever want that to happen, so budget your lesson plans for earlier grade levels as necessary in order to avoid this result.

Following points added between meetings:

Civics - Religion

Even though not all passages of The Bible are completely reliable either for History or for Life Guidance, yet we generally should respect people who profess to believe in it and to live by its principles, because they generally tend to be very good and friendly and productive people. However, we have also seen throughout the last millennium, and even still in our own time, that some very bad and violent and hateful people have also professed to believe in The Bible, and have quoted certain passages in hope of defending their various evil actions. (Some of these people have even managed to insinuate themselves into positions of political power.) Therefore, it is important to know that just because someone professes to believe in The Bible and quotes various Biblical passages at you, doesn't mean that he is necessarily a good person. Most such people are, but some are not, so you must always keep eyes open to spot the difference, especially during election season.

Math - Arithmetic

One of the beauties of Mathematics is that there is one and only one correct answer to nearly any problem. Another of the beauties of Mathematics is that there often are multiple ways to arrive at that correct answer. Thus, if any parent or teacher or textbook attempts to tell you that some particular method which you are using is 'wrong' even if you are arriving at the correct answer, then you should politely protest. Tell them that according to "The Answers To Everything" any method is valid if it always produces the same correct answer as the method in the textbook.

Noted in Session 267 (October 2018): Down the road, we might want to use the same polling site referenced in Answer 580 to assemble a more complete core curriculum, based upon the suggestions of many citizens across the land, possibly broken down by State but not necessarily.

Question 589.5

What is the value of Kindergarten or other pre-school in our modern environment?

This should have been addressed much earlier in our discussion, so we will rearrange it in final packaging. In any case, we have mixed feelings about Kindergarten, and no one who had ever been to Kindergarten was present when this Question was raised in Session 267, so we don't know that much about it firsthand. However, the Moderator recalled from Grade 1 that most other kids in the class already knew each other from Kindergarten, which made it pretty tough on those who were not part of

that 'clique'. We were made to feel like outsiders, making it harder for us to learn all the proper social graces, especially including the basic skill of making friends.

Whatever lessons you might want to teach in Kindergarten, and/or whatever group activities you might wish to conduct, probably better to simply call that Grade 1, still begin it at Age 5 for most kids, and then make everybody do it, so that 'no child is left behind', either academically or socially.

Earlier forms of 'pre-school' probably should be decided by parents on a case-by-case basis, remembering from Answer 536 that larger employers are being encouraged in our model to maintain daycare facilities at their workplaces, and that parents who do not work outside the home might do better spending time with their own kids during the day instead of undertaking the expense and hassle and risk of shipping them off to be supervised by outsiders.

Question 590

By what means may/shall teachers and/or school administrators enforce their will with students in the classroom?

The narrative that we heard most loudly as of Session 267 was that physical violence should not be used as a means of behavior modification of children, not by parents and not by teachers. We are told that the long-term psychological damage to the child far outweighs any short-term benefit achieved by making the child do or not do some particular specific thing. It also sends an important message that physical violence is an acceptable way of getting what you want, a theme which we are trying to get away from. We certainly are not going to challenge these arguments, especially having personally experienced such violence in the Catholic school which the Moderator attended in the 1960's.

As discussed in Subsection III-B-3, there are other responses available to change a child's actions without causing such intense physical and psychological discomfort. These include (but are not limited to) removal from the scene, confinement, counseling, denial of allowance or other privileges, and threat of suspension or expulsion from school, with the knowledge that such an action could have the effect of delaying or perhaps permanently eliminating the child's chance of ever graduating or getting a halfway-decent job or being allowed to vote.

Another method of punishment which should be avoided is to give extra homework (as they also did when we were growing up), because that actually gives the student the opportunity to learn more, and also sends the message that homework and studying and learning are bad.

Question 591

To what extent shall prayer be allowed/required in public schools?

As mentioned in Answer 589 under 'Civics - Religion', we are not teaching in the public schools that any one religion is net-better than any other. We also are not teaching that one must adhere to any religion at all. We probably therefore do not ever want to conduct prayer exercises among an entire class or school. However, as also noted in that same discussion, we do generally want to be sensitive to other people's religious feelings, at least up to a reasonable point.

Thus, if any child feels that she does not get enough prayer time before and after school hours, and that she therefore needs some extra time for prayer during the schoolday, then as of Session 267 we have plenty of break periods built into our standard school schedule, allowing the child to pray silently where she sits, or to leave the classroom for a couple of minutes if she needs more privacy, in which case still please keep it quiet so as not to disturb your schoolmates.

Question 591.5 (continued)

Should we require or even allow the Pledge of Allegiance to be recited each day in schools?

This is another one which we approached with mixed feelings.

On the plus side, we could see as of Session 267 the utility (and maybe even the fun) of beginning each school day with a moment of ceremony of some kind. Can help to bring the students together as a class and as a school, and can help them to begin focusing their mental efforts on the challenges of the day. Without such a moment of "We are going to begin learning.....NOW", the kids might still be thinking about other things and chatting amongst themselves or on their social media, and it might be difficult to capture and retain their attention.

Also, more specifically, there is the social utility of encouraging/requiring each child to renew her loyalty and her commitment to respecting this her nation of residence. Without such a pledge repeated on a regular basis, the child is apt to forget that our Nation has been a stupendous achievement and is a precious gift for all of us, something which should be revered and cherished and protected and assisted throughout our lives. This is one of the key values (isn't it?) which we want to teach in primary school.

On the minus side, we have seen that some students or their parents might rebel if the kids are required to recite any such 'mantra' as a condition of learning the basics of human life. They may see it as a form of prayer, which we just explained in Answer 591 should not be an element of group activity in our public schools.

Also, more specifically, a lot of people seem to object to the idea of pledging allegiance to a Flag as well as a Nation. They have argued that we are too obsessed with Flag reverence, and that reciting the Pledge of Allegiance implies that the reciter agrees with all of the Nation's policies, which may not always be the case.

By way of personal background (insofar as it may tend to create an inherent bias one way or another), the Moderator reported in Session 267 that he had personally gotten into the whole Pledge experience when he was in high school. He had volunteered for the task of raising the Colors every morning, and lowering them every afternoon. Each time that he raised the Colors, he performed a private Pledge just for himself, hand over the heart and all, because it felt good, being part of the group, discharging his (sacred?) responsibility of raising and lowering the Flag each day, and doing so with a level of ceremony appropriate to the occasion.

Moderator also reported that they recited the Pledge at the beginning of each meeting of his Toastmasters club, but that not everybody in the group chose to participate all the time, so again we know that feelings have been mixed here.

After we took a recess for subconscious reflection, we figured that any issue this divisive probably should not be decided either all one way or all the other way. In this case, we should not try either to require the Pledge to be recited everywhere, or else to prohibit the Pledge from being recited anywhere. Any attempt to enforce either extreme position would only perpetuate the division in our society. Best to allow each school to decide for itself, such that parents who wish to do so can use that factor as part of their decision process on where to send their kids to school.

Question 591.6

Shall we make any adjustments to the Pledge of Allegiance?

Begun in Session 268 (November 2018): This is not really an Education question *per se*, so it may need to be moved elsewhere in the final mapping, but the Pledge is used very widely in our public and private schools, perhaps more than anywhere else, so maybe it should continue to be evaluated within an Education context.

In any case, while there is a lot to be said for Familiarity and Tradition and Uniformity, as well as respecting the decisions of your predecessors unless and until there is a strong enough reason to change things, yet we found a few points in this verse which we should at least talk about, because this subject has been another source of disagreement and conflict within our society. In order of appearance:

(a) Pledging allegiance to a Flag -- There are those who argue (if we may paraphrase them in the following manner) that no inanimate object has ever made a conscious decision to do anything good for us, and therefore would be deserving of our 'allegiance'. Others hold that it's not the physical Flag itself to which we are pledging allegiance, but rather what it symbolizes and represents. The first side says wait a minute, the sentence goes on to say that we also pledge allegiance "to the Republic for which it stands", so that is where we are talking about what the Flag represents, and so the first clause of "I pledge allegiance to the Flag" must be referring to the Flag itself.

This is not a point of mere grammatical distinction. Some people like to show reverence to any physical copy of their national Flag as a sign of their respect and allegiance. Others prefer to burn or otherwise mistreat a physical Flag (especially in public) as an outward sign of their disagreement over some national policy or other. Adherents of the two philosophies have come into physical and legal conflict over the matter, and it has been a bit of a mess.

We generally want Love and Peace in our model society, so we want to mitigate sources of conflict wherever and whenever we practically can. But, how could/should we do so in this case?

In order to treat this Question properly, we should look at a couple of Basic Principles which are referenced within the words of this first phrase of the Pledge:

(i) Flags -- What are Flags for? Why do we have them? Why do we use them? Flags and banners and other forms of 'standards' have been used for many centuries to show which Nation possessed (or asserted) political sovereignty over a particular vicinity, and also to identify Military units in the field.

When you march under a Military banner, you are basically showing to your fellow soldiers that you have accepted the authority of

your unit's designated leadership, that you have accepted your unit's mission, and that you pledge to do your best to fulfill that mission and protect your comrades in action.

When you grab that Military banner and throw it to the ground and trample on it, you are sending the opposite message to your unit: You are not in league with them, you are not supportive of their mission, you are not agreeing to take orders from the unit's leadership, and the other soldiers cannot depend upon you to provide the slightest level of protection or other assistance to any of them. When your fellow soldiers once learn of this attitude of yours, they probably will not take it too kindly, and for their own protection (if for no additional reason) they will want to make sure somehow that you are not in a position to actively work against them during the upcoming action, or at any further time.

Same principle applies with a Civil flag: When homes and businesses and government buildings are displaying the Flag which is commonly or legally associated with a particular Civil jurisdiction, they are effectively declaring that they are recognizing themselves as 'citizens'* [*We made a note in Session 268 to compare this with Answer 21, which we figured probably would need to be adjusted during final packaging in order to allow us to use this expression in a casual sense within such discussions, but it later turned out that we changed our minds about the whole Citizenship business.] of that community, that they are recognizing the laws of that community as being prevalent within that vicinity, and that they are agreeing to help that community to the extent that they practically can, or at least not work actively against it. When all the residents or 'citizens' of that community conduct their normal lives within the shadow of these 'textile heralds', they are likewise acknowledging that yes they are physically present in that Nation, that State, and they understand that the laws of that Nation and that State apply to them as long as they stick around where those Flags are. As long as you take no overt action against the community or its 'citizens', and pay your taxes and do all the other normal blah-blah, the community will basically leave you alone.

But, if you instead take one of those Civil flags and throw it down on the ground and trample upon it, and especially if you burn it in public, then you are again sending the opposite message: You are not supportive of that community, you are not recognizing its Rule of Law over you, you are not making any commitment to help the community in any way, and if anything you are willing to work actively against the community's interests.

In such an instance, the community has every right to protect itself from you as from any other overtly-declared threat, and therefore to take you into custody, and somehow make sure that you do not have any opportunity to take any further action against the community.

Thus, it really is not (or need not be) the so-called 'desecration' of the physical Flag which is the real problem. The real problem is your public declaration that you have made an enemy out of this community where the rest of us wish to leave in Peace, and that you may therefore be deemed a danger to our community and its citizens. Whether you make that declaration by an oral statement or by a written message or by burning a physical Flag is immaterial. So, it's

not just the Flag-burning that we will arrest you for, it is the display of 'treason', of being actively and conscientiously opposed to the interest of your host Nation, and of presenting an ongoing threat to our Safety and Security. It is for these reasons why -- if you are ever stupid enough to burn a Flag in our presence -- we will lock you away until such time (if ever) that you may be deemed fit to release back into our civil society. Or, maybe we will decide upon some other remedy.

- (ii) Allegiance -- Let's look at this now: What does the key term 'Allegiance' mean? What does it say about me when I claim out loud that I am pledging 'Allegiance' to anyone or anything?

The author's favorite single-volume dictionary has long been the 1981 hardbound edition of American Heritage.* [*As we discuss further in Answer 649.2, dozens of different dictionaries have been created over the years which call themselves "Webster's" or some variation, because that name has long been in the public domain, and because some folks have felt that it lends a certain air of legitimacy. However, if Webster were alive today and looking at some of these books, he would say "That's not mine!", so as a matter of standard practice our group avoids and eschews any dictionary which claims to be "Webster's" or any variation.] They always seemed to 'get it' about making sure that certain words and expressions are used correctly, and not accepting ignorant bastardizations of our language as some kind of 'alternative standard usage'. American Heritage defined 'allegiance' as "Loyalty, or the obligation of loyalty, as to a nation, state, or cause". The word comes from the French *liege*, meaning 'lord'.

We next saw that 'loyalty' was defined as "The state or quality of being loyal." (That was easy.) Next we looked at 'loyal', and saw that it was defined as "Steadfast in allegiance". OK, so this one time, American Heritage didn't help us so much, giving us a set of circular definitions which were not explicitly based on any more fundamental concepts. We therefore needed to help ourselves.

The context which we took away from these similar definitions for these similar terms was that they basically involve recognizing that a particular Official or Nation possesses sovereignty over you, that within reason they get to tell you what to do and expect that you will do it, and that you are agreeing never to do anything to work against the interests of that particular Official or Nation.

- (iii) Putting these two concepts together, we can see that it actually is both possible and meaningful to pledge 'allegiance' to a 'flag': If you possess Allegiance to the Flag, then you are continually finding within yourself that you do not intend ever to burn or otherwise damage any particular Flag. If you pledge such Allegiance out loud in an open setting, then you are conveying to those around you that this is indeed your posture, such that they need have no fear of any treasonable activities coming from you within the foreseeable future.

As we expressed within Answer 591.5, we will not make you recite the Pledge of Allegiance if you really don't want to, but some of us may be suspicious of your reasons for not doing so when you have been granted the opportunity: Is it some minor grammatical problem that you have about one or more expressions within the verse, or is it some more philosophical but still non-violent objection, or are you an actual ongoing threat to our communal Safety and Security?

If you do agree to express Allegiance to the Flag (again, all that this really means is that you're agreeing not to physically harm any of the Flag's physical incarnations), then it does not (and need not) mean that you are treating the Flag as a person who deserves your loyalty. It simply means that you are agreeing to respect the physical integrity of all of a society's Civil flags as long as you continue to reside within that society. If you ever leave our Nation and stay out, then you can do with our Flags whatever you want.

In summary, yes it is possible to possess Allegiance to a Flag, and to express that Allegiance in the form of a public Pledge, which signifies only that you agree not to burn or otherwise damage one of our Civil Flags as long as you continue to reside on our soil. We will not require you to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, but we will feel a lot happier and more comfortable about you if you do. Whether you recite the Pledge of Allegiance or not, if you are ever confrontational enough to burn an American flag on American soil, then I don't know what to say, there could be a problem.

(b) Pledging allegiance to the Republic -- We have seen both in history and in our present day that our Republic has supplemented some very Good Acts with some very Bad Acts. Depending on who you are, or where you live, or when you were born, you might find some of these Bad Acts so distasteful that you would prefer not to effectively endorse those actions by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, or by standing (either as an audience member or as an athletic performer) while the National Anthem is being presented.

As sensitive and (at least somewhat) morally-advanced human beings, we can feel some level of sympathy with this position: When our government goes to war against nations who never directly attacked us, or sends American troops to die in foreign countries looking for Holy Weapons of Mass Destruction which may not ever actually exist, or calls us a Land of Liberty and Opportunity while denying some basic human rights to recent immigrants and even some of our own citizens, it can be hard for some people to stand up and be counted among the individuals who have empowered that government and have agreed to abide by its authority to take such socially-divisive actions.

Maybe we should be looking at this aspect of the Question in two contexts, one being the context of our Republic as it currently exists, and the other being the context of the Republic as it could exist if it once adopted our model system. Within the context of the Republic as it currently exists, as long as we continue to invade nations which did not previously cross any borders with military force, and as long as we continue to block new non-European immigrants from trying to do the same things which their European predecessors did in centuries past, and as long as we continue to repress the rights of actual American citizens to exercise Liberty in their personal lives even though they are refraining from injuring or threatening others, and as long as we continue any other action or policy which contradicts our core American values expressed in Answer 38 and in many previous documents authored by many famous writers, we cannot realistically expect that all of our citizens are going to want to stand up at all public ceremonies as if to endorse all those actions. Within the context of our model society, we again do not seek to require you to stand ceremonially for either the Pledge of Allegiance or the National Anthem, but we are hoping that you will be motivated to do so, and if you still are not at that time then we will be

interested in knowing why, because maybe there is still some problem within our Republic which we have not yet managed to solve. [Continued shortly.]

Question 429.5

What can we do to mitigate the effects of 'planned obsolescence' within our industrial production?

Following ideated during the week, and ratified in Session 269 (November 2018):

This is where some manufacturers decide in advance (although they might not admit to it in public) that they will sell and support a particular product for only a limited period of time, after which customers will not be able to get their products serviced or purchase replacements. They then will be effectively forced to purchase the newest 'thing', often at a much higher price, and then they probably will need to do the same thing again just a few years later, spending more money all the time because the manufacturers want you to do that.

One recent example of product obsolescence which may or may not have been planned was in our home-video market. A lot of us above 'a certain age' owned video-cassette players (commonly known as VCR's), and we spent a lot of money building collections in 'VHS' format of our favorite movies and TV shows, and behold we were very happy.* [*The author was especially happy because his tight personal schedule often required him to watch his movies in two or three stages, and it was very convenient to eject the tape at any desired stopping point, and then reinsert it again a few days later to pick up exactly where I left off, with no thinking and no fuss. Every subsequent technology which I have yet seen forgets where I leave off, and so whenever I want to pick up again later I usually (if not always) need to go through a series of introductory videoclips and a cumbersome 'scene selection' process, consuming much more time and effort for a supposedly 'advanced' technology.] It would have been just fine with us if we could get our machines inexpensively serviced when needed, and to replace the occasional VHS tape whenever it finally wore out. If we ever needed to get the machine itself replaced, then at least our video collection would still be usable.

A few years later, though, they stopped selling VCR's, and they stopped selling videos in VHS format. It became increasingly difficult to find any local craftsperson who would actually fix your VCR, and once any of your tapes wore out that was it. Instead, they made us all buy 'DVD' players, and now we needed to begin our video collections all over again in a new format, at considerable effort and expense.

DVD's appeared as of Session 269 to be on their way out, too, to be replaced by 'Blu-Ray' and whatever other technologies might come after that.

Another recent example of product obsolescence which may or may not have been planned was in our computer technology. Certain manufacturers sold us servers and monitors and operating systems and program applications which were all compatible with one another, and we did some great and fun things, and behold we were happy. Some years later, they stopped 'supporting' those earlier technologies whenever they needed to be serviced or replaced, and they instead made us buy fancier and more expensive technologies which we did not need and did not want, and which in many cases were actually less user-friendly and less productive than what we were using before.* [*Moderator had multiple specific examples in mind, but did not wish to risk legal trouble by mentioning any specific corporations by name.]

Must that be the way of the world? Must we always be at the mercy of the Great Corporate Powers who keep our entire lives on their master calendars like so many golf dates?

Our group has a suggestion to mitigate this problem. Big part of the issue is that these manufacturers have obtained patents which prohibit others from utilizing those same technologies for a certain number of years without negotiating a licensing agreement of some kind, usually at considerable cost. However, seems to us that any manufacturer who stops supporting a particular technology must be thinking that it is too primitive to bother with any longer, so they should not object if a competitor wishes to step in and resume selling and supporting those products.

Therefore, we suggest that any patent on any technology should expire immediately and automatically whenever the patentholder declares publicly that they are ceasing to support that technology, which then becomes part of the 'public domain' and freely available for anyone else to manufacture and sell and service as they like.

We also suggest that some of you folks out there can help the cause by maintaining an ongoing market to sell and service technologies which the original manufacturers have stopped supporting. We realize (especially from the long lines on launch dates) that a lot of folks are continually eager for the latest 'new thing', and that's perfectly fine. However, others of us don't want to spend so much time learning new technologies, and getting accustomed to new looks and new feels which are sometimes uncomfortable and unproductive for us, and having to pay out large sums of money for the privilege of getting something which we don't really want. If we can please have at least a few of you out there still making and selling and servicing the old things, so that people have a real choice, then we all could be happy.

That way, if the original manufacturers once observe that a lot of people still want things the old way, and that there still is a sizable market out there for them to squeeze, then maybe they won't be so quick to abandon the old technologies, and maybe they will be a bit more willing to continue supporting those older technologies even as they also make and sell the new things for the people who want those.

Question 591.6 (continued)

Shall we make any adjustments to the Pledge of Allegiance?

Continued in Session 269:

(c) 'under God' -- As many of us know, this phrase was added many years after the Pledge was first published. To be exact (which we always try to be), it was added by act of Congress in 1954, following the first publication of the Pledge in 1892.* [*Source: *The World Almanac and Book of Facts 2007*, copyright 2007 by World Almanac Education Group, Inc.] The inclusion of this phrase has been a subject of hot social and legal debate since that time.

The 'opponents' assert that making public-school students recite a pledge which includes a reference to 'God' constitutes a form of mandated prayer in public schools, which we agreed in Answer 591 should be avoided, because this is a Nation which was founded largely on religious freedom, and because we therefore do not feel that we should be promoting one religious belief system over any other within our public schools.

The 'defenders' say yeah that's a solid point but, this Nation was also founded largely on a strong belief in the God of the Judeo-Christian tradition. References to God are made in some of our most cherished national documents, including the Declaration of Independence, the Gettysburg Address, and the One-Dollar Bill.

Nevertheless, as much as it personally pained the Moderator, on both religious and traditionalist grounds, yet we felt that we must reluctantly side with the 'opponents' on this one: Some of us might like it very much if all adults and schoolchildren in America believed in the same God that we do, but the simple fact is that they do not, and our public schools are not the place to be trying to persuade them to do so. Given that numerous American schoolchildren do not believe in the God of the Judeo-Christian tradition, and should not be expected to do so suddenly anytime soon, it would be a hypocritical lie for any child to publicly declare such a belief which she actually does not possess. We don't want to be sending the message to kids that it's okay to lie as long as you confine yourself to repeating the lies which we tell you to utter, so no we should not be trying to make kids speak a pledge which includes that phrase if they don't really want to.

We should not even be leaving a space in the Pledge for individual students to utter 'under God' if they wish to, because that is still making a statement that the public school in question is collectively expressing a belief in the God of the Judeo-Christian tradition, and again that would be contrary to our core American value of religious freedom.

Therefore, while public schools get to decide per Answer 591.5 whether to include the Pledge in their daily programs, they must not include or even allow the phrase 'under God' to be included, not even if 99.9% of the population says that it's okay. Private schools similarly get to decide whether to include the Pledge in their daily programs, but they also get to decide whether the phrase 'under God' is to be included in their versions, provided that full disclosure one way or the other is made to curious parents before they take the time to begin the enrollment process.

- (d) 'One Nation ... Indivisible' -- This phrasing is a clear reference to the secession of certain States from the Union in the early 1860's. Federal officials expressed a level of unhappiness with that decision at the time, and a long series of bloody military battles ensued, one of the key issues of the conflict being whether America should remain together as a single Nation or whether it should be allowed to remain split into two Nations with differing legal standards. As is commonly known, the Federals prevailed in the military conflict, and all the States previously seceding were eventually readmitted into the Union. A lot of folks didn't want to go through another process like that again anytime soon, so this phrasing within the Pledge was a way of sending the message to both kids and adults that no further attempts to divide our Nation should be tolerated.

Our group had mixed feelings about this position, and they basically amounted to keeping one of the phrasing elements and dropping the other:

- (i) One Nation -- We established in Answer 20 that we did not want to recommend any specific changes to any national borders at this time, and we certainly do not recommend any changes for America, with the possible exception (as discussed in Answer 358 about a certain proposed border wall) of peacefully acquiring some additional territory

from Mexico so that more local individuals eager to become Americans can do so without leaving their homelands.

Even with that possibility, though, we continue to recommend strongly that we remain One Nation. Our railroads and highways and flight networks and industrial distributions and military recruitments and utilities and banking systems and broadcast media and governmental structures are all based on this being a single Nation, and the enormous effort which would be required to separate everything at this late stage would almost certainly not be worth any minor benefit which we might realize from having certain things done differently in certain areas. It would be much easier to allow certain States and Localities to exercise certain variations in their cultural and legal environments, than to formally dissolve and 'balkanize' the American Nation.

In addition, being One Large Nation has given us much more 'clout' on the global scene than we could possibly have enjoyed as two or more Smaller Nations. (For example, although we wish that it had not been necessary, we are yet very proud of what we did to free Europe and the Pacific from imperialist attackers in World Wars I & II.) We have sometimes used that clout for non-productive purposes, but it is better to retain that clout and learn to use it for Good on all occasions, than to lose it through segmentation and thus never have a chance to use it for Good ever again.

We therefore totally agree that the continued unity of America is a key value which should be taught to our children early and often, and that it is both proper and desirable to retain the corresponding phrase in our Pledge of Allegiance.

- (ii) Indivisible -- This one is a little tougher. The word means 'cannot be divided', but we know from bitter experience that this has not always been the case with America. It also has not always been the case elsewhere, with Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia being only two relatively-recent examples of Nations which had broken up into multiple smaller States.

We understand that some people would rather send that particular message, that it is impossible to divide America, because hopefully that way people will be less inclined to try. However, from a strict vocabulary standpoint, it's just not valid, it's just not true. We should not be making our kids recite anything which is not true even once, let alone every schoolday, so we feel that we do net-better by dropping this word from the Pledge.

- (e) 'with Liberty and Justice for all' -- This has been the biggest source of hangup for a lot of folks, according to what the Moderator had heard from some individuals over the years* [*I will not violate their privacy by dropping any names here.], and according to what we had seen in many recent 'tweets' and news reports. Problem here is that this is an ideal goal of ours (and a very noble one it is), but that we have been broadly failing to achieve it in real life.

Although the words 'Liberty' and 'Justice' are very key to this phrase, yet the most important element is the last expression of 'for all'. This doesn't mean just all Men, or all Landowners, or all Party leaders, or all Europeans, or all Caucasians, or even all Americans, or even all Humans. It means Everybody, it means All the participants in our global ecosystem. We are All

deserving of Liberty and Justice unless (as discussed in Section I-F) any of us have individually committed so many Bad Acts of such cumulative severity that we have effectively waived those rights, and even then we are still deserving of Justice if not also Liberty. When we deny Liberty and/or Justice to any individual or group simply on the basis of nationality or race or religion or gender or sexual orientation or any other factor which has nothing to do with having committed large numbers of severe Bad Acts, we are violating our own Pledge, and we are making it that much more difficult ever to achieve this our goal on a lasting and universal basis.

Now, we might try to do something similar to what we discussed in Item (b) above, and consider this phrasing in the contexts of both Ideal and Real Life. We might then say, "Well, we certainly do not claim through this Pledge that we are achieving universal Liberty and Justice in real life, but we do want to announce with the Pledge that this is our ideal." We might then try to claim that the Flag represents the Ideal and not the Real Life. Trouble there is, the American Flag has been displayed many times in our history -- sometimes even on the shoulders of our own troops -- while we have committed certain denials of Liberty and Justice, both within our own land and on foreign soil. Some people have therefore come to associate the American Flag with their perception (whether right or wrong or some of each) of our having committed a large number of Bad Acts, and they tell us so every time that they burn one of our Flags in public.

It sure would be nice if the American Flag meant only Good things to all people, and maybe someday it will do so (again?), but for now the sad reality is that this is not the case. As a result, when we pledge allegiance to the American Flag, in some people's minds we are bolstering that perception, and endorsing the various Bad Acts which they think that we have committed. We perceive that a lot of our folks don't want to send that kind of a message, so they prefer to sit out or 'take a knee' on any rendition of either the Pledge of Allegiance or "The Star-Spangled Banner", both of which focus on the Flag as a symbol of what America stands for, which unfortunately for some people is still a net-negative perception.

However, if we take out 'under God' because of religious association, and if we take out 'Indivisible' because it is not grammatically applicable, and if we take out 'with Liberty and Justice for all' because we have too often failed to achieve it in real life, then the only attribute which we would still be listing as to 'the Republic for which it stands' would just be that it's 'One Nation', but that's trivially easy, and applies equally well to any Nation which is globally recognized as a Nation. We would like at least one descriptive expression here which sets America apart from most or all other Nations.

What we therefore are recommending is that we keep that phrase in there, such that we end up with 'and to the Republic for which it stands, One Nation, with Liberty and Justice for all'. However, just as with the discussion above about 'Indivisible', we don't want to be stating things which are not true, and we don't want to be making our children state things which are not true, especially in a ceremonial setting on a daily basis. We therefore need to do a much better job of at least trying to achieve Liberty and Justice in real life throughout the World, to the extent that we practically can, or at least not violating those noble goals as frequently and as visibly as some people think we recently have been.

Until that happens, yes go ahead and feel free to leave the reference to Liberty and Justice within the Pledge of Allegiance, for those individuals who are willing to state that phrasing publicly even in the context of recent

events, but don't be too surprised if some individuals prefer not to utter those words prematurely.

Question 592 (continued)

Should computers be part of the classroom environment?

As surprising as it may sound to some of our Millennial friends, this actually was a fairly controversial topic back in the 1980's and 1990's. There were concerns about expense, and there also were concerns that reliance on computers in the classroom could make human teachers obsolete. The former concern had dwindled severely by Session 269 as a result of improved technologies and diminished costs.

First point to remember with the latter concern is that our educational efficiency has been woefully lacking in recent decades, as previously discussed within this Section, and so we'll take any help that we can get, even if it does end up making human teachers obsolete. Second point to remember, though, is the Good News that human teachers probably do not need to worry about this in real life. For, computer lessons can have the same problem of certain physical textbooks, namely that they are written in a manner which is unclear and confusing to some readers. Computers do have an advantage over physical textbooks here, in that they can provide access to several alternative versions of the problematic lessons, such that the student is increasing her chances of having things explained clearly. That still doesn't always happen, though, and it is still often going to be necessary to have a Human Being standing in front of the class who understands the material enough and is a good enough communicator that she can explain the lessons in terms which all her students can understand (especially including those who don't learn well from either textbooks or computers alone), and she can keep checking with them on a periodic basis to make sure that they do.

In other words, the Teacher is still the Teacher, and we do not envision that key reality changing for at least the next century, if ever. Computers can (and should) be a supplemental delivery system for certain lessons which may be problematic for either teachers or textbooks to describe alone, especially lessons related to the computers themselves, which (like it or not) are going to become an increasingly-pervasive aspect of our lives going forward.

Only real remaining trouble here is that the computer technology keeps changing, such that computer-related lessons which students learn in one year could become obsolete as little as 3-5 years later. Primary school (under our previous definition) is supposed to be for those key lessons which will be applicable and important to students throughout their adult lives, and so we don't want to waste a whole bunch of public dollars teaching lessons to our kids which they are not going to be able to use only a few years after learning them. We therefore stress again the importance of Answer 429.5, where we discourage the pace of 'planned obsolescence' of certain electronic technologies by requiring manufacturers to continue to sell and support them until they are ready to allow competitors to do so without royalty or penalty.

Couple of other conditions of our general Yes answer here: First, from note in Session 264, care should be taken during design and testing that any computer components used in classrooms (either desktops or mobiles) do not emit an excess of radiation which could be harmful to children. Second, to mitigate the risk of computer usage becoming addictive, make sure that there are enough activities

throughout the schoolday (especially Phys Ed) which do not involve computers in any way, so that the child gets the message repeatedly that it is okay -- and actually net-beneficial -- to spend at least some significant time away from your computers.

Question 593

But, won't increasing dependence on calculators and similar devices tempt kids not to develop their arithmetic skills?

Following notes from the 'black book' ratified in Session 269:

Basic arithmetic skills can be taught and tested in the absence of calculators. Complex arithmetic is going to be performed with calculators or computers by adults anyway, so the kids may as well learn how to use the devices at an early age. The most important considerations in Arithmetic education are (1) the ability to perform the calculations manually when you have to (occasional tests can be constructed at different grade levels to make sure that this ability does not go away anytime soon), and (2) the knowledge of what arithmetical processes to use in order to solve different types of problems. Calculators will not get in the way of that all-important last challenge, so we need not fear their presence in the classroom.

Question 594

Should public schools provide lunch and/or snacks to the student population for free, or for a price, or not at all?

According to our Answer 584, we are asking/requiring kids to spend a total of seven hours on our campus during each schoolday, and we agree with those who feel that it would be discourteous and inappropriate and perhaps dangerous not to provide at least some amount of refreshment and sustenance during such a long period of hosting. If we expect the kids to remain on our campuses that long, and if we want them to remain alert and attentive throughout the schoolday, then we need to expend some ongoing amount to feed them.

We imagine as of Session 269 that some basic foods (sandwiches, salads, fresh fruit, etc.) could be provided entirely at the public expense, whereas the costlier delicacies (hamburgers, burritos, pizza, etc.) could be available within larger schools (which have the physical resources to serve hot food) for an appropriate price in order to limit consumption and at least partially offset the public cost of provision.

Question 595

But, if we don't provide the food for free, then how do we know that the child is going to have a nutritious lunch?

Whether we provide all food for free, or some food for free, or no food for free, doesn't matter. What does matter is that we make sure that all foods available on our campuses are sufficiently nutritious for our community standards, which may evolve over time as we continue to learn more about the effects of different kinds of foods and beverages on our children's health.

We don't seek to control what the students bring from home, partly because we don't want to be meanies and take things which are not weapons away from children

as they enter our campuses, and largely because we trust the judgment of parents who for any reason want their children to be eating something which is different from what the school is providing. However unhealthy the snacks and lunches coming from their homes might be, at least we are not adding to the problem by making 'junk foods' easily available on our campuses.

Question 595.1

What role (if any) should Homework play in the modern environment?

From a note entered in the 'black book' in October 2018, and formally treated in Session 269: Homework should be an optional exercise for those who feel like it and would benefit from it. Homework can help you to retain material which you have not yet completely learned, or to self-test on how much you have learned. But, those who already knew the material going in, or who have absorbed and retained it from the classroom sessions alone, should not be required to do Homework, as long as they can demonstrate at actual testing time that they have successfully absorbed the material by one method or another. For, it then becomes a drudge, something to be delayed or skipped or shortcutted whenever possible. It should instead be an opportunity, something which can help you to catch up with the rest of the class if you were out sick, or else to enhance your grasp if you were present but otherwise happened not to absorb some particular lesson completely, or else to make things easier for yourself by getting a 'head start' on lessons which are scheduled for formal presentation later.

SECTION III-D: PERSONAL BEHAVIORS

Question 596

Given the resolution reached in Section I-A that I can do anything that I want, provided only that I am not harming -- or threatening harm to -- anyone else, shall we consider whether some or all of the laws currently on the books which prohibit such unharmed behavior are appropriate in today's society?

We certainly should consider it, because as of Session 270 (November 2018) some people may have been facing criminal charges unnecessarily, and we may have been blowing a lot of resources on unnecessary criminal prosecutions and incarcerations.

Question 597

Do we wish to question any of the freedoms granted to Americans by the Bill of Rights?

Technically, we wish to question Everything. That's what this Project is all about. However, as a practical matter, the freedoms granted in the Bill of Rights are generally pretty safe from attack. For, why would we want to take away (or give away) any freedoms which we have had for centuries?

One exception which we would make is that we probably should have a discussion about the Second Amendment, because it has been a subject of impassioned -- and sometimes even violent -- debate within our society for many years. [Third Pass: But, we ended up discussing the First and Fifth Amendments in this work also.]

The text of the Second Amendment reads:

"A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

A lot of people seem to focus on just the second part of that statement, that the people get "to keep and bear Arms", in hope of justifying their assertion that they should be allowed to keep firearms within their homes, and even on their persons.*

[*This is not just our group's observation, but it was also found on Page 62 of Anastaplo's book 'The Amendments to the Constitution'.] However, that second phrase is a condition of the first phrase, that "A well regulated Militia [is] necessary to the security of a free State". We therefore feel that we should assess and evaluate the second phrase within the context of the first phrase, because that is how the Framers appeared to intend it.

In other words, they are not simply stating that all the people get "to keep and bear Arms". Rather, they are saying that we need to have "A well regulated Militia" in place, and that we therefore need enough arming of the people to satisfy that goal.

To further clarify what the heck the Second Amendment actually seems to be talking about here, let's take a closer look at the term 'militia'. Our trusty old hardbound American Heritage dictionary gives the following three definitions:

1. a. A citizen army, as distinct from a body of professional soldiers. **b.** The armed citizenry, as distinct from the regular army. **2.** The able-bodied male citizens in a state who are not members of regular armed forces, but who are called to military service in cases of emergency. **3.** The whole body of physically fit male civilians eligible by law for military service."

We were surprised that they continued to specify "male" citizens or civilians as late as 1981, but in any case we felt as of Session 270 that we can now generalize the definition to include all gender identities. The main point is that we are talking here about armed civilians as opposed to regular soldiers.

The idea here, as seen from our American history and that of other Nations, is that we have sometimes needed an additional line of defense if an invader ever manages to overwhelm or bypass our standing full-time professional troops. Such an attack may come with little or no warning, so those citizens who are willing to participate in such a Militia should always have hardware ready to go, and should always remain properly trained and practiced in its use.

Further, not only do they appear to expect these armed civilians to be part of a Militia when necessary, but it also must be a "well regulated" Militia. That means that we do not get to have a posse of independent vigilantes spreading violence on its own authority while attempting to claim Constitutional powers. No, the Militia must be "well regulated", so any armed civilians must be willing to place themselves under the command of officers who have been duly designated and empowered by the applicable governmental entities.

It also means that the applicable governments get to establish regulations on who specifically gets "to keep and bear Arms", and under what conditions.* [*This is also agreed on Page 64 of Anastaplo's book.]

So then, what if I want "to keep and bear Arms", but I am not willing to participate in "A well regulated Militia" when called to emergency service? The way that we are reading the Second Amendment, there does not seem to any provision for such people. If you wish to live here as a civilian and also wish "to keep and bear Arms", then we expect that you will be willing to be "called to military service in cases of emergency". Anyone who is not thus willing could be a threat to our security, and therefore probably should not be allowed "to keep and bear Arms".

Whatever other specific conditions we as a society may ever wish to establish on the subject of Gun Control, our group suggests strongly that one of those conditions should be a periodic recertification of personal eligibility, which includes not only physical capability but also psychological fitness. We are reminded here not only of all the mass shootings which occurred in America during and around 2018, but specifically of the one in Thousand Oaks (California), by a former Marine who had been suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. We might have thought (and hoped) that any former Military who was not dishonorably discharged ought to be allowed to continue keeping Arms for life, so that he could use his training and experience and courage to help our Militia whenever needed, but now we know from harsh experience that this is not always the case. Whether one has served in the Military or not, or whether one has served as a Police officer, one's psychological fitness for carrying Arms can change over time, especially as a result of delayed stress. We therefore want to make sure that everybody who ever once gets licensed to keep or use weapons under any other specific conditions (including within the Military) must get recertified on a periodic basis in order to keep that license. Such recertification process ought to include in-person interviews, where the demeanor of the subject can be observed and assessed, especially when confronted with particular questions or exercises designed to test his propensity to commit independent violence.

Of course, we also should try to keep track of every weapon which is produced within this Nation or imported into it, although we are all too aware that guns can be manufactured privately or smuggled through Customs. We should continue to hold it as a separate punishable offense if anyone ever gets caught with an unregistered weapon in this Nation. As for registered weapons, we should be able and prepared to take them away from any person previously licensed who is later found to be no longer fit to keep Arms.

This recertification process is liable to require a lot of person-hours which we would prefer to devote to more constructive purposes, but our recent epidemic of mass shootings throughout America and around the World tells us that we need to devote more resources to this important aspect of our own self-preservation.

Question 598 (continued)

Whatever prohibitive laws we end up still having after going through the list, shall we be prepared to allow exceptions on the claim of 'freedom of religion'?

The only exception which we would even consider allowing is that maybe certain forms of 'expression' which we would otherwise prohibit maybe should be allowed if they are supposedly religious in nature. However, we did not feel in Session 270 that this exception should be allowed, either. Expression is not (or should not be) protected under the First Amendment if it violates our Basic Social Rule of not inflicting or threatening any injury to others. This can include conducting 'services'

on a subway rail and blocking traffic throughout the City, and it can include making noises of such volume that other people cannot work or study or relax in peace.

Question 599

Does 'freedom of speech' also imply freedom of all expression?

No, it does not. Any expressive action is not (or should not be) protected under the First Amendment if it causes or threatens any injury to anyone.

The idea of Speech being included as a basic freedom within the Bill of Rights was that sticks and stones could cause injury, but mere words could not. Trouble is, the freedom has been interpreted more broadly in recent centuries to mean 'expression', which might include actions (such as vandalism or homicide) which actually are harmful. Our group finds as of Session 270 that this interpretation is not validly supported by a fair reading of the Constitution, and that we do not actually possess an all-encompassing 'freedom of expression', nor should we.

Question 600

What limits, if any, shall we place on 'free speech'?

Basically, we don't want anyone harmed unjustifiably. The old saw about yelling 'Fire' in a crowded theatre applies, because public injury can result from people trying to escape a building quickly, and we should not incur that risk unless it is actually necessary. Another basic limitation to 'free speech' as of Session 270 is the Slander rule, whereby we do not (or should not) allow the issuance of any public accusation which cannot be fairly and reliably proven within a court of law.

Another possible limitation is in the area of what some folks call 'Profanity', but we will now address that as a separate Question, viz.:

Question 601

Shall we continue to designate certain words as 'profanity', and forbid their utterance in certain venues, particularly over the electronic media?

We have a mixed Answer here as of Session 270.

There have been several instances within the recent century of words being banned (such as the so-called 'S-word' or 'F-word' or 'A-word') by the MPAA or the FCC or some other regulatory body on the grounds of constituting 'profanity', but where utterance of those words does not cause or threaten any actual harm to others. Not only are the words unharmed, but for each one there is at least one 'polite' word meaning the exact same thing (such as 'feces' or 'copulate' or 'gluteus') which is allowed to be uttered in print and electronic media, so it's not the meanings that are unacceptable. Rather, we are simply getting picky over which synonyms we may use. We claim that this is a ridiculous argument, that these words not be abridged if we seek to maintain a Land of Liberty, and that anyone with a continued hangup over these words should get over it.

However, we see a couple of possible exceptions.

One big exception is in the area of Racial Epithets, because a major Social problem in our American past and present has been a continued hatred between certain members of different racial or ethnic groups. There seems to have been a growing intolerance within our society of certain racial slurs (especially the 'N-word', but there are others), because their continued utterance seems to be encouraging the continued hatred. We obviously wish that this were not the case, that certain words were not so inflammatory that we should not utter them for risking of giving offense or appearing to encourage hatred and violence, but we cannot deny the present reality. We therefore agree as of Session 270 that those particular words should be avoided, and even banned where applicable, because we certainly wish to alleviate any remaining pockets of hatred or violence which may exist within our society.

Another exception might be references to God which are not sincerely intended, such as the annoyingly-repetitive expression 'O My God' which apparently must be written into any serious movie these days in order to designate that it is a serious movie (because we can't tell otherwise??), and which therefore also must appear in the trailers which advertise that upcoming movie in theatres. A lot of us were taught that the Ten Commandments (specifically the Third Commandment, expressed in Exodus 20:7 and Deuteronomy 5:11) forbade us from 'taking the Lord's name in vain', which we generally understood to mean that we should not ever utter the name of God unless we are actually intending to address or refer to that entity. Those of you who do not currently follow the Judeo-Christian tradition (especially the unoriginal screenwriters among you) may feel that you are not bound by that rule, and maybe indeed you are not, and so maybe we do not actually ban those utterances by public law. However, we yet request and suggest that you at least consider exercising some tolerance and sensitivity on a voluntary basis, and cut down those offensive usages to the extent that you practically can. For, when we have less sensitivity among different subcultures within our society, including those devoted to different religions, we have more room for misunderstanding and hatred and violence, so that would take us away from our overall Goal.

Question 602

Shall flag-burning be considered an acceptable form of expression?

This matter was treated in A591.6: You can do what you want with the American Flag when you are outside the geographic boundaries of our Nation, but burning a Flag on American soil is essentially making a public statement that you are an enemy of our Nation, and a threat to our security, so we have every valid reason to lock you up, not for burning a Flag but rather for being a publicly-admitted security threat.

Question 603

Shall we continue to consider prostitution as being socially or legally unacceptable?

No. If two adults wish to enter freely into a contract whereby one party agrees to engage in sexual activity with the other party in exchange for a payment of money, then neither party is being harmed (provided, of course, that due precautions are taken against unwanted pregnancy and spread of disease), nor is any other individual harmed (assuming that the client is unmarried). Therefore, we feel as of Session 270 that there should be no law or custom prohibiting such activity.

Question 604

If one of the parties in a sex-for-money 'specific performance' contract is bound under a pre-existing marriage contract prohibiting such activity with a third party, then may he/she bear a civil liability to the other party of the previous contract?

Noted in Session 271 (November 2018): Generally yes, but it should be clear to all parties what actions are or are not permitted under the previous contract. Different people may have different expectations of how much latitude is (or should be) allowed within any marriage contract where the terms are not completely specified, and some opportunistic individuals may even suddenly pretend to change their expectations if it becomes apparent that such pretense will generate a monetary award for them in court, or save them from having to pay one out.

Question 605

In the above case, does the third party (that is, the sex worker) also bear any civil liability, on the grounds that it may be her responsibility to establish in advance whether or not the first party is married?

It is arguable, but as of Session 271 we claim No. It would be impractical for every sex worker to investigate every prospective client for marital status, and so it really should not be her responsibility to do so. She also should not be required/expected even to ask her prospective client for his status, partly because some marriages are partly or completely 'open', and largely because any partner in a 'closed' marriage who is willing to cheat on his spouse with a prostitute is probably also willing to lie about it, so asking would not really accomplish much, and might make things worse.

A sex worker has every reason to expect that her prospective client either is contractually free to engage in a sex-for-money deal, or else is willing to undertake the risk of being caught violating the terms of a 'closed' marriage contract. She therefore should have no liability if the guy is content to be a jerk.

Question 606

To what extent shall gambling be legal?

Noted in Session 271: All kinds, and in all cities and towns everywhere, with the one restriction being that minors should not be allowed to play at a casino or racetrack or other fixed gambling establishment, since it is too easy for administrators to take unfair advantage of their inferior knowledge and hyperinflated trust. No problem, however, if they want to put a buck down on a marbles game with their minor buddies, as long as there is no 'house' taking any margin out of the pot, such that the game is what the math folks call a 'zero-sum utility' for all the players.

Question 607

What age (and/or other similar factor) shall we consider to be an acceptable minimum for gambling at a professional establishment?

Again, while we were tempted to imitate our predecessors, and to go with a straight chronological age such as 18 for administrative convenience, yet we found in Session

271 that we should not do so. It has been a frequent theme of our findings up to this point that chronological age does not provide a reliable indicator of when somebody is 'ready' to do something. Some individuals are 'ready' to do the thing much earlier in life than that arbitrary chronological age, while some other individuals are not 'ready' to do that thing until much later in life, if ever.

We feel that a primary-school diploma should be sufficient to allow gambling at a professional establishment, provided that the standard primary-school curriculum should include a lesson within the Mathematics track as to the fact that many gambling arrangements (with the occasional exception of large carryover jackpots in public lotteries) will tend to favor the 'house' (that is, the fixed venue where the gambling is taking place), for otherwise they could not afford all those big buildings with the equipment and the carpeting and the lights and the staffing and all the other overhead costs of their operation, and still deliver a satisfactory profit margin to the venue ownership, so the odds will tend to disfavor the individual gambler.

Question 608

Shall we allow ticket scalping?

We don't see why not, and as of Session 271 it had baffled us for many years that any civil jurisdiction ever passed any laws against it. Our only requirement is that the buyer should have full disclosure about base prices and current ticket availability.

It is reasonable in general for an athletic or theatrical venue to sell as many tickets as there are people coming to see the show, so if one person buys a ticket and then can't see the show, then it is also reasonable for that person to engage in a private transaction -- for either a higher or a lower amount than the base price, or maybe at the exact original price -- to assign that right of seeing the show to a third party.

While the venue might be deprived of *additional* revenue if the reseller manages to extract a higher price, they still are not actually harmed, since the ticket had already been duly purchased for the price designated by the venue. Everybody gets what they want and deserve, with nobody harmed, so there should not be a law against it.

Question 609

Does a venue have a right to declare privately that their tickets may not be assigned or transferred, as well as the power to enforce such right?

We argued no in Session 271, and here's why: In the contract to sell an event ticket to an individual for a monetary consideration, the individual is basically purchasing the right to see the event, often from a particular seat. When anyone purchases any tangible or intangible commodity, she generally has the right to sell that commodity to another party, for whatever terms they may happen to agree upon. We don't see any reason why the same standard can not or should not apply to ticket sales.

Only possible exception that we could immediately conceive is if the selling venue had previously decided to ban certain individuals from purchasing tickets, perhaps because they had reached into the field while the ball was in play (we really hate that!) and disrupted the game in progress, or for some similar bad behavior. In such an instance, the individual who is banned from purchasing a ticket directly from the venue ought not to be able to purchase a ticket from another individual.

As long as we continue to engage in cash transactions, though, there is not much we can do to prevent such private transactions, short of requiring fingerprints or facial recognition or some other kind of personal identifier at all entrances to the venue, which we imagine ought not to be necessary if one already has a valid ticket in hand.

However, once we set up the 'master ledger' which we discussed in Part II, it may be possible to flag certain ticket purchases as being transferable to some individuals but not to others, and so venues would then be able to block unsavory individuals from attending their events.

Question 610

Shall there continue to be such a thing as 'indecent exposure', either in person or over photographic media?

Generally recommended against the concept in Session 271, with some provisions:

First, we philosophically object to the notion that a mere display of male or female body parts is 'indecent', especially in the form of still or moving photographs (provided of course for their own protection that no minor children should ever be subjects in such photographs). The body parts exist, they have always existed, they are key to our continued survival as families and as a species, and we have heard of no bad things ever happening when such images are displayed within those Tribes or Nations who have chosen to permit them. It is only those cultures who have decided that such images are 'indecent' who seem to suffer when such display happens within their eyesight.

Not only do such images appear to be harmless, they also seem in many cases to be actively healthful, because both the individual viewer and the overall culture seem to experience less stress and less sexually-related crime than do those cultures who have chosen to make photographic nudity a 'taboo' which must be violated in order for people to view the desired images.

In-person nudity is a bit more complex. Some people like to be naked in public, and some people like to be in the company of other naked people. When no harm is caused or threatened by an action, it generally should be allowed to proceed, and so the 'ecdysiasts' who enjoy the image and experience of nudity generally should have at least some opportunity to do so without legal repression.

However, there also are those who do not enjoy being naked in public, and/or do not wish to see others naked in public. Or, maybe they generally enjoy it, but only at certain times and in certain places, and otherwise they want to be able to focus on work or other activities which do not involve nudity. In both cases, we might be tempted to tell them 'Well, just don't look at it', but that is not a very reasonable expectation if naked people are all around while someone is simply trying to get across town on the subway.

Much more importantly, some individuals -- particularly those not as physically strong as most of their neighbors -- may have a valid reason to feel threatened if some bigger and stronger individual is standing or sitting nearby with no clothes on, or if he flashes his genitalia to you as you are passing each other on the sidewalk.

In such an instance, our Basic Social Rule of not causing or threatening harm to others suggests that such fearful circumstances should be avoided and mitigated.

In order to achieve a compromised coexistence between these two camps, we propose that those local communities which do not already do so should actively consider designating some spaces within their parks and beaches and other public areas to be 'clothing-optional', while other public 'zones' should continue to require a minimum amount of clothing at most times, although they would be well-advised to permit exceptions during parades and other public festivals (such as the Carneval in Rio), provided always that nobody is ever creating the perception or reality of threatening anyone else. In addition, hotels and apartment buildings and civic centers should consider designating certain timeslots as 'clothing-optional' for the use of their swimming pools and spas, until such time as the local culture becomes ready for such facilities to be 'clothing-optional' during all hours of their operation.

As for private property, people should be able to be naked within their own homes (even with the curtains open), and in at least some other areas of their own property (such as if they are swimming or sunbathing or otherwise hanging out in a patio or backyard), again as long as there is no indication that they are threatening anyone. Having a rule in place against such actions would require 'peepers' looking through windows and fences in order to enforce it, and we really don't want to go there.

It's a grey area when it comes to nudity on the front part of one's private property, such as when one is washing his car in the driveway or something. On one hand, you may not be so eager to see your neighbor's ass, but I am not so eager to see his belly either, so why should I be forced to look at his belly while you are protected from seeing his ass?? Why not the other way around? Better yet, why have any restriction at all, again as long as nobody is threatening anybody? On the other hand, it could be argued that the homeowner who has plenty of patio and backyard space for his outdoor nudity should not require it in his frontyard as well, and that at least let's give the neighbors a break and allow them to enter and exit their homes without needing to see the neighbor's bare bum.

Question 607 (continued)

What age (and/or other similar factor) shall we consider to be an acceptable minimum for gambling at a professional establishment?

Non-author panelist in Session 271 noted that having casinos located near schools could create bad examples of adult behavior to kids who have not yet received their complete basic training in Mathematics. We thus should make sure that any fixed gambling establishments should be 'zoned' to different areas of town from where all the schools are, same as we should do with taverns and liquor stores and pleasure-product shops and other businesses where only adult clients are expected or allowed.

Question 365 (continued)

What is a more efficient method of distributing all produce everywhere, so that everybody everywhere has their choice of stuff to get?

Non-author panelist in Session 271 volunteered that we should be taxing the rich to pay for human development, consistent with what we had decided in Part II.

Question 610 (continued)

Shall there continue to be such a thing as 'indecent exposure', either in person or over photographic media?

In the specific case of female breasts, we freely admit for disclosure of potential bias that every attendee at Session 272 (December 2018) was a heterosexual male who confessed to enjoying the sight. Yet, we felt that we were on solid philosophical ground in agreeing with those women who wish to #FreeTheNipple, and to be allowed to go completely topless in at least some public circumstances without any social or legal repercussions. Specifically, our group claims at the very least that any woman should be allowed to expose her breasts in any circumstance where men are allowed to be topless (including beaches, ballparks, etc.), and additionally that she should not be derided or prosecuted if some or all of her breast happens to be visible while she is wearing a red-carpet gown at an awards show or other social function.

Those who would oppose such a relaxation of our social norms might claim that the public baring of a female breast constitutes 'indecent exposure', but again we deny that claim. For, not only is there not really such a thing as 'indecent exposure' generally, but female breasts specifically are among the most 'decent' body parts imaginable, and have been essential for many thousands of years to the continued survival of the human species. Our previous argument about people possibly feeling threatened among nude neighbors also fails in this instance, because to our knowledge no harm ever was caused or threatened by naked female breasts.

In joining with this growing public sentiment, however, Moderator hereby issues a stiff warning to all his fellow Hetero Men, that they should refrain from staring or whistling or making crude comments, or otherwise making any topless woman feel uncomfortable or unsafe, for otherwise they will take away this privilege which we have waited so many centuries to achieve, and it may be several centuries more before they ever give us another chance at doing the right thing, so let's all please do the right thing the first time, and refrain from physically or vocally assaulting any woman, whether she is topless or not. We must earn their trust, now and forever.

Question 610.5

To what extent shall it be considered appropriate for children to be publicly breast-fed?

Even if you do not support our Answer 610 finding as to general female toplessness, then we hope that you would yet grant an exception to nursing mothers, who should be accorded every courtesy and latitude for the important and laborious efforts which they undertake in order to raise healthy children for our society.

Maybe some folks agree with the A610 finding on general female toplessness, but for some reason still have a hangup about public breastfeeding, possibly on the grounds that it is a personal biofunction which should be conducted in private, same as 'going to the bathroom'. We reject this argument, however, on a couple of grounds: First, breastfeeding is neither as stinky nor as toxic as the waste chemicals which we deposit in our latrines. Second, breastfeeding often needs to happen at certain times of the day, regardless of the mother's personal schedule, and it is not always convenient for her to seek out some sufficiently-commodious private room.

Those who oppose public breastfeeding may suggest that women should at least cover the breast and the child with a towel or blanket, as we often see in real life. While this may be comfortable for some women and some children, we can imagine how other women may prefer not to cover up their children and deny them Light and Oxygen and the Cool Breeze while they nurse, just because some stuffy and grumpy and arbitrary and controlling individuals seek for some reason to shield themselves from the image of human nursing.

In sum, as of Session 272 we see no valid reason to prohibit women from breastfeeding at any time in any public place, nor to require them to cover up with towel or blanket while doing so. In our group opinion, anyone still harboring any such objections -- or any community still keeping such prohibitive laws on their books -- really needs to lighten up.

Question 611

But, if we allow all nudity in at least some public circumstances, such that it becomes much more routine, then will our collective sex drive be reduced?

It has been suggested that at least some individuals (both male and female) will have more heightened sex drives if they live in environments where nudity is a 'taboo', because the idea of breaking that 'taboo' and seeing somebody naked (even one's own spouse) gets them excited enough to be willing and able to complete the sex act, and that maintaining the 'taboo' against nudity is therefore important to the ongoing goal of having enough collective sex to keep our species procreating. As of Session 272, however, our group does not find this to be an area of large concern.

First, all other animal species go around without any clothes at all, and they still manage to have plenty enough sex to keep themselves on the planet, so the general urges to copulate and procreate do not seem to attenuate very much simply because of the absence of clothing.

Second, in the specific case of humans, there have been tribes for years in Africa and South America and other places, where toplessness or complete nudity is common, and again they manage to have enough sex and make enough babies to keep the tribes in existence.

Third, in the even more specific case of America, with its vast history of Puritanism and Prohibition, spouses still see each other naked all the time, and yet in many cases they still manage to have sex and generate additional new births.

Fourth and finally, even if some individuals in some of our more 'uptight' cultures actually do experience a reduced sex drive as a result of the deregulation of nudity within their communities, and even if they do end up producing fewer offspring as a result, then maybe that actually helps us a little, because most observers seem to agree that our global and national populations are currently growing so fast that at some point their sizes will become impossible to sustain. Maybe we therefore could use a small reduction in our collective sex drive, and maybe this is another good reason to deregulate public nudity, but we would be extremely surprised if the reduction were ever great enough to threaten the survival of our species, so we really do not feel the need to worry about it too much.

Question 612

To what extent, then, shall we permit the depiction of overt sexual acts on TV or film?

Noted in Session 272: Nudity is one thing, sexual activity is something else. We do not want to expose our kids to images (either still or moving) of adult sex activity, until they possess the necessary maturity and education to understand what is going on and how such activity should be properly managed.

We generally seem to be on a good track for continually achieving this objective, although specific tactics will need to vary with ever-changing technologies. There are certain periods of the day when overly-explicit and overly-suggestive images should be avoided or prohibited, especially in the daytime when parents are likely to be at work and not available to provide parental guidance in the home. As to later hours when parents are more likely to be present and active, the current system of rating films and TV shows -- and giving us specific warnings about the upcoming presence of 'thematic elements' (whatever that means) or other visual hazards -- generally seems to be helping to provide parents with additional information which they can use to help decide what the child sees without supervision, what she sees with parental supervision and explanation, and what she doesn't yet get to see at all.

The specific standards and regulations can evolve over time, not only with rating clarification and changing technologies but also with shifting community attitudes and preferences, which may also be different in different localities, which is why the material which is broadcast on the European continent is often more explicit and suggestive than what we see in either America or Britain. Main thing is to continue at all times and in all places to seek a balance between protecting children from images which they're not ready for, and allowing both performers and viewers to indulge in the satisfying art of depicting human sexuality in cinema.

Of course, we should also maintain rules to prevent the casting of minors in any such photographic or cinematic productions, because it can be hard for producers to establish whether any such performers are actually mature enough for the job, and because some producers would not bother to inquire if they were not legally compelled to do so. Whether or not the cutoff should be either Age 18 or any other chronological limit is still problematic, because again chronological limits are not always very reliable for assessing one's mental and emotional maturity for performing certain acts. Even if you do wish to keep chronological cutoffs generally, we still wonder whether keeping it as high as Age 18 is still necessary, given that so many individuals of lower ages have been copulating and making babies for many millennia now. However, we are very happy to 'err on the side of caution' with this one, and to allow the current industry standard of chronological Age 18 as being both necessary and sufficient to qualify one as a legal sex performer.

Question 612.5

Should it be considered acceptable for consenting adults to have sex in public, provided that they clean up and generally do not present a health hazard?

The 'civil libertarians' among us (and you know who you are!!) may jump up and claim that all acts should be allowed which do not cause or threaten any harm to

others. A subset of those may be 'hedonists', who may clamor specifically for a culture of 'free love'. (For example, we were reminded in Session 272 of the line read by Jim Morrison's character in the 1991 film *The Doors*, that "There should be Great Golden Copulation in the streets of L.A., man.") As tantalizing as these philosophies might be, however, we still need to exercise some social responsibility.

Even if we assume that all proper precautions are taken against disease spreading and unwanted pregnancy and leaving any 'bio-waste' behind at the scene, some venues at some times may be open to children who are not old enough or educated enough to understand the action being taken, and who may therefore be curious to mimic the action without proper supervision or explanation or limitation.

What we therefore need is a sort of 'limited hedonism', in which the adult humans who wish to do so may indulge in Love and Joy and Happiness and Celebration, without unintentionally encouraging underage individuals to experiment with sexual interaction before they are ready. This means that we need to designate some combinations of time and place in which such activity is permitted, and others in which it is not.

For starters, we were talking in Answer 610 about clothing-optional sections of beaches and other such public zones, so that some people could enjoy being naked while others could easily avoid those images if desired. By this same line of reasoning, we imagine that some people who want to be naked and see other naked people might still want to avoid seeing any combination of people engaging in sex, or else maybe they are okay with their children seeing naked people but not with them seeing sexually-active people. Therefore, maybe the clothing-optional section of your beach or other zone has a free-sex subsection, where children are not allowed except when accompanied by a parent, who we may presume has already provided the necessary explanations or will do so at the time.

As for parks, yeah it might have been nice if we could have free sex everywhere, but again we need to be mindful of kids who are not ready to view those images safely. On the other hand, it's pretty fun (at least in the Moderator's experience) to have sex in a park, among the grass and trees and clouds and birds. We suggest that remote areas of your larger parks generally should be okay, and maybe in the more populated areas if the couple is covered up with a large sleeping-bag or something in order to shield the specifics of their actions. The geography of every park and every town is different, so each local community should decide which specific areas should be okay for outdoor sex, and which areas should not be. As a guiding principle, we again suggest aiming for a balance between parental responsibility and fostering a Culture of Love within our society.

Question 613

If deregulating nudity, then do we still need to have separate public bathrooms for men and women?

We apparently do not 'need' them, because we had been seeing more unisex bathrooms in recent years as of Session 272, and the Earth is still continuing to rotate. However, some people may still prefer to have them (especially some women who would prefer not to remove their bottoms in a toilet stall while a potentially-creepy man is in the same room), so those communities and businesses

which are still willing and able to provide two 'flavors' of bathroom certainly should be permitted to continue to do so.

Main hangup with this, though, is that we have begun to observe more than two 'gender identities' in our modern culture, such that some of our citizens are not completely 'at home' in either a men-only or a women-only bathroom, and such that their using either variety is often going to freak somebody out. We have a couple of suggestions for this: First, people generally should try to freak out less over the idea of unisex bathrooms, because it seems to be on the rise. Second, until all those hangups permanently go away (if that ever happens, which it may not, because again some guys can appear really creepy for some women), better for any non-binary individuals to determine which of the binary models they more closely resemble in the eyes of the general public, and then to use the corresponding bathroom in hope of freaking out fewer people.

Generally, with the increased use of unisex bathrooms, a word of caution to our friends who "pisseth against the wall"* [*1 Samuel 25:22, *et al.*], that is, men with standard penises: It has come to our attention that some of you have pissed in a standing position into a non-urinal public toilet. This action has generated complaints of uncleanliness and unhealthfulness because some of you 'miss the target', and get some of your urine on the seats where other people must sit. Please do not do that. We get it that seat covers are an uncomfortable inconvenience, but we don't want to take or allow any actions which cause or threaten harm to others, so we need to 'bite the bullet' and pee sitting down (or momentarily raise the seat) if no stand-up urinals are available for our use. If we fail to do so, then they might take away unisex bathrooms from us, which would be an inconvenience for all.

Question 614

To what extent shall we allow violent or disgusting acts on TV or film?

We believe as of Session 272 that it would be okay to follow the same basic rationale as in Answer 612 for sex acts, that some individuals like to portray those kinds of images on film, while some others (not the Moderator!) like to view them, but that we want to shield children from images which they are not ready to absorb safely, so we generally allow the action but with some restrictions as to time and place.

However, we yet recommend a greater level of restriction for violent/disgusting acts than a community might observe for sex acts, on the grounds that images of violence and horror and gore are more dangerous to impressionable minds than images of sex and love and happiness, and therefore are more dangerous to our society generally. Therefore suggesting more limited timeframes for that sort of 'entertainment', fewer available channels, stricter ratings, higher requirements for chronological age and/or education level, and stronger advisories to parents.

Question 615

Shall we require anyone driving a car to wear a seat belt?

Yes, they save not only the driver and her passengers but also other drivers and pedestrians who might be impacted by a skidding vehicle after an initial collision.

Moderator of Session 272 reported becoming personally convinced of this fact back in 1983, when seat-belt usage was being encouraged more but still was not universally required. I was driving down the #1 lane of the boulevard, at or near the posted speed limit, with little or no other traffic in the area, except for one vehicle which had been traveling in the opposite direction, and which was now paused and preparing to turn left into some driveway in the middle of the block. For some reason, this other driver (who turned out to be both unlicensed and uninsured) commenced her turn just as I was passing by, and sent my vehicle careening dangerously around the boulevard. Fortunately, I had only recently begun to get into the habit of wearing a seat belt, in response to the recent increase in the public message, and this fact allowed me to regain control of my vehicle after only a couple of seconds, and eventually bring it to a safe stop in a parking lot nearby. If I had not been wearing my seat belt, then I certainly would have been thrown far clear of the steering wheel, and any number of very bad things might have happened.

Drivers who refrain from wearing seat belts, and who therefore sometimes generate additional damage after an initial collision, require the rest of us to pay more in insurance premiums, so we have standing to mitigate our collective risk exposures, by requiring all drivers to wear seat belts at all times.

Question 616

Shall passengers in a car be required to wear seat belts?

We feel as of Session 272 that passengers should not have that responsibility, because they can do what they want to themselves, and because they are not an immediate threat to others on the road. However, the driver of a car with passengers assumes a direct responsibility for their safety, and may be held civilly liable for injuries which they may suffer from his negligence, so he may insist that they wear seat belts while the vehicle is in operation, and under certain conditions he may also be held criminally liable if he drives without such insistence.

Question 617

Shall every motorcyclist or bicyclist be required to wear a helmet?

We here disagreed in Session 272 with our 'black book' of preliminary ideas which had been compiled more than 20 years earlier. We instead noted that a cyclist can indeed create other dangers after an initial collision, especially if the cycle is motor-driven, and sometimes even if not. Also, anyone sustaining such an injury probably will incur some hospital costs which may need to be absorbed at least partially by either insurance companies and/or the local community, in which case we all pay for somebody's reckless stupidity.

Maybe if you're out on the open road, or in a desert or forest away from civilization, such that you will be left completely alone to die and rot if you careen off the road without a helmet, maybe we let you do that. In particular, adult bicyclists traveling in quiet neighborhoods at slow speeds probably can be exempted from wearing helmets in most situations (kids should be required for their own protection), for some people clearly prefer to ride without them if it is safe enough for everyone. However, we suggest that States and Localities should get to require helmets whenever the chances appear good that they will be expected to cover your ass for doing something stupid, even though we may sometimes be tempted not to bother.

A non-author Mensan had posted on the L.A. Gen-X list in March 2008 that if you experience an unhelmeted accident within a populated area, then traffic may be backed up for much longer if you die and they have to scrape your bones off the pavement, than if you are merely injured and can walk away, so that is another reason why we get to require helmets, at least on roads with higher speeds.

Another non-author poster counterargued that total public expenses may actually be lower if you die from an unhelmeted accident than if you survive as a result of having worn your helmet. However, that may not be the case all the time, if it ever is the case at all. In any event, though, we imagine that the overall societal cost (including traffic delays) is probably net-lower if we require cycling helmets than if we do not, again at least on the bigger and faster roads (perhaps those where there are at least two lanes traveling in the same direction as the bicycle), although again we probably can exempt the smaller and slower neighborhoods for bicyclists.

Question 618

But, if a cyclist sustains injuries by not wearing a helmet, then society (whatever that means) will have to pick up the tab for his emergency medical care: Doesn't this entitle us to insist on his wearing a helmet?

We noted Yes It Does to close out Session 272. However, to begin Session 273 (December 2018), we reviewed some recent SIG correspondence on the subject. Their points and our responses are summarized hereunder:

One counterargument appearing in the SIG correspondence was that maybe we should allow people to be stupid and careless with their own health and safety, as long as they are not endangering others. While this may be true in theory, yet in real life society probably still will incur a cost for people's recklessness, because in real life most modern societies will volunteer to perform some level of emergency medical service for those in the most dire need, even if they do not carry insurance and even if they do not reside locally and even if they brought their poor conditions upon themselves. For, most folks in the medical and political professions would feel pretty guilty -- and could look pretty bad in the eyes of the public -- if they simply stood by and allowed any person to bleed to death on the street or in a hospital lobby and refusing any level of treatment, on grounds of either lack of insurance or gross victim stupidity or both. Whatever resources and efforts we therefore end up expending on these morons is taking away from what we could be providing to our more wellness-oriented citizens, so we as a society generally have a right to reduce our risk exposure by requiring people to exercise due caution in their personal behaviors while they sojourn within our boundaries. Besides, even if somebody has insurance and then does something stupid which the insurance company covers, the insurers will need to raise their premium rates for everybody, and so again we all pay, and so again we have a right to limit our liability. Therefore going with our preliminary conclusion, that Localities can mandate helmets for motorcyclists if they wish to (we do agree that the issue should not be decided at the Federal level, because our nation is too large and diverse for any one-size-fits-all approach to be applicable everywhere), although they should exempt them out in deserted areas where they can't hurt anybody else and nobody else is around to feel guilty for them if they crash and bleed to death.

It was also suggested for our group's consideration that we should raise the insurance rates for anyone caught not using the mandated safety devices as required. However, it seems far easier to us that we simply fine them an appropriate amount. That way, we don't need to bother the actuaries with another parameter to keep track of, and more importantly the money can come into the public treasury instead of going to some private insurance company.

Generally, though, we agree that motorcyclist restrictions should be more stringent than bicyclist restrictions, and that it should be up to each Locality to decide the specifics for itself, based on local terrain, traffic patterns, loss experience, and willingness to budget for providing emergency medical services to the careless.

Question 619

What regulations shall we have in place regarding consumption of alcohol?

America tried the experiment with Prohibition, and it didn't work out. It arguably created more problems than it solved, and we certainly do not recommend ever going down that road again. Even if you individually believe that alcohol is Evil, yet a global culture which has dominated this planet for the last 5,000 years disagrees with you. Some individuals may be net-better without it, but for others in moderation it not only is not-very-harmful but is actively healthful, for stress relief and other factors. That is why insurance underwriters have often quoted lower premium rates for light drinkers than they would for teetotalers.

Certain communities (including New Orleans) allow residents to walk around the streets and the parks carrying adult beverages, and at least for them it is no big danger and no big deal. Other communities might therefore consider loosening their restrictions on public alcohol consumption.

Even a consumption in excess of a normal level of moderation can be tolerated in at least certain areas on at least certain occasions (including Mardi Gras), provided that nobody's persons or possessions are threatened in any way.

While again it should be up to individual communities to decide their own standards, and modify them over time as they deem proper, yet we generally recommend as of Session 273 that adults should be allowed to drink alcohol -- in addition to having 'open containers' -- in parked cars, in parks, on beaches, and at other public locations, as long as they are not causing any active problems. If they ever start to get too loud, then ding them for that, whether they have been drinking alcohol or not. If you spot them leaving trash behind, then ding them for that, again whether they have been drinking alcohol or not. As long as they are being quiet and peaceable, and minding their own business, you should please let them alone, in this Land of Liberty. Save the policing resources for any actual bad acts.

As for the specific case of driving, we certainly do not want to encourage drunk driving, far from it. What we do suggest is that some people still are acceptable drivers even when having consumed small amounts of alcohol (often better than some other folks who get jacked on Coffee or Uppers and then try to drive at 90mph down the Hollywood Freeway during rush hour), so we do not recommend that States require a 0.0% blood-alcohol content for all drivers at all times and in all places. Some small amount of alcohol usually should be considered okay.

In fact, some communities (including New Orleans again, with its famous drive-thru daiquiri stands) even allow drinking while driving, not just shortly before. Local communities should be able to decide these things for themselves, based on local traffic conditions and consumption levels and public attitudes.

Main thing for driving is that we should condemn any actual bad driving which may have been committed in real life (speeding, erratic movement, failure to obey posted signs and signals, backing into a mailbox, etc.), whether the driver has had any alcohol or not, and not find him guilty of violating a separate set of laws just because he may have had some alcohol in his system at the time, because that would contradict our finding in Section I-F, that it generally constitutes excessive punishment to find somebody guilty of violating several laws for a single bad act.

Question 620

Shall we allow tobacco smoking in indoor public places (bars, restaurants, sports arenas, etc.) without limitation, or shall we allow with some limitation, or shall we disallow entirely?

We generally claim as of Session 273 that it should be disallowed entirely, with only very limited exception. Non-smoking patrons arrive in the public venue, sometimes having paid to get in, and they often buy food and drinks and other goodies because they assume that nobody will be blowing smoke in their faces during their stay, and so it is often not easy for them to just get up and leave whenever a tobacco smoker arrives. This activity thus falls under the heading of harming others, and so is not accorded the same privilege of being able to be done by any individual at his whim.

Exception may be granted if a completely closed-off smoking section is established, such that nobody is ever required to breathe those foul fumes who doesn't wish to.

That being said, we also feel that this issue should not be decided at the Federal level, because we are all too aware from our travels that different States and Localities currently have their own collective preferences on the matter. If an entire community wishes to maintain an environment in which tobacco-smoking can happen freely in any public venue, and if they are willing to absorb any resulting increase in medical expenses without affecting taxpayers and policyholders living in other States, then they probably should be allowed to do so. They simply should make sure to announce very clearly and broadly to the rest of the world that they are a Smoking City or a Smoking State (North Carolina is very good at that, for example), so that the rest of us who do not share or tolerate that lifestyle will know not to live there, nor to visit for any longer than may be absolutely necessary.

Question 621

Shall we allow tobacco smoking outdoors?

We have observed as of Session 273 that some smoking sections at concert venues and theme parks are open-air, so the stinky stench of tobacco often pervades beyond the nominal section boundaries to affect the innocent. We find that this is not acceptable. Either make your smoking sections *much* bigger, with the smokers confined as far downwind from the good citizens as possible, or better yet disallowing tobacco smoking in all outdoor areas accessible to the public.

As with Question 620, we currently feel that local jurisdictions should decide whether or not to adopt this our recommendation, and that it should not be a matter for legislation or regulation by the Fed one way or another. Maybe this condition changes someday, if somebody ever proves convincingly that tobacco smoke generated in one State poses an environmental hazard to individuals living in other States. For the present, though, we are assuming that any negative effects of tobacco smoke generally remain localized to within a few hundred feet of the source, and we therefore are allowing States and Localities to decide the issue for themselves. However, we recommend and request that they feel free to be as restrictive as they wish when it comes to tobacco-smoking, which has turned out to be one of the vilest and most self-destructive practices Humanity has ever created.

Question 622

To what extent (if any) should we be allowing tobacco-smoking at all?

States and Localities should decide, until a peer-approved study finds otherwise. However, we urgently plead with you to legislate against it as much as you please.

Our basic philosophical position is that tobacco smoke emanates away from the indulger, and enters the bodies of other people without their consent, and sometimes with their active disapproval, and that this therefore falls under our definition of actions which cause or threaten harm to others, and which thus are subject to legal limitation. Even if the secondhand smoke turns out not to be as carcinogenic as was widely suspected as of Session 273, the foul smell is still bad enough on its own to require that you keep your filthy tobacco smoke to yourself.

As suggested in Answer 620, tobacco-smoking within businesses open to the public should be permitted only within certain rooms which are properly sealed and labeled and air-conditioned. Some businesses require a tobacco-free zone of 20 feet around the entrance, but we need much more than that. Tobacco-smoking within private homes should be permitted only when no children or animals are present.

As suggested in Answer 621, we claim that tobacco-smoking should never be allowed outdoors at all, unless you're sitting in the middle of your own personal 40-acre ranch, because otherwise innocent civilians are likely to be placed at risk for breathing your oral garbage, in some cases even when they are indoors.

Generally, our group is opposed to tobacco-smoking, and we applaud the entertainment community for explicitly limiting cinematic portrayals of tobacco-smoking to only when it's needed for historical accuracy, because it's a nasty and arguably-dangerous habit which we don't want to encourage among either our adults or our youth. However, we regretfully acknowledge that this our group's opinion is not universally held, at least not yet, so we are reluctantly agreeing to let States and Localities decide for themselves what kinds of worlds they want to have: Do they want worlds where people live, or worlds where people smoke tobacco?

Question 623

Under what conditions, if any, shall we allow marijuana-smoking?

Funny thing about that. We have heard from many authority figures for many decades that marijuana constitutes a 'dangerous drug' which should be universally

prohibited from production or distribution or possession or consumption. However, it turns out that every such authority figure which Moderator had ever heard or read was someone who had never tried marijuana for himself, and whose stated position was therefore underinformed and therefore suspect. I have never read nor heard anyone who has actually tried marijuana and then afterward claimed that it should never be grown or dispensed or used under any circumstances or conditions ever.

The participants in this Project have included several individuals over the years who have admittedly used marijuana more than once in their lives, and nobody who was present during our Session 273 argued against it, so it is our group's current position (not likely to change anytime soon) that marijuana should be allowed within our society at least to some extent and under some conditions. Let us now look a little more closely at what those conditions might be.

First, let's agree right off that marijuana should never be used anywhere near one or more children, unless a particular child's duly-licensed pediatrician prescribes it. It is a toxic substance, not far different from alcohol, and it can have a similar effect of slowing brain function and relaxing the reflexes. We certainly do not want any persons ingesting any such substances while their minds and bodies are still growing, again except as medically prescribed. People should generally have reached their full height and stature, and have begun to process their normal adult bodily functions, before they even consider exposing themselves to such substances in any way.

Second, as we recommended for Drinking in Answer 580, we similarly recommend that a secondary-school diploma should be both necessary and sufficient to legally purchase and possess and use marijuana, except where any individual adults need to be specifically prohibited for any reason. Under our model, most children will graduate from primary school while they are still in their early adolescence (just as many grammar-school graduates are today), and so in most cases their minds and bodies have still not achieved their full adult form, and we don't want any toxic substances like alcohol and marijuana to be inhibiting their growth process. Also, the standard secondary-school curriculum should include a lesson or series of lessons on the physical and mental and medical effects of marijuana, so that those wishing to consider that path for their adult lives will do so with a firm basis of information.

So, from this point on, we are established that only adults ever use marijuana or are nearby when it is being used. What else?

Third, some of the same standards need to apply to marijuana as applied to tobacco in our Answers 620-622. The smell is not nearly so universally foul (although some individuals do find it so), and all of our research on the subject suggests that marijuana is not nearly as unhealthful as tobacco. However, the smoke still does travel, and it still can have an effect on people who do not wish to be thus affected. We therefore must confine ourselves to places where we can indulge without invading anybody else's space. Blend in. Coexist.

Fourth, care must be exercised in terms of driving, also in the same way as alcohol. For some individuals, a small amount of marijuana which is consumed some sizable period of time before actually getting behind the wheel might not necessarily make them a worse driver. In fact, in some cases, it might even make them a bit better, if they are not quite so nervous and tense and jittery from the stress and dangers of traffic, and if they can be a bit smoother and more relaxed in their movements. They also may be disinclined from speeding, or from following too closely behind the

next car. In any case, they still can remain alert and attentive, whereas alcohol can make one sleepy and dangerous with very little use.* [*Therefore strongly disagreeing with the highway sign claiming that "Buzzed driving is drunk driving." We are convinced that that slogan must have been conjured up by someone who had never attempted both, and approved for display by someone else who had never attempted both, so again people are preaching to us who really don't know what the heck they're talking about.] However, also as with alcohol, an excessive amount of marijuana consumption before driving can be bad, as can a small amount taken immediately before driving, so please for all our sakes do not ever do that.

So, we're staying away from kids, we're staying away from non-consenting adults, and we're making sure not to present any driving dangers. Should any other restrictions apply?

At this point, some of you may still suggest that we seek to impose/maintain a universal restriction, and to completely ban the production and distribution and possession and consumption of marijuana everywhere at all times and under all conditions both now and forevermore, such that not even educated adults who wish to indulge safely in their own personal spaces should ever be legally able to do so. After all, this had been the official position of the U.S. Federal Government for many years prior to Session 273. How could the Fed possibly have held such a position for so many years, and have been wrong about it all that time?

Hate to break it to you, gang, but the Fed hasn't always held all the right policies or made all the right decisions. They displaced and destroyed the livelihoods of millions of indigenous people who were living where we wanted to build our cities and farms, they maintained for years that certain groups of adults could have only fractional votes while other adults were not allowed to vote at all, they instituted the Income Tax, they experimented with Prohibition, they invaded nations which had never attacked us or any other country, and they have recently even sprayed tear gas upon individuals who were trying to enter our borders in order to join our national family. Sorry to report it, but we need to face the facts, just because the Fed says that something is right or wrong, does not necessarily mean that it actually is so.

Thus, when the Fed claims that marijuana is a 'dangerous drug', and that it should be prohibited all the time everywhere, we should not be so eager to swallow their potion without looking at all the facts and counterarguments.

While it is true that marijuana is a toxin which causes certain changes in the perception and functioning of the brain, and that the body will flush it out of the system as soon as it practically can (otherwise one 'high' would last forever), that doesn't necessarily mean that it is a net-bad thing which should be universally prohibited. After all, your coffee and your juice and your sugary sodas cause you to feel more alert and energetic, and your beer and your wine and your cocoa can help you to rest and relax, but these are not prohibited substances (not now, anyway). Why should we single out marijuana for our legal restrictions?

It also is true that an excess of marijuana consumption can be both unhealthy to yourself and unsafe for others, but that is also the case with alcohol and coffee and many other legal substances, so that is not a valid reason to prohibit it completely.

Some individuals do not respond constructively to marijuana, or may have some specific medical condition under which individual marijuana use would be bad, so of course if in any doubt please do consult a duly-licensed physician before use. Others

might be okay medically with handling a small amount, but maybe they have addictive personalities which prevent them from rationing their quantities, and so they wouldn't be good candidates either. Then there are the airline pilots and other professionals who would jeopardize public safety if they ever ingested a small amount of marijuana at any time ever, so they should always remain clean. However, the fact that some individuals do better without marijuana does not mean that it should be legally withheld from everyone.

Main objection that a lot of people seem to have is that marijuana allegedly affects brain perception and functioning more than a lot of these other substances which simply make you either more alert or more relaxed, and maybe that part is true. The feeling is certainly different from those other substances. But, is that amount of difference enough to make it a net-bad thing which should always be banned?

We claim not. From the personal experiences of real-life individuals who have shared their perceptions with both the Moderator individually and our research group collectively, marijuana often helps the individual to feel better about her life and about her world, it tends to reduce anger and stress, and it generally promotes a longer and more healthful existence. It is not hallucinogenic, and does not make you see things that aren't there. It merely calms you down, by seeming to place you back a bit further from the issues and troubles of the day, and by allowing you to collect and refresh yourself for whatever is next on your schedule.

Some people seem to fear that a nation with legal marijuana everywhere will quickly become so 'stoned' that we would cease to get any more work done, and that our GDP would permanently drop to zero. And, maybe that is the case for some certain individuals, who maybe cannot ingest that substance even in a small quantity without experiencing a complete unwillingness or inability to work. For others, though, a rationed amount of marijuana not only allows them to continue to work, but sometimes even makes them better at it.

Moderator personally attests: When I have needed to work in the absence of marijuana, I sometimes get so tense and nervous about everything else going on in my life that I have a hard time focusing on the work in front of me, and it is difficult for me to remain seated and still and performing detailed work for any length of time. By contrast, when I take rationed doses of marijuana, and give them sufficient time to 'settle', all the other problems in my life go into a sort of mental 'cabinet', with the door closed, and I am able to sit still and focus and concentrate on whatever one task is ahead of me at the moment. I complete that task, and then I move on to the next thing, and I keep going down my list, one item after the next, and I end up getting huge amounts of work done with very high quality. Sometimes the quality is even higher than I might have achieved without any marijuana usage, because for me it seems to make neural connections which allow me to come up with some very creative ideas on how to do things and how to write things.

This is not all. Testimony is probably going to be pretty nearly unanimous among actual users that marijuana usage generally helps one to feel much more peaceful and much less violent. Any anger or resentment which we might feel toward a spouse or neighbor or coworker seems to just float away, sometimes just for the moment, and sometimes permanently, and we more often end up resolving any such conflicts peacefully and moving on with a happier existence. How many mass shooters do we hear about who were using marijuana at the time and nothing else?

This works not only within the local community, but also at the global level: No monarch or general in the history of the world (so far as Moderator has yet read, anyhow) has ever smoked marijuana and then immediately said to his subordinates okay now let's go invade our national neighbor. Whiskey maybe makes some people more belligerent (Grant liked it a lot), but marijuana seems to have the exact opposite effect, and we claim that we could have gotten away with a lot fewer wars in the world if more of our national leaders had been experienced marijuana users.

That all should be plenty enough 'ammo' to recommend a policy not just of reduced restrictions, but of active encouragement of marijuana usage when it can be done safely and non-invasively, but wait there's more! As if all the other benefits of the herb* [*The semantic difference between 'drug' and 'herb' is important here. A 'drug' is something which Man creates in order to achieve some desired effect which may or may not always be healthful, but an 'herb' is something which exists in Nature. Anybody in this advanced age who would still militate against the existence of marijuana had better speak to Nature about it.] were not enough, it turns out from recent study that marijuana even helps with cancer prevention.* [*Latest sources then known to be cited in subsequent passes.] It seems that the cannabis compound within marijuana has some magic way of detecting cancer cells in the body, and somehow sends a signal to other cells that they should not interact with the cancer cells, and so the cancers end up not duplicating. Pretty neat, huh?

In light of all the foregoing, yes of course we see that certain restrictions need to apply to marijuana usage, but we generally must feel that marijuana usage in safe and non-invasive settings should be not only allowed by all national and local governments, but actively appreciated and encouraged for its facilitation of individual health and global peace. In sum:

Marijuana is either a Miracle of Nature, or a Gift from God, just like Bacon.

It breaks our hearts that so many tons of this valuable natural resource have been seized and destroyed by governments which were willing to be ruled by ignorance and paranoia instead of by observation and experience, but maybe now we can at least prevent this historic problem from getting any worse. In the meantime, let's please do decriminalize marijuana at the Federal level, and tell the TSA to allow it to be transported in modest quantities in our checked luggage, although okay to continue to prohibit it as a carry-on.

Question 624 (continued)

To what extent shall actual drugs be legalized?

Generally, we feel as of Session 273 that we should prohibit only those drugs which are always dangerous even in small quantities under controlled circumstances. Other drugs which can be enjoyed safely by adults under certain conditions should be permitted. Some drugs can be consumed safely by some individuals, and not by others, so sometimes a prohibition may need to extend only to those certain individuals and not to the whole society.

One argument which critics of drug decriminalization put forth a lot is that people can sometimes get addicted. However, we claim that this is an insufficient argument by itself. Some people get addicted to eating, but does that mean that we should outlaw food? Addictive personalities should limit or eliminate their individual usage, but they should not need to ruin things for the rest of us.

Question 625

Given some degree of legalization, what sort of infrastructure do we want to set up for herb/drug sales?

As we had begun to see within California and other States as of Session 273, private outlets are being set up and licensed within duly-zoned business districts to dispense marijuana to adult customers, and to generate sales-tax revenue for the State and the community. We find this to be a healthful trend, and we strongly support it.

Our 'black book' of preliminary ideas from the 1990's reminded us that any herbal or pharmaceutical products sold in retail stores should be subject to requirements for accurate labeling, as determined by the FDA or other applicable agency.

Question 626

What regulations shall we impose on the purchase, possession, and use of firearms?

This matter was addressed within the context of Answer 597.

Question 627

Having clarified the rules on drugs and guns, and having reformed the penal system, shall we continue to make it illegal for an individual of any age to join or belong to a 'gang'?

There should be far less motivation to join a 'gang' if the activities (particularly drugs) which they most frequently pursued in the past have now been legalized and commercialized as described above. If some people do join anyway, then there is also far less motivation to visit violence upon any others. To the extent that any individual who happens to belong to any social group still independently commits a violent (or otherwise illegal) act, the individual can be punished for the act, but as of Session 273 it strikes us as unfair to hold the group accountable for the independent actions of the individual, or to declare the group illegal, as that appears to violate the Constitutional protection of free assembly.

Conversely, if it can be reliably established in a court of law that the organization specifically directed one or more of its members to commit a violent (or otherwise unlawful) act, then the organization has waived its right of free assembly, and it becomes subject to whatever remedial action the community may deem fit.

Question 628

How shall we reduce or eliminate the amount of graffiti in our community?

Addressed in Session 273: Reducing the influence of gangs as described in A627 will help this a lot, because there will be far less motivation to designate particular 'territories' as 'belonging' to different gangs. In addition, by concentrating our policing and judicial efforts on crimes where damage is actually done or threatened, we can catch and prosecute and punish vandals much more effectively, thus also reducing the inclination to vandalize.

Also, cities might consider establishing 'graffiti walls' as places where kids may express themselves artistically, rather than just telling them outright that they can't. Such walls may be painted over every year or so, such that new artists may still have a place to do their thing. Each artist therefore would know that his work is only temporary, so he won't get overly nervous or territorial if someone else eventually paints over his stuff. Besides, if the work is really that great or that meaningful, then the artist should arrange to have it produced on a more permanent medium.

Question 629

For those personal-behavior laws which we find no longer to apply in our more-advanced society, shall we actively recommend that they be repealed at whatever levels they currently exist?

Yes. We specifically recommend as of Session 274 (December 2018) that each legislative body -- from neighborhood councils all the way up to our new Earth Congress -- which does not already have one should establish and maintain a 'sunset committee' or subcommittee, whose sole mission would be to review all current legislation on a periodic basis, and to identify candidates for possible elimination based on new technologies or shifting civic attitudes or other recent changes, and to report them to the full assembly for formal consideration.

Why should they bother? Two main reasons: Specifically, we don't want to bother prosecuting people -- or threatening to do so -- who are not really causing anybody any harm. Generally, we would like to have our legal codes as compressed and simple as we can practically make them, because a legal code which is too large or too complex has a reduced chance of even getting learned, much less obeyed, whereas a shorter and easier code has a much better chance of getting obeyed. You want people to do what you want? You gotta make it really easy for them, so keep those legal codes trimmed and streamlined on an ongoing basis.

Question 630

Shall we recommend any further Constitutional amendments permitting any or all of these activities?

Notes from 'black book' ratified in Session 274: It is probably not necessary for any of the specific items, and we want to reserve the amendment process for the really heavy stuff, or else Constitutional status might become watered down and trivialized, as had been the case for some years with the California Constitution. However, we could go with a blanket amendment, establishing our general resolution that activities which do not harm or threaten others shall not be abridged by law at either the Federal or State or Local level. In addition, we could go with some clarification in the Constitution about limits of 'free speech' or 'free religion' as discussed earlier.

Question 631

How shall we deal with prisoners who were convicted of now-allowed activities?

We recalled in Session 274 that this probably had been treated in the Bad Acts section earlier, but in any case yes we should not only release them, but if possible compensate them for imprisonment on the basis of an unjust law.

Question 632

Won't the release of so many prisoners at once cause a drain on the economy?

If we experience a sudden rise in the labor pool, then we should again average out the total of number of person-hours which are required to keep all of our citizens sheltered and fed and otherwise cared for, and then adjust our overtime regulations as applicable in order to get more individual work schedules in line with the national average, so that everyone who is able to work has a realistic shot of getting a job.

Question 628.1

Shall we recommend a national or global ban on the eating of various kinds of animals?

Added in Session 274: We understand very well that there is a sizable segment of our society who wishes that no human would ever eat any meat, nor use animals for any other purposes beyond being companions and partners in our global ecosystem. As noble as these objectives are, for yes we certainly do love all our animal friends (most of them, anyhow), yet we are afraid that at least the first part is probably not ever going to be sufficiently realistic for us to recommend. We can recommend a complete and permanent cessation of all International Military Conflict, a repeal of the Income Tax, an end to Inflation, and a destruction of the Two-Party System, and we can expect that they will all happen, but we cannot realistically expect that all present and future humans will ever stop eating all meat forever.

Even if they did ever agree to do so, it still would represent only a small dent in the overall activity of the planet's carnivores and omnivores. Many species of animals and birds and fish and insects routinely subsist on the meat of dead animals, and some of them actually kill their prey for that purpose. It is part of our ecosystem, we couldn't stop it if we tried, and even if we did stop it then we might thereby be creating more problems than we solve.

Thus, as much as we might like to help you out, sorry we are not recommending or supporting any legislation at any governmental level to ban the production, distribution, possession, or consumption of animal-derived foods, with the exception of particular animal species which are acknowledged as 'endangered' by the area-based house of the Earth Congress which we described in previous Answers.

We probably will have better luck with the second part of the first sentence above, that we can realistically prohibit the slaughter of animals for any purpose other than food, especially for trophy hunting or other 'sport'. Anything which you hunt or fish should be used for food, and it should be licensed by the applicable authorities as being 'in season' and appropriate for capture. Leather and other non-food products may continue to be derived from animals which are killed primarily for food, but no animal should be killed strictly for fur or other clothing.

Using animals for medical experimentation is a tough one, because we certainly don't want any of the experimental subjects to feel any form or level of discomfort, but at the same time they may help us to understand more about how certain diseases and medications operate, which could be good for the whole ecosystem. Probably net-

best overall to allow it to some limited extent, where animal suffering is minimized, and to require prior approval and on-site supervision of any such experiments by applicable agencies in order to prevent abuse.

Question 628.2

Shall we recommend a national or global ban on the eating of humans?

Also added in Session 274: Some communities have adopted cannibalism as perfectly appropriate and routine, but we are not going to go along. Apart from the 'ick' factor, and the perception (whether right or wrong) that allowing cannibalism in an otherwise-civilized society would act to bring us down to the level of ignorant savages, we are citing a medical argument about cannibalism.

Specifically, we recall the epidemic of 'mad cow disease' which was a big news item some years back, and which turned out to have resulted from cattle being fed beef products instead of their natural diet. If that episode was any indication (and we have no interest in pursuing any further experimentation along those lines), then we can consider it a medical risk for large numbers of any species to eat their own kind.

Thus, with the exception of emergency survival conditions (remember the book *Alive* from the 1970's?), we suggest that it is in the public interest to prohibit human cannibalism, and to maintain actual laws accordingly. It probably should not be legislated at the global level, however, because it is difficult for a large society to enforce any laws which can easily be violated at the individual level, and also because the cultures which currently embrace cannibalism probably cannot be expected to accept our medical arguments against it. Probably better therefore to assign the issue to national and/or local governments to manage as they see fit.

SECTION III-E: SPORTS & GAMES

Question 633

Why address rules and procedures for Sports and Games at all in this effort?

Simply because Sports and Games are an important part of our social order, and because people get into fights* [*Check out <https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/family-argument-game-monopoly-leaves-one-person-injured-Kansas-020245875.html> for one recent example.] and other arguments over the best way to approach these different topics. We want to minimize those fights and arguments, in order to enhance the quality of life of those of us who are not into fighting. In addition, the influence of Sports on our economic cycle cannot be denied, so there is an interrelationship with Part II. Besides, we have been dealing with some heavy and complex issues during the course of this Project, and we feel that we have earned a break to have a little fun.

Question 633.3

Should a 'national anthem' continue to be played before major domestic sporting events?

We were initially tempted in Session 274 to go with a quick and reflexive 'yes', out of sheer tradition and habit, but we found that the issue was a bit more complex and deserved more thorough analysis.

Even if we once replace the current 'national anthem' with one which is less offensive to certain constituencies, and even if we fix all the bad policies currently maintained by the American government, there still would be other arguments both for and against the general idea of having any anthem at all before any game.

On the plus side, as we discussed during Answer 591.5 in the context of whether to conduct a Pledge of Allegiance at the start of each schoolday, there is something to be said for the social benefit of beginning each big event like this with a moment of ceremony of some kind. Your local Little League or Senior Softball team might go directly to First Pitch without any kind of music or announcement or anything, but at the professional level we have come to expect a little more showpersonship.

Besides, it might be good for the audience to have a moment of shared community at a big community event, before we start rooting for different teams and trying to outyell and outargue each other. Dodger fans and Giant fans may hate each other, but at least we're all Americans, and so maybe we should at least take a moment of peace before First Pitch to acknowledge and celebrate that important fact.

Also, there is the general argument in favor of Tradition, of continuing to do the things which have worked well for us over many past years and decades, unless and until there is ever a specific and important reason to change something. In this specific case, we were still not sure heading into this discussion whether we 'had enough evidence to overturn' our current practice.

Further, having a standard song play before each professional game gives both local artists and established stars a free showcase for their talent, which can lead to increased record sales. Any society benefits when it has more Music in it.

On the minus side, you can still have kickoff ceremonies which do not involve the crowd or an artist singing any kind of anthem. PA announcers can welcome the crowd to the stadium, issue any conduct or safety reminders which may be needed, point out any visiting dignitaries, introduce the starting lineups for both teams, and specifically for Baseball invite the crowd to cheer as the home team takes the field.

Also specifically for Baseball, if you really want a song at the beginning of the game, then you could move "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" there from its current position during the 7th-Inning Stretch.

We are wondering what effect it might have on the athletes, who for hours have been getting all stretched and psyched and energized and ready to play, to be required to stop their process and stand at attention with knees locked for several minutes while somebody sings a song. They may perform better without the song getting in the way, and we fans might get a better athletic contest out of it.

Noted at this time that "This is a big one, and we should meditate before deciding.", so we took a recess to consider further. You can tell from the different handwriting.

After recess: On the 'mixed side' (whatever that means), an anthem tends to promote or encourage Nationalism, and as of Session 274 we seemed to have a division of opinion within our Society as to whether or not that is a net-good thing.

Some of us fans don't like the fact that when we have already been waiting in a long line to buy our opening round of foods and beverages, and we finally get to the counter, and then no we have to wait some more, because nothing gets sold during the Anthem. Still, that probably is not a sufficiently-valid reason to lose the Anthem completely. We should just suck it up. That's on us.

As with the Pledge of Allegiance, we might upset lots of people if we drop the Anthem entirely, and we might upset other people if we require it entirely. Should we therefore adopt a similar posture of letting each venue decide for itself? Maybe, but maybe there is enough of a difference between the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem that we should recommend a different solution.

One possibility would be if stadiums experimented with announcing one day per week off of conducting the Anthem before the game. After a few tries (using different days of the week), they might get a sense from increased or decreased ticket sales whether the local community tends to favor or oppose a reduction in Anthem performance.

On the other hand, it also occurs to us that eliminating the Anthem from all games, or even encouraging such elimination, or even allowing such elimination, might constitute an insult and affront to the many millions of our Veterans who have so nobly fought for us and otherwise served us and helped us to be able to enjoy the rights and freedoms which we so desperately crave. Dropping the Anthem, and thereby dropping the opportunity to express our collective love and gratitude for this Nation, might be like taking this precious mega-resource for granted, not appreciating it enough, and that might be a slap-in-the-face to all the military personnel and first responders who have sacrificed so much to provide this Nation to us, and to keep us continually protected within it.

That last argument seems to be the most powerful of all, so while we are legally allowing individual venues to experiment with different Anthem frequencies in order to get a better feel of evolving public sentiment on the matter, yet we are generally encouraging venues to continue to perform or have the crowd sing some sort of community anthem. May not need to be the current or future National Anthem, may be instead something for your State, or for your City or Town, or maybe even for the Earth. The main point is that you are having a big community event, and that it would be net-good for everybody present -- and even indirectly for your fellow citizens who are not present -- if you take a moment while you are all together to do one thing together as a community, and to show your appreciation for all that your community has managed to do for you, assuming that it has done anything at all.

Question 633.4

What decorum (if any) should players and spectators exhibit when an anthem is played before a professional sports event?

We reasoned in Session 275 (December 2018) that the decorum which should be displayed might depend on which anthem is being used. For, certain athletes and spectators might be willing to stand at attention for certain anthems but not for others. However, it is also possible that any anthem which the Community or Nation ever selects is going to offend somebody somewhere, so we probably should plan for that contingency regardless of which anthem ever gets used in a particular venue.

According to Answer 633.3, one of the central purposes of rendering a community anthem of some kind before each game is to bring ourselves together as a community in a moment of ceremonial peace and harmony before the rival forces begin to square off on the field. If all athletes and spectators are not following the same decorum as one another, then that can disrupt and perhaps even destroy the community moment which we are working so hard to create.

But, does this mean that we should all be Slaves and Robots, blindly following all orders and conforming to all approved social behaviors, with no opportunity for individual expression? We claim not, and that there is some room for compromise on the issue, basically making everybody as happy as we practically can.

From this point of the discussion on, the specific protocols depend on whether we are talking about athletes or spectators.

For athletes, all eyes are on you as you are standing on the sidelines waiting to take the field. What you do or don't do while you are standing there is going to be visible to thousands of people, maybe millions if the contest is televised, so we need to be a little more stringent with our protocols than we need to be for the average spectator in the 83rd row.

Specifically, if you are a professional athlete, and if you are either taking a knee or standing on your head or doing some kind of funny dance while the anthem is playing, then that actively distracts both the fans and your teammates, and takes our attention and focus away from the moment of community togetherness which we are trying to create, and in turn takes our attention away from the athletic contest which is set to begin directly afterward. The athlete-performer who does such a thing to his audience does them a disservice, by giving them a visual experience significantly different from what they came and paid to see, same as a stage actor who suddenly starts delivering lines from another character in another play.

Thus, if you are a professional athlete and if for any reason you are not willing to stand at attention while the anthem is being rendered before the game, then we politely ask and expect that you remain in the locker room until the song is over. It will appear far less obvious if you are simply joining your team just before they take the field, than if you are sitting on the ground with your legs crossed (or holding some other unique posture) while all your teammates are standing. It will be much less distractive to both your teammates and the audience, and we can keep everybody's attention on the main reason why we are all assembled here.

If anybody does ask you why you came out of the locker room after the anthem, then you can always claim that you were stretching because you don't handle well standing with your knees locked for several minutes just before the game, which may be true for lots of people. Maybe you could persuade your doctor to advise you to do so, then you could state truthfully that you are doing it on doctor's advice.

If you are in a special pre-game formation because it's the All-Star Game or the World Series or something, then we need to make an exception. We don't want to have to announce your name and then point out to everybody that you're still in the locker room. You need to be out there to accept your introduction and greet the fans who are cheering for you. After you do that, though, we still don't want you doing anything during the anthem but standing politely and non-disruptively with your fellow competitors, because again it would be too much of a distraction to everyone,

including your own team, which is trying to focus on playing and winning the upcoming game. If you are still unwilling to stand politely for the anthem even under those conditions, then we guess that we must make sure not to select you for the starting lineups.

For spectators, again we can be a little less stringent, because in most cases you will not be observed by the TV cameras, or by the athletes, or by the vast majority of the crowd. Also, it is not always as convenient for you to be off in a closed room until the anthem is over, because all nearby public rooms may be filled at the time, and because even when you are in a public room you may not be able to hear when the anthem concludes and it is safe to come out.

However, if you are in the stands then you will still be in the view of your fellow fans seated on either side of you, and within a few rows behind. It is true that they have not paid anything to you, so you do not owe anything to them. Nevertheless, we all do still have the same objective of a happy and peaceful and harmonious society (don't we??), and you can serve that objective by standing politely with your fellow citizens during the community anthem, and you can work against that objective if you make a lot of noises or movements while the anthem is being played.

If you merely sit silently during the anthem, then you are not being disruptive, except to only those very few people who can see you sitting. They might still be upset that you are not standing with everybody else, but hopefully they will understand your response if our Nation happens to be conspicuously observing some particular policy of Evil at the time, including especially if we are engaged without global approval in military deployment within the borders of another Nation which never directly attacked us.

When our Nation finally begins to observe all the policies of Good which are outlined in this document, then we hope and expect that there will be no need or motivation on anyone's part to sit while the anthem is being played. If you still do so anyway, then you can expect someone nearby to ask you why you are still refusing to stand for the anthem even when everything in our Community is doing so well, and you had better have a good answer.

Question 633.5

What penalties (if any) should accrue for failing to observe anthem-related protocols?

Again, any remedies should be different for athletes and spectators, because the expectations are different, as are the opportunities for keeping one's current political feelings private while the anthem is playing.

As noted in Answer 633.3, athletes who insist on publicly kneeling during the anthem are presenting a disruption to their own team, which could negatively affect the team's performance during the upcoming game. The team therefore has every right to suspend any of their players who refuse to observe team policies, or take any other job actions (including salary reduction or termination of employment) which might be indicated for employees who refuse to follow the lawful instructions of their employers.

Spectators are a bit more difficult to manage, because we do not have the same power over them as an employer has over an employee. To the contrary, they are the ones who are paying us for the privilege of watching in person the athletic contests which we stage, so we may not be so eager to alienate them by interfering with their experience of attending our event. And, while we can eject any spectator who continues to be disruptive during the game, especially if they ever reach into the field of play while the game is in progress (we really hate that!!), yet any disruption which a fan might present during the community anthem is only momentary and usually localized, and he may be completely placid and civil the whole rest of the time. Do we then throw him out of the stadium for a mere moment of disruption before the game even starts?

We imagine as of Session 275 that this should be up to the individual venues to decide for themselves. If you're the Miami Marlins, for example, then you are going to be eager for every single ticket sale which you can make, and you are going to be heavily disinclined to throw out a paying customer who might otherwise have been willing to buy another ticket someday. Conversely, if you are the Boston Red Sox and you are selling out virtually every night, then you will not be so bothered by throwing out any disruptive fan at any time for any reason, because you know that there are many other decent fans who are willing and eager to take his place.

Any team which is willing to eject a fan for active disruption during the anthem probably should make that policy very clear in its announced 'code of conduct', or else a fan might claim while being ejected (or afterward at a press conference or in a court of law) that he didn't know about the policy at the time of the alleged offense. However, any such policy should allow fans the option of passively protesting by remaining seated and silent while the anthem is being played, although we do not need to implicitly encourage such behavior by openly announcing that element of the policy before each game.

Question 633.6

If we perform a 'national anthem' before any of our amateur or professional Sports contests, then what should it be?

We have some problems with continuing to use 'The Star-Spangled Banner' for our National Anthem, and we are respectfully recommending that we change it.

As of Session 275, the biggest problem that we see with 'The Star-Spangled Banner' as a National Anthem is the emphasis on Bombs and Rockets within the lyrics. Any community anthem should emphasize and summarize the key positive attributes of your homeland and/or your people, but in 'The Star-Spangled Banner' we spend the whole time talking about a military battle, and one from over two centuries ago at that. It was a great battle, and a great story, and a great song to tell the story, and it certainly should continue to have a place of honor in our national heritage. But, should that story be retold continually as the entire focus of our National Anthem?

We claim not. When we perform the American Anthem in front of our own people, we don't want them continually associating America with only Bombs and Rockets. When we perform the American Anthem in front of foreign athletes and dignitaries and journalists and fans, we also don't want them continually associating America with only Bombs and Rockets. They hate us enough as it is, and this may be one of the reasons why, that we emphasize and glorify our military so much, and that we

have been so quick and eager over the years to deploy our military inside other national borders around the World without the approval of the global community. We currently even sing about our military in our National Anthem, something which very few other Nations do, and that fact does little to promote a perception of Peace, either among other national powers or even among our own people.

We also probably should not be focusing so much forever in our National Anthem on any one single event -- whether military or not -- which occurred more than two centuries earlier. Our country is bigger than that, and our history is bigger than that. Instead of 'living in the past', maybe we should be focused more on who we are now as a People, and what we are now as a Nation.

Secondary problem with using 'The Star-Spangled Banner' as a National Anthem is that it does not mention the name of the Nation at all. That's like making a commercial which does not identify the product which you are trying to sell. Even if for some reason you are still eager to sing about bombs and rockets, then we should at least make it clear that they were American bombs and rockets.

Third problem with using 'The Star-Spangled Banner' as a National Anthem is that musically it is very stretchy, covering the range of a twelfth (over an octave-and-a-half), which is more than many ordinary folks (and even some professional singers) can reach comfortably. Any anthem which you expect your entire community to sing should be in a range which is comfortable for them.

The song 'God Bless America' is sometimes used these days as a substitute anthem, or as a supplemental song for the Seventh-Inning Stretch, so we should at least consider it as a possible permanent replacement for 'The Star-Spangled Banner', but we have a few problems with it as well, and we are not recommending it.

Lyrically, 'God Bless America' does successfully identify the subject Nation, and it does highlight the physical attributes of our Nation without explicitly referring to military conflict even one time, so that's good. However, it does place a very large emphasis on the Deity, even in the title, which is fine for those who believe, but not so fine for those who do not. A community anthem of any kind should represent the entire community, not just those individuals who hold certain religious beliefs.

Musically, 'God Bless America' is not very 'anthem-like' in our group's opinion. The opening phrase goes down, and it prominently features a subtonic note (the 'ti' of the do-re-mi scale), which tends to create tension and stress more than happiness and joy. Maybe we can do better.

We have always admired the Canadian Anthem, as an example of the positive attributes which the current American Anthem lacks. (We in America may like to think of ourselves as 'leaders', and may like the idea of always being 'right' and setting the 'right' example, but sometimes we would be wiser to observe and follow the good examples set by others.) The opening notes of median-dominant-tonic (or '3-5-1' or 'mi-sol-do') are all within the key chord, and the remaining structure of the song is also very 'anthem-like'. The vocal range required is only a single octave. In the current English-language version (not in the French), the name of the Nation is mentioned at the beginning of the song, and again in the middle, and again at the end. Also, the lyrics in English celebrate the land and the people's love for it, but do not mention imperial conquest or any other Bad Thing, pledging only to "stand on guard" in the unlikely event that Canada is ever attacked. More anthems like that.

There is that song called 'America' which opens with the lyric "My country, 'tis of thee", but that gets a penalty point right off for a clumsy grammatical construction in its opening line. (Where and when do we ever say "tis of thee" at any other time? What does the phrase even mean?) The melody also contains a subtonic note in its opening phrase. Biggest problem is that it was written to the melody of 'God Save the King/Queen', which has long been used as the British Anthem. It's a good song to include in our national heritage, to be performed on certain other patriotic occasions, but as a National Anthem before sports contests it is not a very good candidate in light of our political severance from the British Empire in the 1700's.

The best candidate for an American anthem in our current awareness is 'O Beautiful', otherwise known as 'America the Beautiful'. The first three notes are in the key chord. Melody covers the range of a ninth, only a little more than an octave, and includes all the notes within the lower end of the diatonic scale. The lyrics mention the name of the Nation (twice at the climax of the verse, following a stirring rise in the melody), and emphasize our large and diverse landscape. They make no mention of any military engagements, but instead reference Good and Brotherhood. (We might need to tweak the last expression somehow for increased inclusivity, but the grammatically-neutral 'Siblinghood' doesn't sing as well in that particular phrase, so we may need another substitute.) There is a reference to God at the end, but at least it does not permeate the entire verse.

There may be another song out there now which would serve as an even better American Anthem, or maybe it still needs to be written, so either way maybe we change again someday. For the present, however, we are recommending 'America the Beautiful' to replace 'The Star-Spangled Banner' as our National Anthem.

Subsection III-E-1: Contracts and Free Agency

Question 634

What provisions (if any) do we want to have in place for athletic contracts?

Standard provisions of contract law should apply. All parties must adhere at all times to all stated elements of the contract, or else they may be required to pay damages to the other parties in compensation for having violated the agreement.

One special provision which could apply to athletes is that they should receive a modest-but-decent compensation even if the team is losing, or if the athlete is putting in sincere effort but still generating inferior statistics, but that bonuses may apply for exceptional individual performance or exceptional team results or both.

Another athlete-related provision which we would like to see changed is this whole idea of guaranteeing a sizable long-term salary to a player who ends up performing very poorly in later years or doesn't play at all. Teams are wasting money by having to subsidize non-performers, so they are less able to afford the good athletes whom the fans want to see, and so they sometimes need to trade off popular players who are performing well, as the Dodgers sadly did with Matt Kemp and Yasiel Puig in December 2018. We understand the athletes' desires for hefty multi-year contracts to provide financial security for themselves and their families, and we will not begrudge them enough of a minimum salary to ensure 'financial independence' once they have managed to reach the top levels of performance, but those 10-year \$300-million contracts are just too much, especially in the Sports industry with all its

sudden injuries and gradual deteriorations. If we must endure multi-year contracts in the Sports market, then they should allow compensation to go way down during those years when the athlete is performing poorly or not playing at all.

Final point to raise as of Session 275 was about the fact that numerous individuals become physically eligible for professional athletics while they are still below chronological Age 18, which some civil jurisdictions have long considered to be the minimum age for being legally able to execute a valid contract. For this, as with several other similar activities discussed in Answer 580, we are again recommending that chronological age should not be used as a cutoff to decide whether or not the subject is eligible to do the thing in question. Some people will be ready to do the thing at a younger chronological age, while others will not be ready to do it until much later, if ever at all. The much more important criterion is Education. Primary-school graduates who have learned only the basics of social existence should not be expected to know enough to participate in the formation of valid contracts, certainly not at the monetary levels which we have recently seen for professional athletes. Secondary-school graduates can satisfy this expectation, though, provided that we include standard lessons in Contract Law, the Mathematics of long-term financial transactions, and other elements of the business side of Athletics.

Question 635

Is it good to have a salary cap for each team within a given league?

Yes, as of Session 275 we generally prefer for there to be a salary cap which is high enough to allow bigger spenders to gain a competitive edge, but low enough so that the biggest markets like New York and Los Angeles don't always generate the same championship teams over and over.

We also like that a team may go over the salary cap if they pay a 'luxury tax', which maybe can go to the players or the other teams, or to the national government (not recommended, both because it tends to 'nationalize' the Athletics industry, and also because even the big salaries earned by today's athletes wouldn't make a big dent in our current National Debt), but preferably to a recognized charitable foundation.

Our 'black book' of preliminary ideas had suggested No to salary caps, on the grounds that any artificial limitation on either wages or prices tends to 'skew' the economy and misallocate our resources. In this instance, however, the cap would affect only a few hundred athletes at any one time, so the economic effect of an arbitrary limitation probably would not be as impactful as the social benefit of having more than 2-3 Cities being able to compete realistically for each year's title.

Subsection III-E-2: Drafting

Question 636

Do we want to continue to allow professional teams to somehow take turns designating which collegiate/amateur athletes they will consider for hiring, or shall we allow the young players to make their own choices about where they will try out?

As with the Salary Cap discussed in Answer 635, we were tempted in Session 275 to go with the 'libertarian' approach of allowing each athlete to try out for any desired

team, same as any student can decide whether to apply to one college or a hundred, and any worker can decide whether to apply to one prospective employer or a hundred.

Also as with the Salary Cap, however, we apparently need to make an exception to our standard approach. We are talking about only 2-3 dozen teams per Sport, and only a few hundred athletes in the labor pool, so the normal laws of free-market economics may not completely apply. Large market shares are being commanded by small cartels of teams acting as oligarchies over their industries, so a level of regulation may be in order beyond what we normally recommend for a free market.

Specifically, we worry that most or all of the newest talent will gravitate toward the teams with the most recent championships or the largest media exposures or both. With their choice of the best players coming to their tryouts, they would maintain the biggest and longest dynasties. While we don't begrudge an organization to create a dynasty if it can (because those are sometimes fun to watch, too), yet it can get pretty boring for a fan after a while if the Yankees always win and the Padres never get a chance. Both the bigger and the smaller markets should have access to adequate shares of the talent pool from which they can select their starting rosters.

On the other hand, some players may reason that they have a better chance at making the starting lineup if they try out for a team which has less competition. In addition, we would hope that at least some prospects would still apply first to their local teams out of love and loyalty, instead of simply shopping themselves out mercenarily to the highest bidder, so that local teams can have more local character. With the combination of these factors, we still might get sufficient team coverage without any regulation.

On the first hand, though, the Athletics industry is different from most ordinary businesses, in that prospective employees cannot easily apply to multiple companies at once. They usually need to 'try out' for only one team at a time, and the process often takes several days or even weeks. A medium-grade player might try out for the Yankees and not quite make the cut, but in the process of trying out for them they blew the chance to try out for the Orioles, where they probably could have made the starting lineup trivially, but now they've held their own tryouts and filled their own roster and so the opportunity is lost. Those good players therefore need to wander around jobless until the agents and the front offices can figure something out, if they ever do. In order for us fans to get the best entertainment product by having the best players appearing in our games, it makes sense from a simple efficiency standpoint that we institute enough regulation into the selection process to make sure that the best players are definitely selected for consideration first.

A draft also helps with the quality of selection. A young boy from Pittsburgh area may always have wanted to play for the Pirates, but maybe he plays outfield and the Pirates already have all the outfielders that they need for a generation, so he probably would be a better fit with another team which has more need for his particular talent. That's where a draft comes in, because the young prospects are not always in a good position to know which resources the different teams need most at any particular time, but the organizations themselves do, and so they can select not only for general talent but also for specific compatibility with their particular organizations. More compatible fits are better for the players, and better for the teams, and better for the fans, so that seems to be the net-best way to go.

Question 637

Do we like the system used often in recent years, whereby the lower-ranking teams in the previous season get the top draft picks?

We do not like it as of Session 275, for it provides teams with an incentive to lose games toward the end of the regular season, once they learn that they have been eliminated from playoff contention and therefore feel that they have nothing to lose by losing. This hurts us fans, though. We want to see a competitive game every day, regardless of whom you are playing or what time of year it is or where you currently sit in the standings. You therefore should always have some motivation to try to win each game, or else there is little or no point in staging the game at all.

One possible alternative (suggested in our 'black book' of preliminary ideas) to help the goal of improving parity is to have a lottery in which all teams have equal chances of gaining preferential picks. It is better than the first choice, but it still leaves us with another problem. While eliminated teams have less motivation to play competitively in the current environment, the same goes for teams which have already clinched their division titles, because now they are trying to keep their starters rested and uninjured for the upcoming playoffs. That also takes away from our regular-season experience as fans. Every game should be interesting. Every game should mean something. Every game should matter. Otherwise, there is little or no reason for you to play the game or for us to bother watching it.

We solve both these problems with a single solution. (We love when that happens!!) We do have a lottery-type selection, where we draw balls out of the tub to see who selects next, but we do not have any equal number of balls per team. Instead, the number of balls for each team is equal to the number of times that they won during the preceding regular season. The more games you win, the more balls you have in the tub, and so the greater your chances are of receiving favorable picks.

That way, the teams which lost during the regular season will still have some opportunity to come up early in the lottery and get a head-start on rebuilding, but they don't get a huge chance because they haven't earned a huge chance. Best part is, all teams have an incentive to win every single game, regardless of how many or how few games they have won up to that point.

It would be possible to add more balls to the tub for successful performance in the playoffs, but we recommend against it. For one thing, that could give too much preference in draft selection to teams which have already done well during the regular season and have therefore already earned a larger number of balls in the lottery tub. For another thing, it would give too much weight to playoff games, which after a long and injurious regular season can sometimes be misleading in terms of who was actually the better team that year. We instead want to place maximum emphasis on the regular season, which was always the main reason why we came together in the first place. Playoffs were an afterthought, you know, and certainly are a fun exercise to watch every year (up to a point, anyway), but the much larger sampling of regular-season games might be a much more reliable indicator of who was really the best team each year.

As an example of what the balls in the lottery tub might ideally look like, we are envisioning that each of the 30 teams in Major League Baseball as of Session 275 might have a ball design with a different color on each half, each team having a

unique color combination which at least partly resembles their own team colors and/or team name. Might make it fun for fans to watch the draft process on TV if they can follow the dancing colors of each ball as it rolls out of the tub, announcing visually who has won the next pick. Specifically, we envision the following color combinations for the 30 teams, but of course there is plenty of room for variation:

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Black/Blue = Tampa Bay Rays | Blue/Orange = Miami Marlins | Brown/Yellow = San Diego Padres |
| Black/Brown = Atlanta Braves | Blue/Purple = Kansas City Royals | Green/Red = Philadelphia Phillies |
| Black/Green = Detroit Tigers | Blue/Red = Los Angeles Dodgers | Green/Yellow = Oakland Athletics |
| Black/Orange = S.F. Giants | Blue/White = Toronto Blue Jays | Orange/Purple = New York Mets |
| Black/Purple = Wash. Nationals | Blue/Yellow = Milwaukee Brewers | Orange/Red = Houston Astros |
| Black/Red = Boston Red Sox | Brown/Green = Texas Rangers | Purple/Red = Minnesota Twins |
| Black/White = New York Yankees | Brown/Orange = Balt. Orioles | Purple/White = Colorado Rockies |
| Black/Yellow = Pittsburgh Pirates | Brown/Purple = Cleveland Indians | Red/White = Cincinnati Reds |
| Blue/Brown = Chicago Cubs | Brown/Red = Ariz. Diamondbacks | Red/Yellow = St. Louis Cardinals |
| Blue/Green = Seattle Mariners | Brown/White = Chic. White Sox | White/Yellow = Los Angeles Angels |

But, what if we're the Cleveland Browns, and we manage to lose every single game of our regular season? Do we then forfeit the right to collect any draft picks at all? Not necessarily. This is where you have some room for flexibility, so each Sport's officials can decide which variation is better for them. For a game like Football with relatively few games in its regular season, you probably still want to allow each team one draft pick per round, so only one ball would be drawn for each team in each round, meaning that you are using the previous winning record only to determine the odds of getting early picks within each round, in which case a team which went winless will always pick last, but they will still get picks. Conversely, for a game like Baseball with many games in its regular season, it is far less likely that any team will go completely winless, so it makes more sense to have basically one round of draft picks, and go through the entire tub (which would contain 2,430 lottery balls total in the case of Baseball, with its current 30 teams playing 162 games each) until you run out of prospects to draft. Either way, we are still giving more incentive to both winning teams and losing teams to try their best to win during the entire regular season, so we fans always have reason to remain engaged and entertained, and the owners therefore get to collect more stadium revenue, so everybody's happy.

Subsection III-E-3: League and Playoff Structure

Question 637.6

Are we happy with the number of teams in the several top-level professional leagues?

Back when we originally introduced this Question into our Outline nearly 20 years before we took it up in Session 275, our note for our 'black book' of preliminary ideas alleged that we had too many teams, on the grounds that the talent had become too diluted to maintain our attention. Since that time, though, we had happily begun to recruit more from other areas of the World, and we were reaching more communities all the time. We had seen a tremendous upsurge of talent levels among top-level teams in recent years, and it wouldn't have either surprised or upset us if at some point we ended up needing even more league expansions than we had seen already.

In addition, it was becoming increasingly likely that Women would be accepted into at least some of the professional leagues which then comprised only Men. For this point, we added a new Question during Session 275 to make sure that we had the general topic covered somewhere in our Outline, *viz.*:

Question 633.8

Should we be excluding any sufficiently-gifted athlete from being hired to play on a professional sports team on the grounds of belonging to some particular subset of the population?

This may seem like a silly Question now, but it was not that long before Session 275 that persons of African descent were being disallowed from playing Baseball or any other sport at the major-league level. (The excellent film *42* tells all about it.) Further, it had been only recently that we had opened up the major-league ranks to athletes from certain other parts of the World, so this Question is non-trivial.

We vigorously support the broad inclusion of athletes from all national and ethnic descents within our professional sports teams, and their advancement among competition levels according only to their individual athletic talents. Anybody who is good enough to play at the major-league level should be allowed to do so, and all others should be allowed to advance as far up the ranks as they athletically can.

This is also particularly true of Women, who as of the Third Pass had not yet had even one athlete enrolled in any of the top-level professional leagues currently dominated by Men. We understand that some teams may prefer to include only those athletes who can use the same locker and shower facilities, because otherwise it might seem like two 'squads' instead of a single team, but maybe for that problem the solution is simply to go ahead and use the same lockers and showers, and not make a big issue out of it. (Theatrical performers of multiple genders need to change clothes in front of each other backstage all the time, and it is not an issue if we do not choose to make it so.) Maybe there are certain other dynamics which certain male athletes like to share with one another, and which they would be uncomfortable doing in front of female teammates, but if so then those are their issues which they need to sort out themselves. We do not want to lower our athletic standards or change our rules of play in order to accommodate female athletes, but any woman who wants to play our game according to our rules -- and who possesses the physical talent to do so competitively -- should not be excluded simply on the basis of Gender.

Same goes for any variety of Trans-Gender, provided that your hormones or other ingestions do not involve anything which could validly be considered as a 'performance-enhancing drug', because as will be addressed in Q643.2 we generally prefer for our Sports to be played without any such artificial gamechangers.

Two main points are important for this overall discussion:

First, we should not deny for irrelevant reasons the opportunity of professional advancement to any individual who has earned it through some combination of talent and training and experience, because that constitutes Discrimination, which is a serious Social Evil. That's specifically in the Athletics industry, and also in Business and Education and Politics and everywhere else. We don't want any individuals to be treated unfairly in any way, because that is an abuse of power on the part of those who are currently in a position to wield it, and because that kind of culture may result in our individually being treated unfairly someday. Maintaining a Culture of Fairness would be good for other people, and it would also be good for ourselves.

Second, it would be dumb for us as a society to deny ourselves the efforts of qualified professional people simply because they belong to some particular segment of society and not some other particular segment. (The excellent film *Hidden Figures* illustrates this point very powerfully.) As a simple matter of being practical, we generally want those people working for us who are going to do the best job for us. Specifically in the case of Athletics, we fans have a better experience when the Best Players Play, not just those who happen to possess penises or white skin.

Therefore, no, no exclusions on the basis of populative segmentation.

Question 637.6 (continued)

Are we happy with the number of teams in the several top-level professional leagues?

As we noted in what we labeled at this time as our Answer 633.8, our group welcomes and applauds the introduction of Women into any of the previously all-Men sports leagues which they care to enter, on the condition that we do not lower our athletic standards or change our rules in the process. If you can play the same game at the same competitive levels, then by all means let's expand our talent pool even more, and grant even more people the opportunity to compete in our favorite games at the highest ranks. If this happens, then we may end up needing even more top-level teams than we might have envisioned otherwise.

Downside of continued expansion, though, is that it makes things much more complex and difficult to follow, especially during playoff time. On the other hand, the NCAA has maintained a 64-team playoff bracket for Basketball under the 'March Madness' brand for numerous years now, so we imagine that we could handle at least that many teams in our professional leagues. If the collective desire is great enough, then maybe we could have even more than that, but we probably want to keep the playoff population at a maximum of 64, so that we don't require our fans to learn any more math than they already know.

Question 638

Shall we permit/encourage a team to name itself after a given city if it is not playing there?

We were torn at the outset of this discussion in Session 275. City which physically hosts the team's home games must put up with the heaviest share of the logistical burden for putting the event on, including traffic control, security, noise abatement, and trash removal. Why should some nearby big city get all the glory of nominally hosting the team, when in fact we in the smaller city are doing all the actual work?

It is an important argument to consider, but yet there is an answer to this last question: It is because the team attracts more attention to itself with a big-city name than with a small-city name, and therefore can obtain higher revenue. For many happy years, the Lakers played their home games in the city of Inglewood, which is a great city, and which did a fine job hosting the team, but still in all let's face it, the 'Los Angeles Lakers' sounds a lot more romantic and spectacular than the 'Inglewood Lakers'. Similarly, the 'Dallas Cowboys' has much more of an epic historical flavor than the 'Arlington Cowboys' ever could. We want to be able to distinguish easily the top-level teams from the high-school teams using similar

nicknames, especially if we are network executives or corporate sponsors, so using the names of the larger nearby Cities tends to make the most sense for everyone.

One thing which we did agree on right off: We don't at all like the cumbersome construction of 'The Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim', not only because the element of 'The Los Angeles Angels' literally translates to 'The The Angels Angels', but more importantly because it makes it look as though the team is coming from two places at once. Pick a place and represent it. Don't be wishy-washy.

Speaking of representation, that actually is a point which turned out to help settle our main Question here. For, even though the stadium may be located within the smaller City with the unfamiliar name, yet most of their paying fans may be coming in from the nearby larger City. They are providing much of the revenue which keeps the team in operation, and which provides jobs to the stadium workers in the smaller City. They also are providing much of the stadium noise which helps motivate the home team to play hard and win. That other big City therefore does have a big stake in the team, and gets to feel 'represented' by them, at least when they do well.

It therefore should be considered grammatically acceptable and philosophically okay and economically sensible for a top-level professional team to name itself for the nearest large City, even if their home stadium is located within a smaller neighbor.

However, the large City in question should have some say in the matter. No private organization of any kind should get to claim that they represent a certain City without that City's consent. In order to avoid any pesky and resource-consuming litigation, those sorts of agreements probably should be made in advance by lease, rather than attempting it on your own until the other City legally objects.

But, if we're doing it that way, then why can't the Angels include both Cities in their name? After all, we have just argued that both Cities have a stake in the team. Well, we still don't like the cumbersome construction, containing way more syllables than we really need. Also, we still don't like how it sounds as though they are from two places at once, which (especially with that possessive 'of' phrasing) is not the same thing as two Cities having stakes in the team.

The idea of using the larger City in your team name is that many of your attending fans come from there, but many also would be coming from other Cities around the area, such that the large City which appears in your team name actually covers the entire geographic area in an unofficial sense, including the City where the stadium is located (Anaheim in the case of the Angels). That being the case, you shouldn't feel too bad about using the large neighboring City in your team name without referencing the smaller City where your stadium exists.

Even if you do feel like using such a long team name for some strange reason, you shouldn't get to take the rest of us with you. We shouldn't have to speak all those extra syllables all the time, nor make all that extra space in our newspapers and TV screens and websites and other media.

Besides, in trying to look 'different' or 'stylish' or 'hip' or 'hep' or some other thing, you are just coming off looking silly. Expressionism is one thing, and we are the last ones to encourage conformity for the sake of it, but we have a good thing going here, where a team represents one community and carries for quick reference a unique and characteristic nickname. Specifying a second City in the team name

seems unnecessarily complicated, and may constitute solving a problem which doesn't really exist. We recommend against doing it or even allowing it.

Question 434 (continued)

How shall we deal with the fact that industry is currently using up a tremendous amount of physical resources, such as steel and timber?

Added in Session 276 (December 2018): We can also help by limiting the size of our personal vehicles. Ever since the 1990's, we have seen large numbers of Americans driving around in big trucks and vans and SUV's who clearly were not immediately using them for anything other than local personal transportation. Maybe they do so at other times when we don't see, but we also observe that a lot of those drivers are very small and slender, not the type which we would normally associate with hauling around large amounts of freight or heavy equipment or anything like that. Maybe the same vehicles are used at other times by bigger and stronger people who are doing all the heavy lifting, but still we have to wonder: Do at least some of these individuals own vehicles which are significantly larger than they really need to be?

If so, then this is causing problems on a number of levels. First, in direct response to Question 434 here, we are using up our physical resources (especially Steel and Petroleum) more quickly than we need to be, which could be both an economic and an environmental problem down the road (and maybe not too far down the road), if supplies get scarcer and harder to replace, and if everybody's prices go up as a result. Second, the unnecessarily-large sizes present visual hazards to other drivers, who cannot see around you to learn what is happening on the other side of you, whereas they could normally see through the windows of a regularly-sized car. Third, the larger cars decrease the distance from other cars, both on the highway and in the parking lot, increasing the risk of driving accidents and exasperating an already-pernicious parking problem in our populous cities. Fourth, larger cars generate increased fuel emissions which cause greater damage to our atmosphere. Fifth, driving an unnecessarily-large vehicle sends a message to other Americans that it's okay to squander all our resources and use up all available space, and a message to the rest of the World that Americans don't give a crap about either environmental control or resource management, which is a really bad look for us if we have any remaining eagerness to 'lead' the rest of the World in any political or economic or military sense, and any remaining hope of ever doing so again.

Solving these problems will require a team effort. All individuals and families in America (and everywhere else, really) are urgently requested and encouraged to reassess their personal transportation needs, and where practical select smaller vehicles going forward. Lead the fashion. Define the trend. Stand up against Evil. Be comfortable, even stylish if you can manage it, but don't be needlessly Obese.

In addition, insurance companies who are not already doing so should feel free to track their claims experience in terms of the size of the vehicles involved in each loss, and accordingly to assess higher premium rates for larger and riskier vehicles. Also, any State Transportation Department not already doing so should actively consider setting higher registration rates on vehicles which consume more of our planetary resources, and which increase the risk of accidents on our public streets and highways, and which exacerbate the pre-existing public stress in trying to squeeze safely into and out of parking spaces.

Question 638.3

How do we feel about the recent trend to move teams around?

It was easy in Session 276 to have mixed feelings on this matter. We must applaud the Westward movement of teams like the Dodgers and Giants as the markets grew in population and economic power. Besides, could we possibly have had that historic 'Showtime' team of the 1980's, with all its speed and dazzle and style, if it was still the Minneapolis Lakers instead of the Los Angeles Lakers? We doubt it.

We also understand if a particular team owner is not getting the desired level of civic support from the local community, and can get a 'bigger and better deal' elsewhere.

On the other hand, we have seen the Raiders move elsewhere and then move back. We have seen the Rams move elsewhere and then move back. Then there are the cities like Baltimore which lose one team but acquire another in its place, indicating that maybe factors other than civic support were involved in the initial exolocation.

Thus, while some team movements seem to be net-better for the Sport, and sometimes even better for the Nation, yet we must wonder whether some of the movements are just frivolous or short-sighted or otherwise unnecessary.

Insofar as this may sometimes actually be the case, we have two lines of defense. City governments should be very careful and thoughtful when considering what lease term you will accept for any new team forming in your City, and especially for any existing team seeking to move into it. If you try to make the lease term too long, then you might blow the deal because the team may want the option to change its mind again sooner. If you try to make it too short, then you might blow the deal because the team wants a certain amount of stability in the new place, just not too much. Or, the team may like the short lease for more flexibility, but then you lose them a few years later after making a huge investment to support and promote the team's presence within your community. In any case, you should require some amount of severance payment if the team leaves the City at the end of the lease term, and a larger severance payment if they leave earlier for some 'extenuating circumstance' which may be allowed in the lease.

Basically, make future relocations difficult enough that they will be unlikely to happen before you have at least recovered your investments and generated some net income, but easy enough that they can still happen when they really want to.

Even if the various Cities can work things out to their mutual satisfaction, though, some team moves may yet be bad for the League, either because moving a team may change or even destroy that team's character (and with it the character of the entire League), or because fans and/or players will have less loyalty to a team which by moving shows an absence of loyalty to them, or because the new team location would be too close to an existing team.* [*It's technically outside the scope of the present Question, because the team wasn't moved geographically, but this same problem has occurred with the Houston Astros being reassigned from the National League to the American League. This left the AL with two teams in Texas, while the NL had none. Baseball fans in Texas should be able to root for both teams without conflict, until the rare occasions when they are both in the World Series together. Should have kept them in separate Leagues, and maybe we can yet make that re-happen.] The leadership of each League should therefore retain the authority to approve or deny any proposed team relocation. In order to mitigate frivolity, we are recommending that any such approval should require a 2/3 majority of the other League members.

Question 638.8

If a particular Sport comprises multiple top-level Leagues with different rules, with the League champions meeting in an overall title game/series, then to what extent (if any) shall inter-league play be permitted during the regular season?

As of Session 276, this applied only in the case of Baseball, because each of the other major American sports (Football, Basketball, Hockey) comprised a single top-level League in which all teams played by the same rules.

In the one specific case of Baseball, the one material difference between the two Leagues was the use or non-use of the 'Designated-Hitter Rule' ('DH Rule' or 'DH' for short), which was to be taken up directly in Question 644, so we deferred it till then.

If we can derive any guiding generality at this more fundamental stage (just in case it happens somewhere else someday), it would be only that each such situation would need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis. We might generally want and expect each League's champion to be able to play by either set of rules, such that they could easily switch off during a multi-game title series, or annually alternate rules in case of a single title game. However, this is not always so easy to do or expect in real life. In the specific example of Baseball, it is much easier for the National League (NL) players to observe the DH Rule than for the American League (AL) players to operate without it. For, none of the NL players is ever doing anything under the DH Rule which he does not do ordinarily, whereas operating without the DH would require some AL pitchers to bat and some DH's to field, which would make the game very different for them and could even increase the risk of injury.

Thus, if this sort of thing ever happens within any other Sport (which we are feverishly hoping that it does not), then each Sport will need to decide for itself whether they can simply switch rules during each annual title series (or alternate for each annual title game), or whether some other protocol needs to be observed.

For any such Sport, however, probably better not to allow inter-league play during the regular season, because it then becomes too much of a problem for teams to switch rules all the time. The idea of having different rules in the first place was that each League wanted to do things in its own preferred way, so it makes no sense to require each team to do things in two different ways during the regular season.

Question 639

If a particular League comprises two Conferences, with the Conference champions meeting in an overall title game/series, then to what extent shall inter-conference play be permitted during the regular season?

We felt as of Session 276 that such play should be allowed in reduced quantities, but not completely eliminated.

If the Conferences are arranged geographically (such as Western and Eastern), then you are trying to reduce your travel times, and you want to make sure that there is one team from each half of the Nation in the championship game/series. You serve both these objectives by reducing inter-conference play, because otherwise the intended travel savings would go away, and because winning more games within

your Conference makes you more of a 'representative' of that Conference during the championship game/series.

If the Conferences have little or nothing to do with geography (such as in the NFL), then it makes even less sense to have Conferences in the first place if all teams within the League play one another with approximately-equal frequencies, and the Conferences would have no distinct identity or character. They would act only as an artificial and arbitrary restriction on who plays whom during the playoff brackets.

Also, it often is more meaningful and interesting (and more illustrative of a team's true performing ability) to see teams compete during the playoffs who had few or no encounters during the regular season.

Besides, if teams from different Conferences play frequently during the regular season, then you don't really need a playoff in most cases, because you usually have enough information from the regular season to determine which teams were better than which other teams each year.

On the other hand, it can get too boring if teams within a Conference play only one another during the regular season, whereas occasionally seeing teams from the other Conference can be a novelty which can help ticket sales, provided (as suggested in Answer 638.8) that no team ever needs to change its rules as a result, because that spoils everything.

In order to balance these factors, we recommend a target default of 2/3 of games being played within your own Conference, and 1/3 against teams from outside. However, the inter-conference factor might need to be increased depending on League structure, if you are trying to provide approximately-equal coverage to teams in the other Conference. Question 639.3 will allow us to construct specific examples.

Question 640

Should only Division winners participate in the playoffs, or shall one or more 'wild cards' be admitted, or shall the top eight (or some other number of) teams in each Conference play, or what?

This is another one of those where multiple arguments supporting different approaches are available.

There are arguments in favor of allowing only the teams with the highest winning records to participate in any playoffs, including:

- (1) For either the all-season fans or the casual onlookers who can't make time to watch until the playoffs, you want to be sure that you are watching the best of the best, not a bunch of also-rans.
- (2) The team winning the championship should have demonstrated that they deserve the crown by having won more games during the regular season than anyone else with the same schedule. Conversely, if a lesser team wins, then it might be attributable largely to luck, thus subverting the meaning of the championship.
- (3) There is less incentive for a team to try to win during the regular season, or for their fans to cheer them on, once the team has already reached the playoffs, because they may want to rest their players, the prospect of home-field advantage being somewhat helpful, but not nearly enough.

(4) It makes winning the Division more meaningful if only the Division winner advances, not some given number of teams from the entire Conference. In fact, there is no reason to have Divisions at all, if you are simply picking the leaders of the entire Conference.

However, we also observed as of Session 276 that adding a one-game playoff in Baseball -- to determine which of the top two Division losers within each League will act as the 'wild card' during that League's playoff -- actually seems to have increased competitiveness during the end of the regular season, as more teams find themselves in playoff contention for longer periods.

On the other hand, as noted above, including more Division losers in the playoffs increases the chance that one of them will win the championship, which if it happens probably can be ascribed at least partly to luck (such as a key injury on the opposing team, or a sudden gust of October wind off of Lake Michigan), because otherwise we would have expected that team to have done better during the regular season.

One possibility which our group has considered, but at this point we are not thrilled about, but just to get it out there for a theoretical alternative: For a sport like Baseball or Basketball, where each team routinely plays several games per week and travels frequently, you could have several rounds of playoffs within each League or Conference or Division. The first round might be one game between the two worst teams, and then the winner has a 3-game playoff with the 3rd-worst team, and then the winner has a 5-game playoff with the 4th-worst team, and so on as needed.

Upside of this alternative is that it gets more teams involved, so they all have something to hope for, but still you are granting 'byes' in order to encourage continued competitiveness throughout the regular season.

Downside of this alternative is that it allows teams to get through further on the basis of luck, and thus diminishes the value of the regular season, which is generally intended to tell us which teams are generally better than which other teams each year. Also, those early rounds involve the worst teams, and one of the big draws of the playoffs is that we fans get to see the best ball played by the best teams.

Generally, increasing playoff rounds and representations can increase team competitiveness and fan excitement, but only up to a point, after which having too many rounds and participants can dilute the impact of the whole experience, as well as increase the risk of player injury through overexertion.

As with the other points discussed above, each Sport needs to find its own way here, except that we have a specific recommendation below for the NFL. Generally, though, we recommend that each League and each Conference and each Division should represent some combination of Rules and/or Geography and/or Longevity and/or League Origin and/or Cultural Tradition which makes it unique within its Sport, such that representing that group by winning the most games within it that year is a significant and meaningful accomplishment, and such that we are all eager to see the winners square off in some sort of playoff bracket. Allowing too many Division losers into the process can make it too lengthy and boring and injurious.

This means allowing only Division winners if the number of Divisions within your Sport is a power of two (2,4,8,16,32,64), such that you can organize your playoff bracket without using any 'byes' or 'wild cards'. If you have any other number of

Divisions in your Sport, then you will need to make some adjustments somewhere, but we generally recommend not allowing any more Division losers than are really needed in order to reach a power of two in your playoff population, except that again we are okay with the recent Baseball change to have a one-game playoff for the top two Division losers in each League.

Question 641

What incentive is there, then, for a team which is out of contention for the Division title to keep playing well, or for their fans to keep coming out to see them?

We already addressed this in Answer 637. If the simple Joy of Play is not enough, nor the normal competitiveness which might come out when one plays a game of any kind in front of any audience (or even without an audience), then we help things by allowing teams with higher winning records to obtain higher chances of gaining preferential picks during the next college/amateur draft.

Question 638.9

What is the optimum number of Conferences per League, and Divisions per Conference? For the limited purposes of this Question, Major League Baseball is treated as a 'League', and each of its Leagues is treated as a 'Conference'.

As discussed in Answer 637.6, this may need to change over time, as we continue to expand our recruitment efforts to other segments of the global population, such that we will be able to allow more teams without allowing our average talent level to become diluted. To help assess this factor quantitatively, each Sport might want to construct some statistic of overall annual performance of all positions combined, so that it can track over time whether having too many top-level teams has caused overall performance to decline.

Although we have not always managed it in history, it is generally good for each League to have the same number of teams in each of its Divisions, so that winning your Division has approximately the same meaning throughout your League, because winning a 4-team Division is usually much easier than winning a 5-team Division.

Generally good if the total number of Divisions in your League is a power of two (2,4,8,...), so that you can determine your playoff bracket without needing to use any 'byes' or 'wild cards'. If for some reason that cannot practically work out at a given particular time, then do what you can with three Divisions in your League or Conference, as Baseball and Basketball did as of Session 276.

Question 641.6

If a given League uses a 'wild card' in its playoff structure, then how many games should it take to determine the 'wild card'?

A note was handwritten into our 'black book' of preliminary ideas long before Session 276, that no extra games should ever be involved in determining the 'wild card' for given League or Conference, except in case of an otherwise-unbreakable tie in regular-season results. However, that note was added before we observed the

recent experience in Baseball of allowing a one-game playoff between two teams for the 'wild card' spot in each League. Even that one game with one additional team has successfully infused additional excitement and intensity of competition into the end of the regular season, and seems generally to have been good for the Sport. We again caution that adding too many rounds or games or teams will have the opposite effect, by reducing interest in the regular season because everyone will simply be waiting for the playoffs, and also will increase the risk of injury to players who are already exhausted from a long season. However, in the specific case of Baseball, the system of one 'wild card' game in each League has seemed to operate net-well.

Question 639.1

If a given Conference comprises two or more Divisions, then how much inter-divisional play should there be during the regular season?

Handwritten note in 'black book' ratified and expanded in Session 276, as follows:

There should be some, because they are all part of the same League, and under our definition of 'League' in Answer 638.8 all teams within the same League play one another some nonzero number of times during the regular season. However, the emphasis on inter-divisional play should be significantly less than on intra-divisional play, because winning more games within your own Division makes it more meaningful to have won your Division. It certainly helps to have won more games overall, but in order to be able to state truthfully that your team was better than all others in your Division that year, you really need to have demonstrated that assertion by having beaten each of those particular teams a significant majority of the time. Smaller samples give more unreliable results.

Question 639.2

How best to summarize and quantify these findings?

Noted in Session 276: If you have two separate Leagues, then they should never interact during the regular season. If you have two Conferences within a League, then you generally should aim for about 2/3 (or maybe a little more if needed) of the games being within your own Conference and 1/3 with the other. If you have three Divisions within a Conference or League, then you generally should aim for about 1/2 (or maybe a little more if needed) of the games being within your own Division, and 1/4 for each of the other two Divisions.

Question 639.3

How might we apply these standards to the four major American sports of Baseball, Football, Basketball, and Hockey, assuming current conditions?

The 'current conditions' which we assumed as of Session 276 were (1) the number of games in each League's regular season, (2) the Division structure of each League, and (3) the number of teams in each Division.

Major League Baseball (MLB) = 162 games = 2 Leagues, 3 Divisions per League, 5 Teams per Division

-- 84 games within own Division (21 against each of 4 other Teams)

- 39 games with each of 2 other Divisions (8 against each of 4 of the 5 Teams, plus 7 against the 5th, so one series in each park, preferably in separate halves of the season)
- 0 games with other League

National Football League (NFL) = 16 games = 1 League, 2 Conferences, 4 Divisions per Conference, 4 Teams per Division

- 12 games within own Conference
 - includes 6 within own Division (2 against each of 3 other Teams)
 - includes 2 with each of 3 other Divisions
- 4 games with other Conference (1 with each Division)

National Basketball Association (NBA) = 82 games = 1 League, 2 Conferences, 3 Divisions per Conference, 5 Teams per Division

- 55 games within own Conference
 - includes 28 within own Division (7 against each of 4 other Teams)
 - includes 27 with other Divisions (3-3-3-3-2 for 14 against the 5 Teams of one Division, and 3-3-3-2-2 for 13 against other Division)
- 27 games with other Conference (9 with each Division, including 2 against each of 4 of the 5 Teams, plus 1 against the 5th)

National Hockey League (NHL) = 82 games = 1 League, 2 Conferences, 2 Divisions per Conference, 8 Teams per Division (except that we were looking forward to the Central Division getting an 8th team someday)

- 50 games within own Conference
 - includes 35 within own Division (5 against each of 7 other Teams)
 - includes 15 with other Division (2 against each of 7 of the 8 Teams, plus 1 against the 8th)
- 32 games with other Conference (which is over 1/3, but it allows 2 against each of 16 other Teams)

Question 642

Shall we make any adjustments to when certain seasons begin or end, in order to make the year more balanced?

As of Session 276, we generally like a total of 6 months for a Sport's regular season plus playoffs, so that both the players and the fans can have an approximately-equal experience of the game being either 'in-season' or 'off-season'.

As a starting point for specifics, we like for Baseball to cover the traditional 6 months of April to October, partly because playing much earlier or later than that can increase the chance of weather-related cancellations and temperature-sourced injuries, and also because the historic title of 'Mr. October' should always be semantically relevant by always having the World Series happen entirely in October.

Football should end in January, partly because it is three months after Baseball ends, and partly because it ended in that month for many happy years before the recent extensions. This means that it should start in July, at least with preseason, because a 16-week regular season (or 17-week if you still insist on allowing each team a 'bye'

week, although maybe that causes more problems than it solves) can run from August to December, leaving ample time for both preseason and playoffs.

It would be nice if the other two big American sports of Basketball and Hockey also concluded their seasons in three-month intervals, so that we fans do not ever need to wait longer than that for our playoff experiences, but in recent years they both have been holding their playoffs in June. We would be happier with an adjustment.

Hockey is more winter-oriented, and it seems to make little sense to have people playing an ice sport during the same month that Summer starts, so we recommend concluding it by April, so start it around October.

Basketball should therefore be ending by July, not far from what it currently does, so begin it by January but not much before.

Basically, we are always gearing down one regular season and gearing up another one, and we fans nearly always have two major Sports which we can follow actively at any time of the year. Current arrangement does not always do that. Sometimes we have too little to track, sometimes we have too much, and sometimes we see athletes on TV playing some Sport which seems ridiculously out-of-place for that time of the year. Above proposal makes that all better.

To summarize, in Spring we see the end of Basketball and the start of Baseball, in Summer we see the end of Baseball and the start of Football, in Autumn we see the end of Football and the start of Hockey, and in Winter we see the end of Hockey and the start of Basketball. There will then be Order in the Universe.

Subsection III-E-4: Other multi-Sport issues

Question 643

To what extent shall we either allow/encourage or prohibit/discourage the use of artificial turf in Baseball or Football?

Artificial turf should be permitted only for fixed-dome stadiums, which themselves probably should be discouraged, except in communities which otherwise would get a lot of rainouts, and even then we wish that they would save up and install retractable roofs so that we could all have the benefits of natural grass.

The argument that artificial turf is better because it is smoother is invalid because a decent groundskeeper can keep grass very level. The argument that artificial turf is easier to maintain is invalid because those savings are outweighed by the extra time taken by physicians and trainers to mend the additional injuries which players suffer from running and falling on the harder surface.

Subsection III-E-5: Baseball

Question 644

Shall we allow/encourage or prohibit/discourage the 'designated hitter' (DH) rule?

We thought that you would never ask.

Some people clearly like it, because it allows pitchers to focus more on that job without also needing to worry about batting and running, and therefore hopefully do better at their core job, whereas big hitters like David 'Big Papi' Ortiz who maybe don't field so well at a given stage of their career can still have a chance to shine.

However, everyone who was present at our Session 276 hated and loathed and detested the DH Rule, because it takes us away from the Basic Model of the Game, where each player must participate on both Offense and Defense (same as Basketball), and must therefore be able to develop and demonstrate a variety of athletic skills and not be just a potentially-boring specialist.* [*Actually, there are multiple additional reasons to prefer the Basic Model, and the author could go on and on at considerable length regarding this subject, and maybe we can go into it more at another time in another forum. For now, however, the simple fact that there are broad preferences on both sides is enough for us to deal with.]

What are we going to do about this?

We have heard some journalists argue in favor of eliminating the DH Rule throughout Major League Baseball, and other journalists argue that it should be expanded for perpetual use in both Leagues. As with the Pledge of Allegiance (see Answer 591.5) and other topics discussed previously in this document, we upset a bunch of people if we do it all one way, and we upset a bunch of other people if we do it all the other way. Therefore best to reach a compromise solution which will get everybody to shut up about the issue already.

MLB has attempted this by generally allowing each of the two constituent Leagues to play its own preferred version of The Game, but it has been faltering in the specifics, so we need to make some adjustments.

Things were pretty much okay until they started staging 'inter-league' games during the regular season, a bit over 20 years prior to Session 276. It was one thing to expect all pitchers to bat and run during the World Series games played in National League parks, and in alternating All-Star Games. However, with extensive inter-league play during the regular season, it has become much more of a necessity that they learn how to do it right. But, the whole idea of having a DH in the first place was so that pitchers would never need to worry about batting and running.

Similarly, managers who are accustomed to structuring their lineups based on either the presence or the absence of a DH must occasionally do things differently during the regular season, such that they're basically playing two games instead of one.

It is not just the players and managers who need to adjust. We fans who have one preference or the other must sit through multiple regular-season games where our favorite teams must play under our unfavorable rules, or else (like the Moderator) we simply skip watching Baseball that day.

We solve this problem by getting rid of all regular-season inter-league games, which under Answer 639 should never be allowed anyway.

At this time, we added a retroactive definition of 'league' to our Answer 638.8 as follows:

Question 638.8 (continued)

If a particular Sport comprises multiple top-level Leagues with different rules, with the League champions meeting in an overall title game/series, then to what extent (if any) shall inter-league play be permitted during the regular season?

Added during Session 276, in context of Question 644: Besides, our most familiar definition of a 'League' is a group of teams who play one another at some particular Sport some nonzero number of times over the course of a season. If you are playing any regular-season games against teams who are technically not in your League, but if those games still count as official for the season standings, then in reality those other teams are part of your League, and so the names should be changed to reflect that reality. Or, better yet, just keep the teams within each League playing one another only, and just don't have any inter-league play except during the title game/series and the All-Star Game and probably also your preseason if desired.

Question 644 (continued)

Shall we allow/encourage or prohibit/discourage the 'designated hitter' rule?

As described in Answer 638.8 as amended, if you want to keep the Leagues separate in terms of which rules they play, then also keep them separate in terms of meeting each other during the regular season. Let each League's players and managers and fans have their own preferred experience, and let them never need to think or worry about the other version as long as the regular season is still blessedly with us.

But then, what do we do about inter-league play outside the regular season? What about Spring Training, the All-Star Game, and the World Series? Glad you asked.

As we mentioned in Answer 638.8, it is far more difficult for American League players to adapt to our rules than for National League players to adapt to theirs. We therefore should not require them to do so as a condition of playing any meaningful inter-league games at all. [We discuss Spring Training later on.] Thus, the National League should be prepared to play with the DH Rule during any meaningful inter-league game, regardless of which team (if any) is geographically hosting the contest.

But, doesn't that constitute a major disadvantage to the National League, because we always have to adapt and the other League never does? Perhaps, but that is the compromise which we offer, in exchange for everybody everywhere (and that includes you, Mr. Bill Ripken) agreeing never to suggest or propose again that the NL should ever observe the DH Rule for even one single game or one single moment of its regular season.

You guys play your game, and have fun with it, and select your League champion according to your preferred rules, and we will do the same. We will play your way during the All-Star Game and World Series, but otherwise please don't ever bug us.

Question 644.1

Should we allow umpires to be influenced by 'instant replay'?

Not exactly under those terms, because it is not really the umpires being influenced, but rather the officially-recognized outcome of a given controversial play being

decided. However, main point is that we do generally like the use of 'instant replay' to decide certain close calls which may have been decided incorrectly on the field. Present system seemed to be working pretty well as of Session 277 (January 2019), with a qualified umpire not on the field reviewing and deciding the play based on the high-resolution ultra-slo-mo video footage which we now have available.

Question 645

Shall we extend the 'infield fly' rule to include situations where there is only a runner on first?

Currently as of Session 277, the 'infield fly' rule applies only when either the bases are loaded or else there are runners on first and second. The idea is that we don't want an infielder to intentionally drop an easy fly ball in the hope of being able to initiate a 'double play' among the lead runners, who must stay close to their original bases in order to avoid being thrown out after the expected catch. In those situations, if the field umpires decide that a given fly ball is sufficiently easy for an infielder to catch normally, then the 'infield fly' rule allows them to declare that the batter is automatically out whether the infielder actually catches the ball or not. The runners on base may advance at their own risk, but they usually do not do so.

This rule is helpful as far as it goes, but we recommend that it be extended to situations where there is only a runner on first base. Reason is, even though a 'double play' probably is not happening (assuming that the batter is running reasonably hard toward first base while the ball is in the air), the infielder still might have a motivation in some instances to drop the ball intentionally, which simply looks ridiculous regardless of the situation.

For example, this might happen if you have a fast runner on base, and a slow runner at the plate. If you have your choice as a defender, you usually will prefer a slower runner to be on base rather than the faster one, because it is less likely that the other team will score any runs on you in that inning. You might therefore drop an 'infield fly' intentionally, and then throw out the faster runner at second for a 'force play', while the slower runner makes it to first base safely. One out is recorded either way, and either way you still end up with one runner on first base, but by dropping the ball intentionally (which really looks ridiculous) you have managed to switch from the faster runner to the slower one on the basis of a technicality.

The batter who is popping up into the infield is the one who deserves to be out, so simply call him out if there is any level of 'force' in play at the time (that is, while a runner is on first base, whether there are any other runners on base or not), and if the play looks sufficiently easy in the judgment of the field umpires.

Question 645.1

What can we do about fan interference?

Baseball is currently the only major American sport in which fans are allowed to sit close enough to the action to be in a position to influence it. Football has broad 'sidelines' for the players and staff, and no fan can get anywhere close to the field of play. Hockey has a big clear protective shield around the entire rink to separate the fans from the action. Basketball has some courtside seating which allows fans to touch players who have gone 'out of bounds', but under the rules of that game any

such players are ineligible to do anything official, and the ball is immediately and automatically dead once it touches anyone or anything outside the court, so as long as the fans stay off the actual court during play there usually is no chance of fan interference.

By contrast, there are multiple chances in Baseball for greedy jerks in the stands to unduly influence the game in progress. For one example, a fly ball can be caught in foul territory for an official out, but the foul territory often runs right up against the first row of fan seating, such that fans can reach to grab the ball while the fielder is trying to do the same thing. For another example, a ground ball which was fair as it left the infield is still 'in play' even if it afterward rolls into foul territory, and again fans currently can reach into the field of play to grab the 'live' ball before the fielder has a chance to get to it. Third and perhaps most importantly, a fan sitting near the outfield fence is able to touch a ball batted into the air before we have a chance to determine whether or not it has been hit sufficiently far to qualify as a 'home run'.

All these things happen often in real life, and it always sucks. We have tens of thousands of other fans who have paid to see an athletic contest between teams of professional players, and sometimes millions more watching on TV, and our experience is severely disrupted just because one isolated jerk of a fan decides that his lust for a souvenir ball outweighs everybody else's desire to see a fair game which is decided solely on the basis of what the athletes do. We do not agree with the jerk, and we therefore feel that his temptation needs to be removed.

We clearly cannot trust all fans to refrain from reaching into the field of play while the game is in progress, not even with advance announcements and the threat of ejection. We have tried for many years, but some people can't seem to stop themselves from crossing the plane to where they don't belong. Games and even entire seasons have been irreparably altered because some fans simply refuse to stay in their proper places when the ball comes anywhere near them.

Everyone present at Session 277 expressed deep anger and disgust at this condition, and we suggested a permanent solution: As much as we are philosophically opposed for several reasons to the idea of a Wall on any of our national borders, yet we must advocate in favor of bigger barriers between fans and athletes at the ballpark.

The barriers can take the form of netting (which we are happily seeing more of now, anyway, with increased awareness of the risks to fans from flying bats and balls), or else you can make sure that there is a sufficiently-wide aisleway in front of the first row, but one way or another make it physically impossible for a fan to interfere with any play in either fair or foul territory.

We understand that venues want to sell as many seats as they can, especially in the lucrative spots up front, and that they therefore might not be too eager to erect a non-paying aisle in front of the first row. We also understand that a permanent netting between the field and all the fans could eliminate the pre-game autographs and other fan interactions which for some folks can be an important part of the whole stadium experience.

To the first of these concerns, well hey we're sorry for the lost revenue, but it's not our fault; raise ticket prices to offset it if you must, and then together we can all blame those selfish and inconsiderate jerks in the stands for having made things worse for the rest of us; boo on you jerks, you should have thought more about the

bigger picture. To the second of these concerns, one possibility to consider is a retractable netting which can be kept lowered during the pre-game and raised after the home team has taken the field but before the first pitch. That last option seems 'net-best', if you will forgive the poor pun.

Question 645.2

What can we do about 'pace of play'?

Funny thing about that. We never used to have a problem with 'pace of play'. That didn't used to be a 'thing'. One of the best and biggest charms about Baseball was that it did not ever require any particular 'pace of play', there was no clock, no time pressure, both players and fans could take their time and enjoy the experience, especially on a gorgeous afternoon in an undomed stadium. Longer games meant more concessions sold, and we always were happy for the 'bonus baseball' of extra innings, so that we had an excuse to stay at the ballpark longer. Good times.

In more recent years, however, the game has gotten much slower, and not because we changed the number of outs per inning, nor the number of innings per game, nor anything else about our rules. Something else has been at work which has either increased actual game lengths, or at least made the game seem slower.

Major League Baseball has made various small tweaks to try to help things along, such as a clock for between innings, a clock for between pitches, and eliminating the four physical pitches which previously were required for issuing an intentional walk. However, as of Session 277, those measures have helped to only very small degrees, if they have helped at all. The bigger problem lay elsewhere.

We can sum up the main problem in two words: Pitching Changes

The one big thing that's different between recent Baseball and that of all previous years is that we are demanding our pitchers to be throwing harder and with greater movement than ever before. Part of that probably comes from our increased recruitment efforts in other Nations, as mentioned in Answer 637.6, resulting in heavier competition for the few available roster spots, and in the harder throwers being discovered who now have set a new standard in big-league pitching performance. It was not so long ago that throwing at 95mph was a rare gift, but now it is practically a minimum requirement. That is why we are seeing so many pitchers needing to be treated by 'Tommy John' and other surgical procedures.

It also means that pitchers are not able to last as many innings per game as their predecessors did. Complete games used to be commonplace, and now they are a rarity. This means that we need to see more pitchers per game than ever before.

This might not be such a bad thing if the process of changing pitchers were as quick and easy as the process of changing hitters, but it currently is not. The way that we currently do it, the Manager first needs to walk out to the pitcher's mound, and he seldom seems to be in much of a hurry, either through age or through disinterest or because he's trying to give the relief pitcher more of a chance to warm up. Once he finally reaches the mound, there often is a moment of conversation before the actual pitching change, again especially if they are stalling for warmup purposes. When the signal is finally given, the relief pitcher must make his way to the mound from the bullpen, which usually is situated beyond the outfield fence, making for a very long

walk. (The situation was helped some during previous decades by the cute little 'bullpen carts' which drove pitchers out to the mound, but they can have the problem of chewing up the field.) Finally, the relief pitcher is allowed 8 additional warmup pitches from the mound before play can resume.

This process often happens several times per game these days, and not just because we are trying to protect pitchers who upon our expectation are throwing faster and harder than ever before. We also have the issue that certain Teams and certain Managers like to 'play matchups', and allow a pitcher to face only 1 or 2 batters before getting replaced, simply because the following batter stands on the other side of the plate. This new tendency doubtless comes from our newer technologies providing us with more 'analytics' than ever before, motivating organizations to take some odd measures just to extract a few extra percentage points of probability.

We don't see any issue which slows down our 'pace of play' nearly as much as the increased number of Pitching Changes which we are now enduring. If you want to improve the 'pace of play', then that is where you should be looking.

Solving this problem requires doing one of two things, or maybe both: Either reduce the number of Pitching Changes to something closer to what we used to see, or else streamline the process of changing pitchers so that it does not take nearly as long.

Can we reduce the number of Pitching Changes? That might be tough. Now that several pitchers have learned to throw with their current speeds and movements, newcomers will naturally try to meet or exceed those standards, and fans will naturally expect all future generations to at least keep up. And, while Moderator if he were Manager would volunteer to change pitchers only between innings, in order to avoid this problem and also to make more efficient use of available resources, yet we apparently cannot successfully persuade certain Teams and certain Managers to do the same, no matter how many times we Tweet it to them. They continue to waste both time and roster positions for the short-sighted purpose of increasing by a few narrow percentage points the odds of getting this one next batter out.

One thing which you could theoretically try (but we are not pushing it) is to require any pitcher who is replaced in the middle of an inning to be placed on the Disabled List (DL) for some minimum period of time (probably 10 days, so that their absence in the bullpen will be keenly felt) before being allowed to play again. For, the reason that we call them 'relief pitchers' is because their purpose always was to provide 'relief' to the starting pitchers when they got too tired or sore to continue, such that any pitcher who is getting replaced after only one batter must have gotten injured in the process. On the other hand, we're not sure that it constitutes a proper use of the DL to place people on it forceably who are not really injured, and maybe a Manager really should continue to have the option to burn his players with extremely short appearances if he is convinced that it constitutes a net-efficient use of resources, and if he doesn't care at all about the extreme boredom which those many Pitching Changes cause for the fans, or about his fielders needing to stand around for several more minutes with locked knees.

Another thing which you theoretically could do is to reduce the roster size from its current 25, in order to motivate Managers to keep their players in the game for longer periods, but we are not recommending that approach either, because you sometimes need all those players in an extra-inning game, even when you have utilized them efficiently throughout.

Seemed to us as of Session 277 that the better approach here is to reduce the time required for Pitching Changes. We can do that in several ways.

First, do not require (or even allow) the Manager to walk out to the pitcher's mound prior to any Pitching Change. Merely announce the change and send the guy in, same as they routinely do with pinch-hitters.

Second, don't have the relief pitcher come in all the way from beyond the outfield fence, either with a cart or without. Have him instead come in from the dugout, which should have an interior area set aside nearby as the 'bullpen' for pitchers to warm up as needed until the time comes from them to get in the game.

Third, maybe we can eliminate those 8 additional warmup pitches. Seems to us, especially if the Manager is 'playing matchups' and therefore can anticipate when different pitchers will be getting into the game, that the relievers should be getting all the warmup pitches that they need in the bullpen (wherever it is), and so should be ready to go when the time comes to play.

But, what do we do about Teams who are not willing to undertake any (let alone all) of these measures? That would require a few rule changes. First, if a Manager or Pitching Coach or Catcher walks out to the mound (Trainer can be exempted) prior to any relief pitcher emerging, then no relief pitcher may come in until after the next at-bat has been completed. Second, require any relief pitcher to come in from the dugout instead of the bullpen, and treat him as having come into the game and immediately having been substituted out if he attempts to come in from anywhere other than the dugout. Third, no warmup pitches from the mound should be permitted, except in case of a legitimate injury-sourced substitution.

These measures will motivate teams to keep at least some of their relief pitchers loose at all times -- from within the clubhouse area -- whenever the defense is on the field, so that they can be ready to go at a moment's notice, and to require them to emerge from the dugout whenever the substitution is ordered by the Manager remaining inside. This will greatly improve the actual and perceived 'pace of play' even if the number of mid-inning pitcher substitutions remains the same. It hopefully will also motivate some Managers to make more of their substitutions between innings, so that the relief pitchers will have the between-innings time to warm up from the actual mound, improving the 'pace of play' even further.

Question 640 (continued)

Should only Division winners participate in the playoffs, or shall one or more 'wild cards' be admitted, or shall the top eight (or some other number of) teams in each Conference play, or what?

Based upon our recent findings, we are hereby asking the NFL to change its current playoff format. As of Session 278 (January 2019), they had 8 Divisions in their League, which is a power of two, so they do not really require any 'wild cards' at all. The two Division winners with the best and worst winning records within each Conference can meet in the first round, along with the two middle teams, ties to be broken first according to any regular-season results between the tied teams, and secondarily by some combination of other factors. As a default, we suggest using Total Points scored during the season as 2nd tie-break, and Total Net Yards (that's

Yards Gained minus Yards Allowed) as 3rd tie-break, but other possibilities are possible. Team with better record gets home-field advantage. First-round winners meet for the Conference championships, and the Conference winners meet for the League title.

Even though the NFL is in a position to use this simple and elegant playoff format, they still insist for some reason on introducing 'wild cards' into the structure. This not only increases the chances that an undeserving team will end up winning the title, but also increases the length of the playoff season unnecessarily. It's not so bad for Baseball, where a one-game 'wild card' playoff means only one day for the game and another day for travel, but an extra 'wild card' game in the NFL means adding a whole other week to the schedule. It now extends into February, which is contrary to the seasonal structure which we proposed above in Answer 642. It makes the whole experience too long and dull, such that a lot of us have lost interest in the preliminaries, and simply wait around for the Big Game. We therefore are recommending that the NFL should streamline and simplify its playoff structure, by including only the eight Division winners without using any 'wild card' teams at all.

Question 643.1

Do we have continuing problems with any particular Team names, logos, colors, or other similar attributes?

Yes, we have a few, as presented in the following sections for specific Teams, although some of these will result in recommendations of no change:

Anaheim Angels

We already discussed the franchise name in Answer 638, where we established that any Team should name itself after only one community, and that it's generally okay for a Team to name itself after a community which is near to where its home stadium is located, on the grounds that a large proportion of its paying fans and event staff presumably will come from there.

Now that we were looking at specific franchises more closely in Session 278, however, we felt that we should be a little more specific about the Angels. It might not bother us so much if they really want to name themselves after the nearby community of Los Angeles (even though -- as mentioned in Answer 638 -- the expression 'The Los Angeles Angels' literally translates to 'The The Angels Angels') if that other community were at least located within the same County as the home stadium. As it is, however, Anaheim is located in Orange County, whereas Los Angeles is in the adjacent Los Angeles County.

If you want to name yourself after a nearby community, for greater marquee value or whatever, then we politely suggest that maybe that other community should at least be within your home County. If it is not, then is it really "nearby"?

Although we loved the California Angels back in the 1970's, we must regretfully admit that this name was not really appropriate either. For, the same American League contained (and still does contain) another team from the State of California, namely the Oakland Athletics, so the Angels could not legitimately be said to be representing the entire State of California within the American League.

We might theoretically solve that problem by referring to them as the 'Southern California Angels', as we had the 'Southern California Sun' (coached by former Rams great Tom Fears) during the short existence of the World Football League. However, that name is very long and clumsy, and it is not recommended.

It might seem net-best to simply name the Angels after their hometown of Anaheim, but we realize that there still might be some folks out there who prefer keeping the L.A. connection in the name, and not just because of marquee value, but rather because the whole reason of calling them the 'Angels' in the first place is because L.A.'s name translates to 'The Angels'.

If the Angels franchise really wants to keep naming itself after Los Angeles, and if the fans are okay with it, and if at least 2/3 of the other owners in the American League (see Answer 638.3) are okay with it, and if the City of Los Angeles expresses its formal approval through an executed lease agreement, then we suppose that we can live with the whole 'The The Angels Angels' embarrassment, and even with the fact that their namesake community is in a different County. There certainly are far worse problems needing to be solved, as discussed elsewhere in this document. However, we hope that they would still consider tributing the City of Anaheim for its role in hosting the franchise, by naming themselves the 'Anaheim Angels', and thus satisfactorily address these other issues.

This brings us to another issue with the Angels franchise, though, and that is their Team Colors. They had a beautiful and handsome look back in the 1970's, but then at some later point somebody had what we consider to be a very odd idea, to dress the players and coaches in Devil Red. Why would a team calling itself the 'Angels' wear Devil Red? Whatever the reason, they still were doing it as of Session 278, and it was looking really ridiculous.

We can only speculate that the front office was eager for some reason to develop a new image for the team to distinguish it both from the 1970's team with Nolan Ryan and Rod Carew and Don Baylor and a host of other greats (why would they ever want to do that??), and from the Blue color sported so prominently by the Dodger franchise based in the neighboring County.

It's very difficult to maintain loyalty to a franchise which fails to exhibit loyalty even to itself. By wearing Devil Red all over the place, they're basically making a statement that they are not Angels at all, except maybe that they are Fallen Angels. We see this as a Social problem needing to be fixed, maybe not the most urgent in our list, but still needing to be covered if we are to claim having assembled the "Answers To Everything".

It would be totally fine with us if they went back to their 1970's design. If for any reason they still don't want to do that, then another possibility which we have considered for a while is for them to go with a Light Blue motif, because that color suggests the Sky, which is where we commonly associate Angels as hanging out most of the time, if they exist at all. It would also distinguish clearly from the Darker Blue used by the Dodgers. However, upon further reflection, we can envision how the team might not want to use that coloring, because maybe some people might then look upon them as 'Dodgers Lite', as if they were a minor-league affiliate of the L.A. organization instead of being a full-fledged MLB team in their own right.

We fix all these problems with a single solution. (We never get tired of that happening!) Forget both the Light Blue and the Devil Red. We can instead use the Yellow which is commonly associated with the Sun, which of course is seen so prominently in the same Sky where the Angels are presumed (by some) to float around while conducting their various Angelic duties. Yellow is used in combination with Green by the Oakland Athletics, and a darker Gold is used with Black by the Pittsburgh Pirates, but otherwise Yellow is woefully underrepresented among teams in the Major Leagues. OK for them to have Yellow jerseys for some of their games, and Yellow caps for all of their games. It will help to balance out the overall color scheme of Major League Baseball, it perfectly fits the imagery of Angels, and it is highly distinctive of the Dodger franchise so there will be little chance of mixup.

That is why we selected White and Yellow in Answer 637 as representing the Angels franchise on the balls in a proposed draft lottery. We also see while reading back that we used the expression 'Los Angeles Angels' in that chart, but only because it then was in official use (except that we of course dropped that whole clumsy 'of Anaheim' appendix), and because again we are seeing multiple arguments in favor of either City being selected as the one and only official hometown of the franchise.

Cleveland Indians

As many of our readers will be aware, the Cleveland Indians were recently moved to discontinue their 'Chief Wahoo' logo which was featured so iconically in the first two *Major League* films, because the perception had become too widespread (and we certainly will not dispute it here) that it projected a too racially-insensitive image.

However, the team had still been allowed to retain the 'Indians' nickname as of Session 278, and even though we love Tradition, and we especially love the first two *Major League* films, yet we must wonder whether it makes sense to abandon part of the image and leave the rest in place. It could be argued that naming a team after our indigenous population is a way of paying homage to them, but the specific expression of 'Indians' might still be considered offensive by some.* [*According to Cleveland's Case Western Reserve University (<https://case.edu/ech/articles/a/american-indians>), this has been the perception of at least the "500-Year Committee, an organization composed of many ethnicities dedicated to combating insensitivity to Native-American concerns".] For, as we all know, these folks didn't come from India or the East Indies at all, but the jerk Columbus thought that they did, and so the name has stuck ever since. Some folks seem to feel that the expression of 'Indians' may have been used derisively over the centuries by both stay-at-home Europeans and immigrant Americans as a convenient means of thinking about them as inferior peoples, and treating them as such.

One theoretical alternative is to call them the 'Cleveland Native Americans', but we're not sure that that's really such a good fit either. Sort of implies that at least some of the referenced folks would be playing Baseball at some point, and we just don't see it happen very often. Beyond that, many of our Native American nations are such proud and brave and dignified people, historically living on modest means and in other ways taking care of the Earth, that maybe a small group of individuals making million-dollar salaries playing a children's game doesn't really deserve to be named after them.

It might not be so bad if they named themselves after some specific Tribe or Nation which was indigenous to the Cleveland area, because then they could make a better case for representing the people who lived in that specific area. According to the

website for Native Languages of the Americas* [[*http://www.native-languages.org/ohio.htm](http://www.native-languages.org/ohio.htm)], the Erie tribe was the most prominent in northeastern Ohio, but the 'Cleveland Eries' might not be such a good name for a Major League team, for it would be too easy to make a lot of insulting puns such as calling them the 'Eeries' or the 'Airies' when they weren't doing so well in the standings.

Cuyahoga is the name of the County which contains Cleveland, and of the River upon which it was built. It is an Iroquoian name according to the Encyclopedia Britannica* [[*https://www.britannica.com/place/Cuyahoga-River](https://www.britannica.com/place/Cuyahoga-River)], possibly meaning 'crooked water' for the shape of the River. The name is featured very prominently in the opening song of *Major League I*. Having a team name of 'Cleveland Cuyahogas' would make a strong positive statement about the place where the Team was born and continues to play its home games. It is catchy without being too kooky. It does not directly deride or offend (so far as we are aware, at least...) any particular indigenous Tribe or Nation, and if anything it pays homage to the Iroquois by keeping one of their words in permanent national use.

We are not specifically recommending (at least not as of Session 278) that the Cleveland team should abandon its 'Indians' nickname, but we are suggesting that they should be prepared to do so at some point (if they are not already), because the time may come (and maybe very soon) when the popular demand for changing it will become too overwhelming. If and when that happens, we like the 'Cleveland Cuyahogas' for an alternative. Any other possibilities should be considered very carefully before implementation, because we don't want to have to change the name again for any reason later. [Amended later from correspondence and news.]

Washington Redskins

We felt in Session 278 that this one ought to be a lot easier. Not only did this NFL franchise reference the Native American people in its nickname, and not only did it curiously do so from the City of Washington even though the most historically-prominent Indigenous Nations were based much farther West, but it did one of the worst things imaginable, by explicitly labeling (and therefore demeaning) a group according to the color of its skin.

One of the most important improvements which we can make as a Society, and one of the biggest lessons which we would like for people to take away from this document, is that People Are People. We should accept them all as the Cousins which they are, regardless of whether your skin colors happen to match up or not. As long as we continue to broadcast the message by any means that it's okay to classify people according to their skin color, we also send the message that it's okay to treat as inferior (and therefore expendable) those groups whose skin colors are different from ours. It is not a philosophically-valid position, and it has been the source of very many bad actions over the years. We operate more successfully and happily as a Society when we believe the opposite of that, and when we treat people on an individual basis according to who they are Inside, and not lump them into any kind of dehumanized group according to how they look Outside.

It doesn't help us to get to this level of social evolution if we continue to allow superficial epithets such as 'Redskins' to exist in our collective vocabulary at all. It makes our job even harder when such terms are allowed to be used as official nicknames of any top-level professional Sports teams.

In our group's opinion (and we are pretty sure that we were not the only ones to hold it), the Washington franchise of the NFL needed to completely rebrand itself. Cleveland at least had an Iroquois word applied to its geographic area, so it could claim some historic connection with a segment of the Indigenous Population, but we never learned anything in History class about any particularly great concentration of Native Americans living in what is now the City of Washington. If anything, it would have been one of the first areas to be cleaned out of native peoples in order to make room for the European Immigration. They are therefore going to need some other imagery which has nothing to do with Native Americans, but what should it be?

Senators can be expected to at least think about playing Baseball (which is why MLB had two separate franchises with that nickname), but few if any could be expected to play Football, so that probably would not be a good fit. Governors might be a little more 'Football-like' (whatever that means), but then of course Governors exist within the States and not in the District of Columbia. Naming them after the Presidency would be too politically divisive, especially when the team isn't winning.

We could try going with some kind of animal, but we are so tired of the Donkey and Elephant which long emblemized the old Two-Party System, and the Bulls and Bears are more of an economic-market thing which Chicago has all wrapped up. Detroit already has the Lions and Tigers.

Nothing militaristic, please, because the whole idea of Washington (at least in theory, and with the notable exception of the Pentagon) is that it is a place where political decisions can get made without resorting to violence. Besides, if you name them the 'Washington Colonels' or the 'Washington Majors', then they still would be nominally subordinate to the Washington Generals, who famously have lost nearly every Basketball game which they have ever played, so that wouldn't be a good look.

We were charged up for a while about calling them the 'Washington Diplomats', which is suggestive of what happens in Washington, and specifically more of the Peaceful side and less of the Warlike side. It was used by an unsuccessful Soccer team from 1974-1981, but hopefully that wouldn't present any impediment to our using it today in the NFL. However, as we thought about it more, we realized that it would not be as good a fit for Football as it would be for Soccer, where you are trying to get to your goal by going around other people. Football requires you to gain territory at least partly by pushing your opponents out of the way through the use of physical force, which is not an image that we like for Diplomats.

Nationals and Capitols are already used in other Sports, so it would be good if we did something unique to Football, but we may be on the right track with those names at least. We thought of calling them the 'Washington Americans', and maybe that still ends up being the net-best way to go, but the hangup there is that most/all of the other Teams in the League are also based in America, so the name is not really telling us anything unique about Washington. We could go with the 'Washington Potomacs' on the same grounds as changing the Cleveland Indians to the 'Cuyahogas', but it sounds more like a minor-league Baseball team than an NFL franchise. Calling them the 'Washington Chesapeake' makes us think of fly-fishing or some other gentle activity on the Bay, and not so much about Football.

New England already has the Patriots, but for similar reasoning we see some value in the idea of the 'Washington Independents'. For, even though the Declaration of Independence was drafted and approved in Philadelphia, yet the document is now on

permanent display in the City of Washington, and the name continues to invoke the "Don't Tread On Me" image which has long been a huge part of the American Experience. We thus accepted that term pending stronger preference. [Replaced.]

Atlanta Braves

This is another team of Major League Baseball which refers in its official nickname to our Native American population. We have mixed feelings about this version.

On the plus side, at least it does not suggest any inferiority on the part of the people being referenced, and instead it exalts their historic Bravery. On the minus side, though, it does imply (at least in some people's perceptions) that the people being referenced are all bloodthirsty Warriors, running around indiscriminately with their Tomahawks to 'scalp' any innocent civilians that they can find.

We might be able to keep living with this dual interpretation if it were not for the famous 'Tomahawk Chop' which by Session 278 had worked its way into the team's brand. For those readers who do not follow the game closely, whenever the team had just done something particularly good on its home field, or was threatening to do so, the PA system would play a certain melodic phrase which apparently was intended to resemble a native War Chant, and the fans would sing along, waving their outstretched hands forward repeatedly in such a way as to imitate a Tomahawk being used to Chop somebody's head. They probably didn't see anything wrong with it (at least we'll give them the benefit of the doubt, and assume that they would not have kept doing it if they once realized how offensive it is on multiple levels), but to us outsiders it's really a bad look for the Team and the City and their Fans.

In addition to the imagery evoked by the use of the War Chant, that the Native Americans were simply a bunch of uncivilized Savages who loved to kill whenever they could, instead of a beleaguered people who occasionally used Freedom Fighters in desperation to defend their homeland from the European invaders, the 'Tomahawk Chop' gesture is offensive on an additional level which has nothing to do with the Native Americans: Atlanta is currently the only MLB franchise whose fans make any sort of coordinated gesture which appears to be directed against the opposition.

It's one thing to cheer for your home team, and no one says that you need to like the visiting team, especially if it is a long-term rival. However, we are all trying to be peaceful and respectful sportspeople here. That is one of the big reasons why we are playing these different Sports in the first place, so that we can see who is more athletically gifted without needing to go onto an actual battlefield and kill each other. That is also one of the big reasons why players and coaches (even in Boxing) often shake hands with the opponents either before and/or after the contest, to show that we're just here to play a certain Game by certain rules in order to help compare our athletic and managerial talents, and that it's nothing personal.

Most other franchises seem to 'get it', that it's perfectly okay to cheer for your home squad, and maybe to boo a specific opposing player if he is a steroid-user or other manner of jerk, and maybe even to boo the entire team if they specifically have done something unsportspersonlike to your team in the recent past, but that in most ordinary cases you should simply sit silently when an opposing player is introduced or makes some kind of good play. We are their hosts, and they are our guests, and we should be at least minimally-polite to them while they are here. By contrast, the Atlanta franchise seems to be willing to 'flip off' the other team (and indirectly their

fans) by showing contempt and disrespect to them with their taunting Chant and Gesture, even when neither that team or any of its individual players has done anything to deserve such ill treatment.

Maybe they should still be allowed to do it, if that really is the message which they intend to send, if that really is the image and perception which they would like the rest of America to have about them, in short if that's their brand and they're sticking to it. Hopefully, however, they someday will get the message that they are making themselves out to be the Villains of the League for the manner in which they have been treating their visiting opponents who have traveled all that way just to play some friendly games with them, and that their present practice poisons our public perception not just of the Braves franchise but of the entire Atlanta community (most of whom we are hoping are better people in real life than the rude and insensitive jerks who go to Braves games), and maybe they will modify their attitude and behavior as a result. We look forward to the day. In the meantime, back atcha.

Alliance for American Football

This was a new League which included teams named the San Antonio Commanders and the San Diego Fleet. The logo for the Commanders featured a big Saber, and the logo for the Fleet featured a big Battleship with guns poised for action.

We get it that older NFL teams such as the Raiders and the Buccaneers (as well as the Pittsburgh club in Baseball) have used branding images which suggested a certain romanticized vision of Pirates, but we let it go because it always seemed like more of a harmless 'dress-up' sort of thing, as when you go to a Halloween costume party dressed as a Pirate and carry a rubber saber and go "Arrr" a lot. No big deal.

As of Session 278, though, some of us felt pretty strongly that we should be getting away from that whole Conquest mentality, and away from threatening other peoples with our massive Weaponry. We probably can grandfather the older teams and their brands, but we strongly suggest that any new teams should be avoiding any images in their branding which suggest Weapons or Conquest or Violence. Those images get seen by the General Public as well as just the fans of the Sport, and they act to reinforce a belligerent and ethnocentric view of America which those of us connected to this Project have been trying very hard to discourage.

When the American Public repeatedly sees images of Weapons on the logos of so many of their favorite Sports teams, it subliminally encourages them to keep thinking that it's okay to brandish Weapons, that it's okay to threaten your Neighbors, and that it's okay to cross the borders of other Nations with military force whenever we feel like it. It's not okay, people, and for a variety of reasons including our own self-preservation we urgently plead that you all get away from that mentality. We therefore also plead with the Commanders and the Fleet and any other new Sports teams to omit any Weaponry from their team logos. We are all here to play a Game, not to Kill each other. Any branding images for your new Sports teams therefore should emphasize Fun rather than Death.

Utah Jazz

Let's just establish right off the bat, Utah Jazz is my favorite. You can travel the Nation, and you can travel the World, and you will never find any Jazz like Utah Jazz.

Weren't aware of that, were you? Hmm, well then maybe I was thinking of a different place all along.....

Seriously, this Basketball franchise started in New Orleans, where the association with Jazz music is much more commonly known. When they decided to leave that City some years back, and to relocate to Utah, they curiously decided to keep the Jazz reference in their name, even though Utah is known musically more for its Mormon Tabernacle Choir than for any Jazz which may ever have been written or performed there. This has always looked and sounded ridiculous to us.

We realize that some other franchises carry nicknames which relate to their origins but not to their current locales. Famous examples include the Dodgers (who got their name from the folks who needed to dodge the streetcars in Brooklyn way back when) and the Lakers (who came from Minnesota with its thousands of lakes). However, these teams have been located where they are for so long now, and their team nicknames have lost virtually all meaning other than as references to those specific franchises, that we can happily 'grandfather' those adjustments. By contrast, though, the word 'Jazz' still has a very common and distinct meaning, and it still is broadly associated much more with New Orleans than with Utah, so it probably still is a good candidate for further fixing.

If you insist on remaining in Utah (no reason why not, with only one other team located within a 500-mile radius), then it would make a lot more sense to select an image more commonly evocative of that State. Probably would be good to keep it as a Musical reference, in order to maintain your historical ties to your New Orleans predecessors. Since the Choir is so big in Utah, maybe that should be your source. Since the NBA currently comprises only males, maybe good to select one of the male sections of the chorus, so you'd be either the Tenors or the Baritones or the Bases.

Down the road, when women are allowed to compete on the NBA teams, you might need to select a more generic team name, but it may not be strictly necessary. For, any woman who is tall enough to compete at the NBA level probably has a windpipe which is longer than average for women, so she might have a vocal range which is lower than average for women, and thus she might be able to sing in the Tenor or Baritone sections if she were to join the chorus at all. You might therefore be able to keep the gender-suggestive name. If you prefer not to, or if the public demands a change, then maybe you use the more generic expression of the 'Utah Choristers'.

Question 645.3

What else can we do to maintain/improve fan interest in Baseball?

We were not completely sure as of Session 278 that this was even a real problem needing to be solved, because attendance was very high at the time (except in Miami), TV coverage was extensive, and enough money was coming in from sponsors and other sources to enable many pro players to receive seven-figure annual salaries. But, we had heard various statements from the Commissioner's office in recent years that fan interest had been a topic of official concern. Just in case it is a problem, then, we did have a few suggestions. [More were added later.]

First, we suggest eliminating the Home Run Derby from the All-Star schedule, for it encourages hitters to aim for home runs instead of higher-average line drives which can drop in the gaps for hits. Todd Frazier and Cody Bellinger and Giancarlo Stanton

and Aaron Judge and others suffered batting slumps and strikeout surges following their participation in the Home Run Derby, and we must wonder whether the sacrifice in regular-season performance is really worth it for a one-day exhibition.

Not only does it seem to encourage the actual participants to swing for home runs instead of singles, but it also seems to be having the same effect on many other players, including among those who have not even reached the Major Leagues yet. Everybody wants to hit for glory now, instead of placement, and the trend has turned the game from Baseball to Fenceball. Bases no longer matter as much, only Fences.

It's nice for the fans when the homer actually gets hit, but Fenceball can be roundly boring and disappointing and frustrating the rest of the time. We can stay much more engaged when more players actually reach base and give themselves a chance to make something else happen, instead of striking out all the time while attempting to hit the Big Bomb and then sauntering slowly back to the dugout in shame.

It therefore would be good if more teams and individual batters focused more on that part of the game, where you reach one Base and then try to advance to another Base. We would help that encouragement by dropping the Home Run Derby.

Second, teams may still shift their defenses if they want to, in such a way that they have three defenders on one half of the infield, but it looks dumb and boring when the batters predictably fall into the trap and hit directly to where the defenders are standing. The game is more interesting when batters try hitting against the shift, including by bunting. If the hitter takes a batting-practice approach at the plate, simply trying to drive everything as far as he can with no regard to defensive positioning, then offenses score less and it's a more boring game for the fans. When the batters respond to the defense as much as the defense is responding to them, when it's more of an interactive contest, that's much more interesting.

Third, it also can get pretty boring when teams 'platoon' their batters, such that they use all/predominantly right-handed batters against left-handed pitchers, and lefty batters against righty pitchers. If all the batters are standing on the same side of the plate, then that allows the Pitcher and the Catcher and all the Fielders to remain in their same spots, and to settle into easy and comfortable rhythms. They therefore make more easy outs, teams reach base less and score less, and the whole process can be pretty repetitive and monotonous.

Conversely, if more teams were to alternate their batters by lefty-righty, although some batters might drop a few points in Batting Average as a result, yet that would continually change up the postures of the Pitcher and Catcher, and the positioning of the Fielders. They would get wearier more quickly, and would be more likely to miss a spot at some point and allow a batter to reach base. Baseball is always more interesting when there are runners on base, even if they are from the visiting team.

Fourth, it would also be more interesting if Managers more consistently scheduled in their starting lineups whichever players are hottest at the moment, instead of switching in colder players either to 'get some work in' or to 'keep them relevant'. It's a long season, and there are plenty of opportunities for your initially-hot players to get tired or injured, which is when the other guys can come in and give a better-rested performance and take charge for a while and thus be 'relevant'. When those other guys also get tired or injured, you switch around again. By the postseason, everyone on the entire roster has managed to get in some work and rest at some

point, so everybody is ready to go as needed. In the meantime, the hottest players from each week of the regular season play during that week, so the team should have a strong winning record, and the fans get to have a better time all season long by watching the hottest players play. Change the lineups only after you lose.

Question 645.4

Should we use automated systems to make the definitive call as to whether a given pitched ball qualifies as a strike?

This had been suggested often as of Session 278 (including by Eric Byrnes and other athletes-turned-commentators at MLB Network), but we do not support the concept.

First reason why not, the game should be played at the Major League level in essentially the same way it is at the Little League level, and everywhere in between. The lower Leagues often will not have access to the same sort of technical equipment which can be made available to MLB, and we feel that players should have a certain amount of continuity between how they learn to play the game as kids and how they play it as pros. Pitchers and Catchers and Batters in the lower Leagues make all their pitch-to-pitch decisions based on the fact of a human being standing behind the plate and deciding whether each pitch is a ball or a strike, and so they should apply that same learned skill when they reach the Major League level, instead of essentially needing to learn a new game once they get there.

Second reason why not, even if all Leagues everywhere had access to the same sort of pitch-calling equipment, we still would oppose the concept on grounds that it would remove the critical element of human judgment from the process. The machine can tell us where the ball crosses the 'invisible plane' which stands perpendicular to the front edge of the plate, and can even give us some information on the path of the pitched ball, but in the end we need a human being back there watching the actual ball in real space and real time, and judging whether or not the pitch is legitimately hittable. For, that's the main reason for requiring pitches to cross the plate in order to be called as strikes, because the general idea is that the Batter has a legitimate chance at the ball if it crosses the plate (which is why he then gets charged with a strike if he lets it go by without swinging), and does not if the ball passes on either side of it. Trick is, though, some pitches which technically cross the plate are not really very hittable, whereas some other pitches which technically pass outside the plate zone are reasonably hittable. It takes someone back there who is taking into account both the location and the path of the ball relative to the Batter, to determine reliably whether or not the pitch should be counted as a strike.

Third reason why not, in addition to whether or not the ball crosses the plate (or close enough in the Umpire's judgment), it also must be within a certain height range in order to qualify as a strike. Trick is, the upper and lower limits of the 'strike zone' are dependent upon the Batter's height, and can also depend on how the Batter stands at the plate. When we see those strike-zone projections displayed on the screen in various TV broadcasts, they never seem to move up and down according to when the Batter raises or lowers his stance, so we are not convinced that the mechanism is a reliable way of judging whether a pitch of a given height can be successfully hit by a Batter of a given height and a given batting stance. A human Umpire is in a much better position to make this call reliably, by changing the upper and lower limits of the 'strike zone' mentally for each different Batter.

Fourth reason why not, even though a given pitch may not technically be within the 'strike zone', and maybe even does not have a chance to be very hittable, yet it may have such amazing movement on it, and still come fairly close to the hitting zone, that the Umpire may want to reward the Pitcher by giving him credit for the strike. In this sense, the Umpire is watching not only where the ball crosses the plate but also what happens to the ball before and after it gets there, and using all the information to assess whether the pitch was net-good enough to count for a strike.

Fifth reason why not, a big part of the charm of Baseball is that the 'strike zone' can vary slightly from one game to the next, not only because you are rotating Umpires, but even because a particular Umpire may see the ball differently on different days. We saw this aspect of the Game endearingly portrayed over the closing credits of the great film *A League Of Their Own*, when the Batter protests a particular strike call, and the Umpire responds: "Yesterday it might have been a ball, and tomorrow it might be a ball, but today it's a strike." Baseball is a game of adjustments, like many other Sports, and one of the ways that we can distinguish the best Athletes and the best Teams is by observing how flexibly they adapt to different conditions, and that certainly can include how big or small the 'strike zone' is each day.

Question 645.5

Who should be making the definitive call as to whether or not a batter has swung on a given pitch?

While this already had been an ongoing issue for years as of Session 278, it was highlighted in a tweet which the author read during Game 5 of the World Series on 28-Oct-2018, with the hashtag "CT3wasright", a reference to Chris Taylor of the Dodgers, who asked after a particular pitch for the First-Base Umpire to decide officially whether or not he had swung, but was denied that privilege by the Home-Plate Umpire. The tweet asked whether we could have a rule to require those calls to be made by the Base Umpires and not the Home-Plate Umpire, and we said Yes.

For those not as familiar with the issue, the Home-Plate Umpire generally gets to call balls and strikes, but he often is so engrossed watching the path of the pitched ball relative to home plate (which he still gets to do under Answer 645.4, not devolving that duty to a machine) that he is not always able to tell clearly whether or not the Batter has swung the bat far enough to be charged with a strike. In case of doubt, either the Batter or the Catcher may ask for help from the Base Umpire on the opposite side, whose sole job at that point is to focus on whether or not the Batter has swung at the pitch. However, they only get to request, and it currently is up to the Home-Plate Umpire to decide whether to defer to the Base Umpire's judgment.*

[*The actual language from Rule 9.02(c): "If a decision is appealed, the umpire making the decision may ask another umpire for information before making a final decision. No umpire shall criticize, seek to reverse or interfere with another umpire's decision unless asked to do so by the umpire making it."]

We are politely asking that this policy be changed. We take it as a matter of faith that the Base Umpire can focus better on the motion of the bat than the Home-Plate Umpire can. In addition, the Base Umpire has a side angle which can help establish more reliably whether the bat has traveled far enough to constitute a strike, whereas the Home-Plate Umpire is behind the front line of the plate and so is not in nearly as good a position to make that determination.

We don't need to ask the Base Umpire for a judgment on every single pitch, for it would slow the game down too much. (We addressed in A645.2 the need not to drag the 'pace of play' unduly.) However, whenever either the Batter or the Catcher feels that the call should be appealed, the Home-Plate Umpire should be required to ask the applicable Base Umpire for a ruling, which should be treated as final.

We must pay a price for this privilege, though, by not asking for help too many times. If the executives at MLB ever once decide that we are dragging the game too much by appealing calls which end up being upheld, then they will understandably go back to the Old Way, and we may never get another chance. Batters and Catchers are therefore urged to remain prudent and selective when considering whether to appeal any given swing calls. Let 'em win the little ones. Choose your battles.

Question 645.6

Can we recommend at this time any improvements in Baseball statistics?

One of several problems treated in Session 278 from various handwritten notes in our 'black book' is that we need a better statistic to describe overall player performance, because that can help both teams and fans to understand who is generally more valuable at present than who else, which of course can be very important during trade talks and contract negotiations. The current Wins Above Replacement (WAR) gamely attempts this goal, but it still places too much emphasis on team performance when we want to know more about the individual.

We had been experimenting with a certain new statistic as of Session 278, but it still needed more work before we could put it into practice. We experimented with it during the 2015 and 2017 seasons, and then needed to break off in order to finish on a higher priority the document which you are now reading. Basic idea is that you get positive credit for all the bases which you generate on Offense and all the outs which you generate on Defense, you get negative credit for all the bases which you allow on Defense and the outs which you generate on Offense, and you divide the difference by the number of innings in which you appeared.

We need to test out different weighting factors to come up with a more reliable final formula, and also different rules on which positions get charged for different types of bases allowed, because the earlier experiments were producing odd-looking results. One factor which we will probably need to incorporate is the proportion of bases generated to outs generated in an average game. As one quick datapoint, in Game 7 of the 2018 World Series there were 69 bases generated and 51 outs, but we will get more data before final packaging. [We did get more data on this later.]

Second problem is that a Pitcher is credited with a 'no-hitter' only if he pitches the complete game without allowing a hit. We feel that we should expand the definition. This issue came up prominently when Rich Hill of the Dodgers pitched nine innings of no-hit ball on 23-Aug-2017, and in the 10th allowed a hit which cost the game.

It is a tremendous athletic feat -- especially in our modern era of harder-throwing Pitchers who usually are pulled from the lineup after fewer than nine innings -- to go nine innings without allowing a base hit. If that feat is rewarded with an entry in the official 'no-hitter' listing when the game ends after nine innings, then it should be similarly recognized if some other outcome occurs. It should therefore be listed regardless of the number of runs scored by the Pitcher's team, and regardless of the

eventual game result. OK to include an asterisk for a game like Rich Hill's if you wish, to show that he eventually allowed a hit after the nine innings of regulation, and/or that the team ended up losing the game, but at least let's still remember that amazing athletic achievement in the permanent history one way or another.

Subsection III-E-6: Football

Question 645.7

Should we be using a coin toss to decide who kicks off first and/or defends which goal first?

Addressed in Session 278: Visiting team has a built-in disadvantage, facing not only the opponents' fans but also the home team which knows how its stadium conditions (sun, wind, etc.) are at different times of the day, and which goal is better to defend first, and/or whether it is better to kick first or receive first. In order to offset this advantage at least partly, the visiting team should always have the option to select either a preferred starting goal or a preferred starting position (that is, either kicking or receiving), but not both, and then the home team should make the other choice.

Only exception need be the Super Bowl, where neither team usually has a distinct home-field advantage, so you could use a coin toss for that Game, with all desired ceremony. However, it is also okay to switch at any time to a rule that whichever team is coming from farther away is considered to be the 'visiting team' for purposes of starting selections, so you wouldn't any longer need a coin toss for the Big Game.

Question 645.8

Under what conditions shall a Quarterback be allowed without penalty to throw the ball intentionally to a spot on the ground in the field of play instead of toward an eligible Receiver?

We claim never. It used to be that any such play would constitute 'Intentional Grounding', a bad thing. The presumption is that the Quarterback is trying to create an Incomplete Pass and thus get the ball back to the Line of Scrimmage, instead of taking a big loss from a surging pass rush. We would consider that to be 'cheating', by disallowing the Defense from getting credited with the sack which they otherwise had justly earned. As a result, not only would the ball not be reintroduced to the Scrimmage Line after an 'Intentional Grounding', but to discourage any attempts at cheating a penalty of up to 15 yards would be assessed from the Line of Scrimmage.

This famously made a huge difference in Super Bowl V.

These days, penalty has been reduced to 10 yards, which probably is more equitable (we will talk about that in a bit), but the bigger issue is that 'Intentional Grounding' is not called in nearly as many situations as it used to be. It now depends on whether the Quarterback is in the 'pocket' or not, and on multiple other factors.

We don't feel as of Session 278 that such distinctions should be allowed to matter. We understand that the intent of the rule changes was to provide greater protection to Quarterbacks, and we don't want to see anyone endangered unnecessarily, but we must feel that Quarterbacks should simply 'take a knee' and accept their loss safely if they cannot find an eligible Receiver anywhere or gain any more yards on their

own. If the Defense has managed to get past the Blockers and to pressure the Quarterback into a yard-losing situation from which he cannot recover, then they deserve to have the ball spotted backward to wherever it was (or should have been) downed, and not have it come back on the basis of a technicality such as an Incomplete Pass which was not really intended to go to anybody.

That's the whole idea of the 'Intentional Grounding' rule, to prevent that, and to enable the Defense to push the ball backward if they can, instead of settling for a respotting at the Line of Scrimmage as their best-case scenario on any given play.

Question 645.9

Shall we permit Quarterbacks to throw the ball out-of-bounds in order to avoid a sack?

No, this is the same as the 'Intentional Grounding' discussed in the Answer above. Quarterback is trying to create an Incomplete Pass in order to avoid a big loss on the basis of a technicality, instead of allowing the Defense to get credit for having pushed the ball backward by means of a successful pass rush. He shouldn't get to do that, not by throwing the ball to the ground and not by throwing it away.

Any forward pass must come within 5 yards of an eligible Receiver (or at least of where the Receiver was expected to be at the end of the pattern), or of any Defender (because maybe he can then intercept it, so for convenience we are including Defenders as 'eligible Receivers' during this discussion), or else the play should be treated as 'Intentional Grounding' and be subject to penalty.

Question 646.0

How much penalty should there be for 'Intentional Grounding'?

We concur in retrospect that the 15 yards assessed in Super Bowl V seems a bit harsh, but we imagine as of Session 278 that it would generally be best to graduate the penalty in proportion to the extent of the foul. That is, if the Quarterback fails to get within the required 5 yards of an eligible Receiver, but gets within 10, then he should be penalized only the minimum 5 yards. If he doesn't even get within 10 yards, but gets within 15, then penalize him 10 yards. If he doesn't even get within 15 yards, then penalize 15 yards, but that should be the maximum.

Another big difference that we are recommending from current practice is that any penalty for 'Intentional Grounding' should be measured from the Spot of the Foul (that is, from where the ball was improperly thrown), not from the Line of Scrimmage. We should be crediting the Defense with as many pushback yards as they have justly earned, plus the appropriate penalty (as described above) for the QB attempting to 'cheat' by throwing the ball away.

As indicated in Answer 645.9, and as it usually happens currently, no penalty should be assessed for 'Intentional Grounding' if the Quarterback was legitimately throwing to where he thought the eligible Receiver was going to be, but if the Receiver simply tripped or got blocked or was texting along the way.

The distance from the nearest eligible Receiver should be measured from where the ball lands on the field, or -- in the case of an out-of-bounds throw -- where the ball

would have landed if it had not been touched by personnel standing along the sidelines. The idea is to keep the ball in the field of active play, so that the Defense has a fair chance of recovering the ball by turnover (same logic behind the 'dribbling' requirement of Basketball), or at least of pushing the ball backward. The farther away that you are throwing the ball from where the Defense could possibly intercept it or do some other good Defensive thing, the more of a penalty you should get.

Question 646.1

How do we stop the Quarterback from simply kneeling when ahead during the last moments of the game, removing the other team's last chance to do anything, and making the end-game so dismally boring?

Football can be a lot of fun to watch, but it can look pretty ridiculous when the clock is running out, and the leading team has possession. If it is a large lead which the other team cannot possibly overcome in the short time remaining, then you should simply declare the game over (as in Boxing), and let's all move on with our lives. As it is now, the players and the referees and the guys holding the down markers and everybody else must walk to their assigned positions on the field, hike the ball, and watch the Quarterback drop to a knee, maybe once, maybe two or three times. They all look like a bunch of Slaves or Robots, going through a lot of useless motions in order to satisfy a rule technicality which nobody is demanding.

Conversely, if the game is close enough that the other team does have a shot at retaking the lead before time runs out, then we should give them that opportunity, so that everything counts all the way to the last second of regulation.

For both these reasons, we object as of Session 278 to allowing the Quarterback to drop to a knee in order to allow the clock to run out. If you want the clock to keep running, then you must attempt an actual run or pass or something else which will give the Defense at least a small chance of generating a turnover, or of stopping the clock by successfully stopping the intended run or pass. If the Quarterback simply drops to a knee, and the clock keeps ticking, that's too easy, it's too boring, it cheats the Defense out of their last minute of opportunity to change the outcome of the game, and the fans get cheated out of a minute of potentially-meaningful action.

This problem has an easy fix: The clock should stop for any loss of yardage, at least during the last two minutes, but we think all the time. Clock can keep moving when the Offense has successfully moved the ball forward, and has thus earned the right to control the clock until the next play. But, it should not have that privilege after any loss of yards, because the Defense has thus earned the right to stop the clock and give their own Offense more of a chance to advance the ball the other way.

This is most especially true at the end of the game. We want every minute and every second to count, and we want the game to be as competitive as it can be until it is officially over. We therefore want the Offense to keep using strategy and physical effort all the time to advance the ball even if their team is ahead, so that by continuing to gain yards and make First Downs they are continuing to earn the right to maintain possession, and meanwhile the Defense has at least some chance to recover a fumble or interception, which is not an available option if the Quarterback is allowed to take a knee for a loss of yards and still watch the clock tick off.

Question 646.3

Shall we allow the Referees to be influenced by Instant Replay?

As we described in Answer 644.1 in the context of Baseball, it is not that we are allowing the Referees to be influenced, it is that we are allowing them to be overruled, for certain selected types of situations where the replay clearly shows that the field calls were incorrect. We have the technology available now, in ultra-high-def and ultra-slo-mo, so we may as well use it, and thus make sure that the outcome of the game reflects what the teams actually did on the field.

Subsection III-E-7: Basketball

Question 646.5

Do we need to make any rule changes to Basketball?

Yes, we had one suggestion of Session 278, and added another later.

Basketball can be a very fun game to watch, and we understand that with all that frenetic activity around the ball some unintentional Personal Fouls are going to happen. That's part of the game, and the rules provide a compensation of Free Throws in recognition of the frequent nature of the occurrence.

However, we don't like it when any situation calls for a Personal Foul to be inflicted intentionally, especially when it is near the end of the game, and the Defense is behind in the score but close enough that they still have an outside chance at winning. They deliberately strike the player on the arm or something in order to inflict a Foul and stop the clock while the guy takes his Free Throws.

We get the logic. Even if he makes both Free Throws, you still have managed to stop the clock and regain possession, which is better than what probably would have happened if the guy had been allowed to run the 24-Second Clock all the way to the end before shooting. If he misses one or both Free Throws, then you have managed to come out ahead, and you improve your chances of coming back.

Still doesn't alter the fact, though, that the situation is calling for you to strike somebody intentionally. We don't ever want that, not in Sports, not in Real Life.

We offer this solution: Do what they do in Baseball now with the Intentional Walks, and simply give a recognized sign that you want to stop the clock, and to be charged with a Foul, and to allow the guy to take his Free Throws as though he had actually been fouled. In other words, everything is the same in terms of what happens in the game situation, except that you don't actually strike the guy.

If after we adopt this rule, somebody commits any actual Personal Foul which appears to be unnecessary against a player with clear possession, then he should be charged with a 'flagrant foul', which should result in the fouled player receiving an additional Free Throw (hopefully can keep it at '3-to-make-2', but may need to go with '3-to-make-3' if the violations continue), because again we don't want those kinds of things happening anywhere at any time for any reason.

Unless anyone has a better idea, we default-suggest that the new sign to take an 'Intentional Foul' should be two hands meeting over your head, same as they use to call a Safety in Football. It's not otherwise used in Basketball, and it should be high enough for everybody to see clearly.

Subsection III-E-8: Hockey

Question 646.7

Do we need to make any changes to Hockey?

Yes, as of Session 278 we have one suggestion.

Hockey can be a very fun game to watch, and we understand that with all that frenetic activity around the puck someone is eventually going to take exception at how he was 'checked' by an opponent. What we don't get is why they are allowed to have fistfights about it, while the Referees simply stand around and watch for an extended period, until maybe they eventually step in and tell them to stop fighting.

As a core Basic Principle of this entire document, we don't want people physically fighting, nor trying in any other way to physically and nonconsensually injure other people. We don't want it happening at the International level, we don't want it happening in Domestic settings, we don't want it happening on the Streets, and we don't want it happening in Sports. When our professional athletes are allowed (and encouraged!) to beat each other up in front of the stadium crowd and a TV audience, we are sending the message to our entire Society (especially our kids) that it is okay in at least some circumstances to inflict physical harm upon other people who are not directly attacking you. Do we want to send that message? Heaven forbid.

If the opposing player actually has been excessive in his 'checking' or 'tripping' or whatever else you think that he did, then you must rely upon the Referees to spot it and call it and penalize him for it. If they do not do so, then either it was too minor to capture their attention, or else they did have a clear view and saw no basis for a penalty. Either way, you should not be taking it into your hands to inflict your own physical punishment. We can ask the lawyers, but perhaps such 'unilateral justice' may rise to the level of constituting criminal assault, which not only needs to be stopped and penalized by the Referees as soon as it happens, but also may need to be considered for external prosecution.

Subsection III-E-9: Horse Racing

Question 646.8

If we still allow Horse Racing, then should we allow/encourage a rule requiring lighter Jockeys to carry sandbags in order to provide a standard weight for the Horses to carry?

We claim no. If the Jockey can be lighter but still stay strong enough to manage a 1000-pound Horse, then the Team should be able to use that advantage.

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At this point, with the Moderator now working on our writeup on almost a daily basis, and with time growing short, the formalities were becoming less and less important, so for expediency we decided to allow ourselves to add new Questions and ideas and arguments (such as those following) to our writeup even if they were not always composed or formally ratified during a Monday session.

Question 643.1 (continued)

Do we have continuing problems with any particular Team names, logos, colors, or other similar attributes?

We formed a new favorite shortly after Session 278 of the 'Washington Colonials'. It does have the same number of syllables as 'Independents', but at least it has only one stressed syllable so it's easier to say, and it has fewer letters. Better still, the name is apt to that franchise because General Washington commanded the Colonial Army. Finally, there's nothing incongruous or otherwise wrong with the idea of Colonials playing American Football, now that we know how. Looks lovely from here, and that's now our primary recommendation.

Question 132.3

Under what conditions (if any) should the Chief Executive be allowed to 'shut down' the government?

Added in January 2019: Notwithstanding the above, the Chief Executive shall not have the authority to 'shut down' the Government -- nor any segment(s) of it -- for any period of time nor for any reason. It is the Chief Executive's responsibility to run the Government, that's his job, and he abdicates that responsibility if he once orders or otherwise causes it not to run. Whenever he so abdicates his responsibility, he should be treated as having vacated the position even if he has not formally resigned, or even if he asserts that he can 'shut down' the Government and still remain Chief Executive at the same time. After he has been removed from all the trappings of Executive Power, he may also be subject to prosecution for criminal neglect of public duty, depending upon the specific circumstances of each case.

Question 277.3

Under what conditions (if any) shall an individual legislator or minority faction be permitted to Filibuster, that is, to force a delay in taking up a particular question, or in taking the vote on any pending question?

Added in January 2019: No one Legislator or Committee shall have the authority or other capability to block any vote or other item of business which is desired by a majority of the full Assembly, as Senator McConnell reportedly did with the motion to override the previous Executive action and re-open the Federal Government. The full assembly should always be able to decide which items of business are the most urgent, and any system which allows a select Few to subvert the will of the Majority is not only un-democratic and un-American but also just plain stupid.

Therefore, in order to make the Calendar process both fair and streamlined, we suggest the following standard procedure for all Legislatures in our recommended zero-party environment: Except in those very rare circumstances when the Legislature has absolutely nothing else to do at the moment, most new bills or other

business items must wait their due turn at the end of the Calendar, and be addressed by the Assembly in the order in which they were received, unless prioritized according to any procedural changes adopted within Subsection I-E-2. However, if it can be separately established that a majority of Legislators desires to bump any particular item to the top of the list, or to make any other adjustment to the order of the Calendar, then it should have the parliamentary ability to do so. But, because we don't want to waste time entertaining regular motions from the floor (not even undebatable motions) to adjust the Calendar if the majority does not actually support them, we suggest that a petition should be in order. Whenever the proponents obtain an actual majority of support away from the formal proceedings on the floor, they can record their support on a standard petition form and submit it at any time to the Clerk of the Assembly. If the petition is valid, then the item requested in the petition shall automatically become the next item of business. If the proponents feel that the business item in question should not even wait until the conclusion of the pending item, then a petition containing the signatures of a 3/5 majority should direct the Clerk of the Assembly to have the Presiding Officer stop the pending proceedings and immediately take up the item presented in the petition.

Question 645.3 (continued)

What else can we do to maintain/improve fan interest in Baseball?

Fifth, part of what might make Baseball boring for some people at least some of the time is the fact that many teams organize their batting orders with a 'top of the lineup' and a 'bottom of the lineup', and sometimes a 'middle of the lineup'. They stack their hottest and biggest hitters at the top (that is, the beginning) of the batting order, so that they will have more opportunities to bat during the course of the game. There is a certain logic to that, but it means that you often will have the 'bottom of the lineup' coming to plate during a given inning (as in *Major League II*), and those innings are often wasted as a result. Even if the #7 guy does get on, the #8 and #9 guys are both unlikely to move him over at all. Not only are you sacrificing some chances for offensive production that way, but you are boring many of your viewers, even some of those who are rooting for you to win.

We feel that it makes more sense to spread your batting power more evenly throughout your lineup, such that somebody good is always either batting now or on deck, and so the pitchers always need to worry, and you always have a chance to make something happen. It is true that whoever is batting last will have statistically fewer opportunities to hit than whoever is batting first, can't avoid that, but if your offensive production improves enough as a result of spreading out your batting power then the difference won't matter very much. Besides, the more important factor is that your team has a better chance of winning more often.

Sixth, we also recognize that different batters have different strengths, and that some of those strengths will vary over the course of an individual player's season or over his career. Some guys hit well for power but can't place their hits very accurately when needed, other guys may have less power but are better at hitting for placement. Some guys are really good at drawing walks, some hit better (or worse) when there are runners in scoring position. Chase Utley was a legend at getting hit by the pitch.

We feel (although we freely admit that we have never once sat in the dugout except on Fan Appreciation Day) that any Manager who needs to reset his batting order

following a loss (under 'Fourth' above, he shouldn't change the lineup after a win, except if some previous starter is tired or has gotten injured or has some other kind of individual problem) should keep these different factors in mind (as well as the lefty-righty alternation described in 'Third' above) when deciding who should be batting in front of whom, and in which area of the lineup. Frequent huge changes in the batting order suggest to the fans that very little or no thought is going into the decision procedure, and that it's mostly just random, going with whatever's different from how we did it recently, whether we won recently or not. Maybe that's not actually the case all the time, or any of the time, but our perception is our reality, and in some cases it can affect our level of interest. If we the fans feel that the Manager is not putting that much planning effort into the batting order, then some of us may feel less like caring very much about the outcome. Effort generates attention. Absence of effort is boring.

We therefore wish that some bold franchise in the National League would begin experimenting with a model where the batting order is split into two squads, each of which has its own 'clean-up' hitter who is aiming to hit for power and drive in any baserunners, those two 'clean-up' hitters being the right-handed and left-handed batters with the highest recent average of Home Runs Per At-Bat.

Whoever is leading off the lineup should be adept at reaching when the bases are empty, in order to be moved over by the subsequent batters, so the leadoff batters for the two squads should be the right-handed and left-handed batters with the highest recent average of Reaching-First-Base (including by Error or anything else) Per Plate Appearance. This means that the second 'clean-up' hitter should bat directly before the first 'lead-off' hitter, so 9th in the lineup, not the Pitcher as NL teams frequently do it now.

In order to keep the righty-lefty alternation described in 'Third' above, if your #9 batter is the right-handed 'clean-up' hitter, then your left-handed 'clean-up' hitter should be in the #5 spot, and *vice versa*. Having your left-handed 'lead-off' hitter always batting in the #1 spot has an amount of logic to it, because the shorter distance to first base increases the odds of getting there, so maybe you always want to have your right-handed 'clean-up' hitter batting 9th. However, you might then get a disproportionately low number of home runs getting hit from the right-hand side, so that might not be so good. Besides, part of the whole reason of alternating is to keep the Defense off-balance, and that can apply over the course of a series and a season, not just a game. Maybe you therefore want to switch off the handedness of your 'lead-off' batter each game, but again as long as you're winning with a certain lineup you really should keep it intact until you stop winning with it. Best therefore to change the handedness of your lineup after each loss, but keep it after each win.

Whoever is batting directly in front of the 'clean-up' hitter for each squad should be good at getting actual hits with Runners In Scoring Position (RISP), because at least two batters in each squad will bat earlier, so there's a fair chance that somebody will have reached at least second base by the time that the 'pre-cleanup' batter comes to the plate. In this case, an actual Single is better than a Walk or a Sacrifice Fly, because it gives a runner on second base a chance to score, so the 'pre-cleanup' spots should go to the right-handed and left-handed batters with the highest recent RISP batting average.

The second squad now has a 'lead-off' hitter, a 'pre-cleanup' hitter, and a 'clean-up' hitter, and needs at least a fourth to go into the #7 spot, and that's where we

envision the Pitcher going, who usually has the least amount of experience with batting, so he usually should still be in the bottom half of the order, but should be ahead of both the 'pre-cleanup' and 'clean-up' hitters just in case he is able to get on base at all. [These suggestions descend from our log notes from 9-May-2018, suggesting P to bat 2nd, and revised rationale from 13-Jul-2018 resulting in 7-spot, and further revision from 12-Sep-2018, and AL version from 19-Sep-2018.]

The first squad has a 'lead-off' hitter, a 'pre-cleanup' hitter, and a 'clean-up' hitter, and has the #2 and #3 spots to fill. For those, we recommend using a statistic which the author has not yet seen or heard or read about, and it is what we call the Batting Success Rate (or BSR). We feel that batters are getting gypped when they reach base on an Error, and their Batting Averages do not go up as a result. Even though the fielder bobbled the play in some manner, and maybe you normally would have been put out in similar circumstance, yet at least you did make contact with the ball (always better than striking out!!!), and you did drive it between the lines, and you did so with enough force and/or spin and/or placement that it turned out to be a non-trivial play for the defender, as evidenced by his bobbling. We therefore need a batting statistic that includes Hits and Walks and Errors and any other manner of reaching base. However, that stat should also include getting yourself out but advancing (or scoring) a previous runner, even if it does not fall under the technical definitions of a Sacrifice.

The idea with this new stat -- and specifically with using it for the #2 and #3 spots in the lineup -- is that if the 'lead-off' batter has failed to reach first base, then the right-handed and left-handed batters with the highest BSR will still have a good chance at getting on, and 'setting the table' for the 'pre-cleanup' and 'clean-up' batters. Conversely, if the 'lead-off' batter does get on, then the batters with the highest BSR will also have a good chance of moving him over, so that the 'pre-cleanup' batter with his good RISP average has a good chance of bringing him in, and of course you do want to take that chance because you cannot always depend on your 'clean-up' batter getting a home run or any base hit every single time.

These measures taken together should improve not only your offensive efficiency (because adjacent batters within your lineup will have distinct relationships with one another, instead of simply having all batters other than #9 being followed entirely by weaker batters, the way that many NL teams do it now), but also your offensive morale. For, players like Yasiel Puig would not need to feel bad or grumble because he is placed in the #8 spot, because now that spot does not signify badness but instead is playing a specific and unique and valuable role within the overall team structure. When batters feel better, they do better, just like everybody else, so their improved morale will multiply the increases in your offensive production, and will therefore enhance fan interest.

The model needs to be adjusted for the American League (AL) system, which uses a non-fielding Designated Hitter (DH) in the batting order instead of the Pitcher. In order to spread out your batting power, and still recognize that different batters have different strengths, and still alternate by lefty-righty as much as you practically can with an odd number of players in the batting order, we figure that it's best in the AL structure to go with three squads in your lineup. Each squad has a 'lead-off' batter and a 'clean-up' batter as before, but the middle guy will be what we call the 'move-over' guy. As with the #2 and #3 spots under the NL structure, the 'move-over' guy should have a high Batting Success Rate (BSR), in order to be able to reach if the bases are empty or to move any existing runners along, as each situation demands.

Under this AL variation, if the 'lead-off' batter in your first squad bats left-handed, then the 'lead-off' batter in your second squad should bat right-handed, and they should have the two highest averages of Single-Base Access Per Plate Appearance. The 'lead-off' batter on the third squad should be the remaining player with the highest average in that category. Do the same thing with the BSR for your 'move-over' batters, and the Home-Run Per AB average for your 'clean-up' batters. At some point, you will need to have adjacent batters approaching from the same side of the plate, but do you what you practically can with alternation to keep the defenses as off-balance as possible, and at the same time maximize fan interest.

Seventh, some fans start getting bored with Baseball in the so-called 'dog days' around August, partly because it's one of the physically-hottest times of the year, but also because the games start to look the same as the dozens which have come before, while it's not yet close enough to the postseason for Division standings to matter very much. One thing which we can do to help is to make the visual look of the games differ over the course of the season, and one way in which we can do that is to apply stars or stripes or other emblems to the players' uniforms for having been the MVP's of previous wins during those regular seasons. (Please don't ever select 'co-MVPs', we hate that, pick one and stick with it, but in case of a tie give weight to whoever has fewer previous MVP designations that year.) The emblems can be embroidered with the key details of the games (dates, opponents, scores), as well as a summary of whatever the players did (such as '3 HR' or '12 K') to earn those MVPs.

In addition to giving the fans something to look at which changes over the course of the season (could be fun to see who gets to Two Stripes first, who gets to Three Stripes first, etc.), this protocol could also improve player morale and therefore player performance. For, when players start to go into periodic slumps (which seems to happen to a lot of guys around August), looking at those emblems can remind them of what it physically and mentally felt like back when they were doing better, and maybe that helps them to get back on track sooner. Also, as some players advance in stripes earned, the players with fewer stripes might feel additional motivation to play harder and earn more stripes of their own. It all adds up to improved player performance, improved team results, and improved fan interest.

Question 635.5

Any other problems needing to be addressed with Free Agency?

We heard a lot during the Winter of 2018-2019 that there were lots of problems at the time with Free Agency, because teams were not bidding as vigorously for Bryce Harper and Manny Machado and some others as some of the pundits were expecting.

However, as of January 2019 we do not concur that there necessarily is a problem here which needs fixing. The whole idea of Free Agency is to allow players who have served out their contracts to be signed by the highest bidder, that is, by whichever organizations were willing to pay the most for their services. In other words, they want to introduce an element of free-market economics into the industry.

Trick is, as we discussed extensively during Part II, a free-market economy means that nothing is guaranteed, and that the value of your services can go either up or down relative to what other goods and services are out there to be purchased. If somebody decides that you are charging too high of a rate for the amount and

quality of service which you are offering to provide, then maybe you can successfully persuade some other employer to pay your preferred rate, or maybe you can't. If you can't, then that's the free market telling you collectively that you are charging too much for whatever service you're providing, and that you must either lower your salary expectation or else get better at your job or else find something else to do for a living. It's not the economy. It's you.

That's generally for any industry, and it especially applies in Athletics, where the salary rates are so much higher than in nearly any other profession, and where people are naturally going to look much more closely at how much they are willing to pay for this or that commodity. [Third Pass: Also especially applies in Athletics because, unlike in most professions, one's performance ability degrades over time.]

Some folks claim that we continue to have a level of 'collusion' going on among team Owners, and that the Owners are conspiring together in an agreement to avoid dealing with certain Players until they lower their salary demands. Maybe that's actually happening, and maybe it's not. We're not in those rooms, and we don't have their phones bugged, so we can't tell. Even if it is happening, though, we're not entirely sure that it's a really bad thing in this instance. The industry is already very small, in terms of both prospective employers and prospective employees. Yes, the Owners may possibly collude at some times, but then it could be argued that the Players sometimes do as well, especially when they collectively decide to go on strike and basically hold the industry hostage.

Sorry, but it's hard to feel sorry for anybody making eight million dollars per year who thinks that he deserves to make ten million, and is willing to go on strike to get it. Not in this economy, not when millions of our own American people are starving and homeless, let alone those in the rest of the World.

If players like Harper and Machado are willing to play the Free-Agent Market, then they should be willing to accept whatever that Market says they're actually worth at present, whether that rate happens to go up or down over time. If they ever need to adjust their salary demands downward in order to make themselves more marketable, then that's not a fault or problem of the Free-Agency System. To the contrary, that's the System working.

Question 643.3

At what point do team celebrations on the field begin to constitute 'unsportsmanlike conduct' and therefore become subject to some manner of penalty?

First, before we get into the heart of the Question, let's clarify a point of grammar about which some people might otherwise become concerned: The astute reader will have observed that the more recent portions of this document have done a better job of avoiding the use of the masculine gender for generic pronouns. More specifically, we have tended more frequently to use 'she' and 'her' when speaking about business executives and political leaders and other positions of mental distinction, and to use 'he' and 'him' only when speaking about thieves and bullies and other bad people, just to change things up from the previous practice, and to help us get to a more equal grammatical footing more quickly. It is for this reason that we kept the adjective 'unsportsmanlike' in the text of the Question, instead of using the more gender-neutral 'unsportspersonlike', because it seems to be the men

who get penalized for offensive on-field conduct at a much higher proportion than the women. We can neutralize the expression in later editions if the collective desire is strong enough, or maybe we do net-better by leaving this one as we have it.

That said, let's now get into the substance of the Question.

One of the main purposes of Athletics is to give the individual athletes a chance to show what they can do, as well as to see what the teams are able to do collectively. When an individual athlete or an entire team does something especially and uncommonly good, as compared not only with the general public but also with the other athletes playing the same Sport, it is perfectly natural and reasonable that they will often want to take a moment to celebrate their achievement together. It would be unreasonable of us to expect that they would want or need to be robots all the time, and that they should not possess or express any positive human emotions about what they have just done.

Besides, even if the athletes did manage to show no positive emotion after any touchdown or home run or other big play, then that would get pretty boring for the fans after a short while. One of the important 'entertainment' aspects of the Athletics industry is that we get to see not only the great plays themselves, but also the acknowledgements and celebrations which come with them. If the guys all appear to be simply going through the motions and never celebrating anything, if it looks as though they're thinking 'yeah I/we do this all the time, no big deal', then these great plays end up looking a lot more commonplace than they actually are, and we fans have a lot less motivation to keep watching.

In short, if the players look bored, then the fans will get bored too. If the players look dazzled by what their comrades do, then we fans will be dazzled as well. A certain amount of celebration therefore is not only 'sportsmanlike', but also critical to the fan experience, without which the Athletics industry would go away completely.

As one example of what we always used to think was a perfectly appropriate and fan-pleasing celebration was when the Washington franchise of the NFL had their 'Fun Bunch' back in the 1980's. After a particularly difficult touchdown play, about six of them would form a circle in the end zone, do a little dance together, then give one another a big 'high five'. Seeing the players express such joy and exuberance was almost as much fun for the fans as it must have been to the players themselves.

However, as in most things, it's possible to go too far. When players start taunting their opponents, and insulting and demeaning them, when they become in any way disrespectful of their fellow athletes instead of simply celebrating their own athletic achievements, that's when it can stop being a friendly game, and that's also when it can stop being pleasant for the fans to watch.

In our group's collective feeling as of Session 279 (January 2019), that's where the 'line' is, or should be. If you are doing your own thing off to the side, then you're generally good to go. But, when you perform your celebrations directly in front of any of your opponents, even if you are not directly speaking to them or pointing at them or anything as you do so, that should still be considered 'in their face' enough to constitute 'unsportsmanlike conduct', and to be subject to an appropriate penalty.

In the specific case of Football, the penalty can be either 5 or 10 or 15 yards, depending on the 'flagrancy' of the conduct in the perception of the referees. In the

case of Baseball, any player who is disrespectful enough to another player in the judgment of the umpires can be subject to ejection and replacement. In neither case, though, should the original result which precipitated the exchange be nullified.

Question 643.1 (continued)

Do we have continuing problems with any particular Team names, logos, colors, or other similar attributes?

Kansas City Chiefs

We were not seeing an actual problem with the team name as of Session 279. In general, it must be at least as okay to name a team after the Indigenous Peoples who originally lived here as to do so after the Cowboys and Packers and Steelers who moved in later, provided that we do so in a respectful and non-stereotypical manner.

In this specific instance, the name 'Chiefs' does not directly imply 'warriors', but instead honors the strength and bravery and wisdom which propelled certain individuals to be the Leaders of their Tribes and Nations.

So they have an Arrowhead as part of their logo, and they play in Arrowhead Stadium, not really a big deal. Those folks used arrows for hunting as a critical element of their ongoing survival, so we should not make the mistake of associating that image with any misbegotten perception of the Native Americans as savages who frequently murdered other humans in cold blood.

However, we did uncomfortably observe during the AFC Championship game in January 2019 that the KC fans used the same War Chant and Tomahawk Chop which fans of the Atlanta Braves had used for numerous years. We are recommending (see above) that the Braves fan jettison the practice for multiple reasons, and now we politely offer the same recommendation and request to Kansas City.

Question 646.2

What rules should apply in the case of Overtime?

Used to be that we had a coin toss at the beginning of Overtime, whoever won the coin toss would trivially elect to receive the ball, and whoever scored first in any manner won the game immediately. That's why they used to call it 'Sudden Death'.

As much as we like a certain amount of Tradition in our various Sports rules, yet we must agree that this approach is not really fair, and that the result may not really be reflective of the relative strengths of the teams that day. The odds of winning while possessing first under those conditions are better by such a huge degree that the coin toss is really having too much influence on the outcome of the game.

We therefore applaud the fact that leagues have experimented with different approaches at different times, but we have some problems as to their specific approaches, and we have a recommendation for a different way of doing it.

As a minimum requirement, each team should generally get at least one possession, with the only exception being if the Defense directly produces a score on the first possession. Thus, when New England scored a touchdown on the first possession of

the AFC Championship game in January 2019, we claim that Kansas City should have had at least one chance to get a touchdown themselves. #GiveKCaChance

Even if we do that, though, what then? If the second team gets a Touchdown too, then we're simply back to where we were before. If we then go into 'sudden death' format, then the team who won the coin toss still has too much of an advantage. If we instead keep giving each team an equal number of possessions, then they could trade Touchdowns or stops indefinitely, and the game might not end for days.

Fortunately, as of Session 279 we have a workaround, something which will bring the game to a quick termination, but which will also not give an overwhelming advantage to the winner of the coin toss.

Here's how we do it: Each team has one possession. If the receiving team scores a Touchdown on their possession, then they are permitted an attempt at only a regular Extra Point. If they make that Extra Point, and if the kicking team then scores a Touchdown on their possession, then they must attempt and complete a Two-Point Conversion or else they lose the game.

Among other advantages, this system makes the coin toss more meaningful, but at the same time less impactful on the outcome. For, whoever wins the coin toss now has an important decision to make, and there is value on either side. The receiving team is eligible to attempt a regular Extra Point, so they have a good chance at scoring 7 points and winning the game. However, the kicking team also has the advantage of being able to score 8 points on their possession, but that ability comes with the price of not being able to attempt a regular Extra Point to re-tie the game. The teams automatically switch sides from however they were arranged during the second half, so that is not a factor in the coin toss for Overtime, but the other elements are valuable enough to make it a non-trivial decision for the toss winner.

Another advantage is that you don't keep trading Touchdowns indefinitely, so we have a decent chance at wrapping up the game at a reasonable hour.

This system has some room for customization, so that you can fine-tune it to your particular preferences. One opportunity for variation is what happens if each team scores a Field Goal on its first possession. A theoretical option is to start over with the original Overtime rules of one additional possession for each team, and if the first team gets a Touchdown then they can attempt only a regular Extra Point, and then if the second team also gets a Touchdown then they must complete a Two-Point Conversion or else lose. However, we do not recommend going that way, because it means that we will have gone through the whole time and effort of two complete possessions just to get back to where we started.

A somewhat-better option is to go to 'sudden death' format after consecutive Field Goals. It's a way to go, but it seems at that stage that we may be continuing to play needlessly, for we may already have enough information to determine the outcome.

Our preferred option after consecutive Field Goals is to declare as the game winner whichever Field Goal was kicked from the longer distance. One advantage is that we wrap up the Overtime period after only two possessions. Another advantage is that it rewards not just points but also distance. Third advantage is that requires the receiving team to use some strategy during its drive: Do they try to go all the way to the Goal Line in hope of a Touchdown, and then if unsuccessful settle for a short

Field Goal which the other team will be able to outkick trivially if our Defense fails to stop them? Or, do they stop their drive at a certain point and go for a long Field Goal which will be hard for the other team to outkick? Answer could vary from game to game, based on what you know about your own Kicker, what you know about your opponent's Kicker, how your Defense is holding up, wind conditions, and other factors. We think that it would be interesting to see how different teams approach the problem in different situations.

Another opportunity for variation is what happens if both teams fail to score at all on their initial possessions. Either you could make it 'sudden death' afterward, or else you could require that the kicking team gets one more possession if the receiving team later scores first, but we prefer the first of those. After two successful stops, the effect of the coin toss drops significantly, and the distinction between 'kicking team' and 'receiving team' becomes much less important, and we really don't feel like keeping track after the first two possessions of which team kicked off, so we feel that it would be safe to switch to 'sudden death' format from that point in the interests of both expediency and better drama. However, it's not a necessity.

Another option for what could happen after consecutive stops is that you simply declare as the game winner whichever team got nearer to their Goal Line. It does have the advantage of ensuring that we do not go past two possessions in Overtime. However, it creates a situation where the 37-Yard Line is the new Goal Line, and maybe that's okay, but visually that introduces a whole different element to the game which maybe we do better without. It always was that you can win the game only by scoring points, and that you can score points only by somehow getting the ball past the Goal Line in front of you. There never was any provision to our knowledge that offensive points could be scored or games could be won with the ball never getting past the 37-Yard Line, and we are not convinced that we should be creating such a provision at this time, so we are not recommending it. However, it is a theoretical option if for any reason you want to limit Overtime to only two possessions no matter what.

In sum, we are recommending that there be at least two possessions in Overtime, except if the Defense produces a score on the first possession (in which case game ends immediately), and that there should be no further possessions if either Offense scores during that time. If each team scores a Touchdown on its first possession, then the first team may attempt only a regular Extra Point, and if they make it then the second team must complete a Two-Point Conversion or else lose. If each team scores a Field Goal on its first possession, then the game is decided by whichever Field Goal was longer. If neither team has scored during the first two possessions, then play proceeds on a 'sudden death' basis until any team scores anything.

Question 646.1 (continued)

How do we stop the Quarterback from simply kneeling when ahead during the last moments of the game, removing the other team's last chance to do anything, and making the end-game so dismally boring?

Added in Session 279: By stopping the clock when the Quarterback takes a knee for a loss, we eliminate the necessity to 'spike' the ball for an Incomplete Pass in order to stop the clock, which is what teams with possession currently do sometimes if they are behind in the score with limited time remaining. As mentioned in Answer

645.8, we want to discourage/prohibit the occurrences of throwing the ball to the ground intentionally, so this rule change would remove another motivation to do so.

Taking a knee after the snap can mean a fixed 1-yard loss for simplicity and expediency, unless the Referees really want to try to spot the ball where it lies.

Subsection III-E-10: Boxing

Question 647

Shall we continue to allow Boxing?

If we were to attempt to outlaw Boxing, then numerous science-fiction films (usually set in post-Apocalyptic times) tell us that the activity would carry on underground, meaning less regulatory oversight and more danger to the participants. We would be making the situation worse, not better, so we should not be going that way.

If that many people still really want to do it, and if that many people still really want to pay to see it, and provided that everybody involved in the industry operates fairly and with full knowledge of all the risks, then we suppose that we must regretfully let it go on. It is a key Basic Principle of this entire document that we should all be able to do what we want, if only we do not injure or threaten other people against their will. If somebody is willing to stand up there and get punched 500 times because some other people are willing to pay him money for the privilege of watching it happen, then who are we to claim that such an arrangement should be outlawed?

In addition, we never get tired of watching the first four *Rocky* films, not just for the fun scripts and good acting and cool music and all, but also as shining examples of what regular folks can accomplish if they combine enough courage and dedication with their natural talents. And, we must agree with what he told the Russian crowd in *Rocky IV*, that it's better for two guys to be killing each other than twenty million.

Even with all that, however, although we must reluctantly acknowledge that people have the right to participate in Boxing and to watch Boxing, yet we must recommend on a non-binding basis against either doing it or watching it in 'real life' any further.

Two main reasons why as of Session 279: First main reason is that it strikes us as pretty stupid to participate in any athletic contest where sustaining physical damage is not only a risk but an inevitability.

Second main reason is that by continuing to promote the activity in any way we are also continuing to endorse its main message, that it's okay to beat up and injure other people if only you happen to be strong enough to be able to do so. That's a culture in which Bullies Win, and in which Nations with smaller armies must do the bidding of Nations with larger armies, or else suffer from War and other nastinesses.

But, you may ask, how can we continue to enjoy the *Rocky* films if we are now claiming that Boxing should be discouraged? Answer is for the same reason that we can enjoy *Patton* and numerous other films about War, while at the same time maintaining that we should avoid all War in the future. We can also like *The Godfather* and *Goodfellas* without endorsing Gangsterism: We can enjoy the films in an historical and artistic context, and we can be moved to admire the achievements

of the characters who did what they could under the conditions which prevailed at the time, but we can still encourage those conditions to be different going forward.

You may also ask, what about what Rocky said about two guys killing each other being better than twenty million? Shouldn't we continue to slake our bloodlust vicariously through the injuries which our 'modern gladiators' inflict upon each other within our small arenas, rather than by engaging one another in real-life Fistfighting or International War? Might be nice in theory, but it hasn't seemed to work out that way in history. We have had many cultures in many places and times stage Boxing and Swordfighting and other contests based on Violence, and still we have been plagued by War through the centuries. Keeping a certain amount of Violence in our Sports does not seem to be preventing or even reducing it in 'real life', and may even be encouraging it, so maybe we should see whether reducing Violence in our Sports will also reduce it in our real world. Can't make it much worse.

We have heard it argued that Boxing should be not only allowed but encouraged, because it encourages people to learn the skill of Self-Defense, which you never know might come in handy someday. Problem with this argument is that Boxing involves much more than Self-Defense, it involves actual infliction of mayhem on the other guy. You don't win a Boxing match by defending yourself better, you win it by causing more injury to the other guy than he is causing to you. It's all about Damage, it's all about Pain, it's all about Injury, it's all about Violence, it's all about all the Crap which a huge portion of this document is trying so hard to avoid.

We have also heard it argued that Boxing should be encouraged because it involves the skill of reacting to your opponent's actions within fractions of a second, unlike Chess which can involve several minutes for each move. However, the sports of Fencing and Wrestling also involve real-time reactions, but (with appropriate Rules and Equipment) do not involve any injury to yourself or your opponents. Tennis is also pretty quick, with about a full second between volleys, and involves no physical contact at all. We thus have enough other one-on-one Sports involving immediate responses to your opponent's actions that we don't need Boxing in addition to them.

Good news is that even if we can't outlaw Boxing, at least we can discourage it, not just through this document but in how we address it as a Society on an ongoing basis. For instance, while we probably need to allow matches to be shown on certain TV networks on a 'pay-per-view' basis, at least we can make sure not to broadcast them on general-access networks, the way that we used to do on 'Wide World of Sports', which seemed fun at the time, watching Ali and Frazier and Foreman and all those guys, but we didn't realize how much we were continuing to promote a Culture of Violence by displaying those contests in front of millions of impressionable kids.

Another way to discourage Boxing without outlawing it is to drop it as an Olympic event. The Olympics were always about friendly competition, about taking time out from War and Violence and Conflict and Hatred, while we have some fun playing some games, and see who is more physically gifted without sending people onto a battlefield. We see little sense in including as an Olympic sport any activity which emphasizes the infliction of contusions and concussions and organ damage upon your fellow human beings. Does not seem consistent with the 'Olympic ideal'.

We understand that they have been trying to mitigate the violent effects of Boxing through the use of protective headgear, and by modifying the Rules to reward any contact and not just damaging contact. However, we regretfully claim that these

steps do not go far enough. You still need to hit quickly in order to contact your opponent before he moves out of the way or blocks your punch, and any blow which is delivered that fast is likely to cause some amount of damage, even with protective equipment. Even more, the simple fact that we are training our athletes to develop and strengthen the specific muscle memory of thrusting their fists forward, which is not really useful in any other athletic activity with the possible exception of the Shot Put, has the effect of mentally conditioning those athletes that it's both acceptable and actively desirable for them to thrust those fists forward whenever any opponent is standing in front of them. That is a bad Social message, and we want it stopped.

Opponents should resolve their differences in some way other than by thrusting fists, or by wielding any other weapons. Let's by all means teach actual Self-Defense, so that we can deal with the actual bullies and other bad people when the time comes. After that, let's not train and encourage people to thrust their fists forward to make physical impact with their opponents' heads and bodies. No good can come of it.

In sum, reluctantly okay to allow Boxing to continue in clubs and on 'pay-per-view', in order to satisfy the bloodthirsty adult savages who will find a way to pursue their peculiar passions whether we legally allow it or not, but let's please eliminate it from the Olympics and from any other general-public broadcast which could be seen by kids.

Same for any 'Mixed Martial Arts' (MMA) contests which involve kicking or choking or any other action clearly intended to cause pain and injury to your opponents. No contest based on violence should be broadcast on any medium accessible to kids.

Subsection III-E-11: Olympics

Question 647.1

Shall we continue the institution of the Olympics for the foreseeable future?

Yes, as of Session 279, we certainly hope to. The institution still seems to be a net-positive thing for us, specifically as Americans and generally as Humans, and the moments of dazzling greatness seem to far outnumber and outshine the occasional bump, so let's by all means continue to support it, with the greatest of pleasure.

Question 647.2

To what extent shall we continue to encourage the inclusion of Gymnastics, Figure Skating, Diving, and any other events which involve judging?

Some folks may prefer to watch contests which are decided by objective factors such as most points or fewest seconds, but events like Figure Skating and Gymnastics also continue to have large followings, and they clearly also require athletic ability and years of preparation in order to be able to compete at the International level.

It has been a problem at different times that the political bias of certain Judges has occasionally influenced their scorings, and thus the outcomes of certain events. If such actions ever become too pervasive, then we may need to revisit this Question, and possibly reduce or eliminate from the Olympics any event which requires the judgment of human beings. In the meantime, please keep doing what you can with both scoring formats (dropping the high and low scores is often helpful) and judging selection to mitigate the frequency and severity of politically-biased judging.

For those event categories which do not already do so, we have one specific suggestion (it's a bit mathematical, so okay for the casual reader to skip to the next paragraph, and we'll take care of this one) which can help to motivate Judges to score fairly if they want to keep their jobs: Program your computers to calculate the 'standard deviation' of the scores from each routine, and to count the number of times that each individual Judge's scores fell outside of that range. If after a certain number of attempts a given Judge has either too many outliers, or too high a proportion of outliers, then he can be removed from further use as a Judge.

Another theoretical possibility is to exclude all politically-controversial Nations from participating in the judging pool. Leave it up to Norway and New Zealand and other folks who manage to stay out of trouble. However, that strikes us as being contrary to the Olympic ideal: If athletes from all Nations should be allowed to participate, then judges from all Nations should be allowed to critique them. Maybe we end up needing to suspend a certain Nation from judging access for a limited time in the case of some particularly-scandalous conspiracy, but otherwise best to give everyone an ongoing chance to participate in the Games fairly, whether as Athletes or Judges.

As a possible specific exception, we might at some point need to cut the Ribbon Twirling, because that looks to us much more like a Dance competition than an Athletic contest, so it may be more appropriate for other times and places than for the Olympics. However, we can wait to see whether public sentiment ever once catches up to agree with our group.

Question 647.3

Shall the Winter and Summer games be held in the same year or different years?

Obviously, there's arguments both ways, because we've done it both ways.

There's a certain amount of traditional and historical charm associated with keeping both Games scheduled on those years which are divisible by four, so that the intervening four-year period can still be properly referenced with its original label of 'Olympiad'. Also, people previously needed to wait it out for the entire four years of any Olympiad before getting to enjoy the next Olympic experience, and so maybe we want to require our modern people to do the same thing. Sort of keeps us all in the same community over time, whatever that means.

On the other hand, especially now that both Games are so much more heavily populated and widely broadcast and extensively sponsored than ever before, as a practical matter we need to recognize that that's now an awful lot of logistics and schedule reconstruction and 'hype' to happen twice within any single year, even if we ignore the fact (which we don't) that the elections for U.S. President always happen in the same year. Our 'inner accountant' tells us to spread out that effort and expense, and have the Games alternate every two years as they do now.

Besides, it was not so big of a deal back in 776 B.C. to make people wait four years for the next Olympics, because they didn't have all that much else going on anyhow. By contrast, our 'iPhone Generation' (as we called ourselves during Session 279) has a much shorter attention span these days, with so much more going on to watch and to talk about, and with our advanced technologies bringing Sports coverage to us

within milliseconds instead of months. We can't really expect people to wait four years between their Olympic experiences anymore, so let's not bother to try. In sum, no change from current system.

Question 647.4

To what extent shall professional athletes (however that may be defined) be permitted to participate in the Olympic Games?

One of the trends which caused the original Olympics to decline and eventually discontinue was the inclusion of professional athletes in their equivalent of a 'circus' environment. As with Answer 647.3, though, a lot of things were way different as of Session 279 from how they were centuries before, and so maybe we shouldn't be applying the same standards and harboring the same expectations.

They have been allowing NBA stars and other pro athletes to participate for several years now (we fondly remember the 'Dream Team' of 1992, featuring Magic Johnson and Michael Jordan and other big names), and the Earth has continued to rotate.

What we are generally doing here is to see which Athletes are the best, and which Nations are producing them. Allowing professionals to participate helps tell us that.

On the other hand, it was always the vision of Baron Coubertin to utilize only amateur athletes, who presumably are there only for the fun and competition, and not for any salary or endorsement, so both the athletes and the overall competition were considered to be 'purer'.

On the previous hand, our modern Games are viewed by many more people than saw them in 1896, and the athletic standards are more demanding than ever. It is no longer reasonable to expect college students and farm hands and office clerks and fast-food flippers to have both the spare time and the spare change to put in the level of training necessary to compete on the international stage. We should expect some amount of corporate support going to at least some of these athletes, if we are to keep seeing the level of competition to which we now have become accustomed.

Question 647.5

Under what conditions (if any) would we wish to allow the exclusion of any Nation from a given Olympic competition?

Established in Session 279 that we should not allow Steroids. [Generalized later.]

Subsection III-E-12: Pool/Billiards

Question 647.7

How -- if at all -- do we want to clarify/change any rules in 8-Ball, 9-Ball, Cowboy, Cutthroat, or any other Pool/Billiards game?

As of Session 279, probably not so much. Rules already need to change according to whether or not you're playing at a coin-operated table. If you are not, then you get to assess penalties by bringing up a ball after any Scratch or Table Scratch.

Beyond this, some venues evolve certain favorite variations on the Basic Rules, such as the 'last pocket' rule of requiring the 8-ball to be sunk in the same pocket as the last non-8. Best to allow any such variations to happen as they wish, but just make sure that they are clearly understood by any new players, to avoid the physical altercations which have sometimes arisen over misunderstandings about the rules.

Any such newbies are thus strongly advised to make sure that you clearly understand the 'house rules' before boldly taking on the locals on their home floor.

Subsection III-E-13: Chess

Question 647.9

Any changes to recommend in Chess?

We introduced two suggestions in Session 279, and more later.

In the 2018 World Championship, each of the 12 regulation games ended in a draw, which had never happened before. The rules provided that a tie at end of regulation play should be resolved by a series of tiebreaker games at extra-short speeds.

We disagree with this approach, because it makes the result too random. We feel that Chess should operate the same as Boxing: Even though we don't like Boxing all that much, yet they did always seem to have the right idea that one needs to defeat the Champion decisively in order to displace him. If a championship match ends in a draw, then the Champion retains the title.

It should be the same in Chess: If the score is tied after all regulation games are played, then the match should be over, and the Champion should retain his title.

Second suggestion relates to Chess.com and other online platforms which have their own separate rating systems. We are plagued by players who allow the times to expire when they are in lost positions, instead of officially resigning. They currently lose the same number of points either way, but those looking on cannot clearly tell that the winner actually merited a win by superior position, as opposed to the other guy simply letting the game get away through poor time management. In addition, it gets boring to wait for several days while the other guy allows the clock to run out.

We feel that this practice can be mitigated drastically if we assess a larger point loss for a loss-on-time than for a loss-by-resignation, so that more people have a motivation to play the game out as long as they have a chance to win, and to resign for the record when the game is lost. Don't need to add any extra points to the game winner, because they didn't do anything other than win the game normally, but yes extra penalty points to anyone who loses by time.

Subsection III-E-14: Monopoly

Question 648

So, what about the Free Parking rule, anyway?

Notwithstanding the 'house rules' which some folks prefer, and which some aren't even aware are 'house rules' at all, we are standing by and supporting the actual

rules on this point. That is, we claim that it is good to leave Free Parking as an empty resting space which does not involve any kind of 'jackpot' or other bonus. We feel that it helps to have a free space to land on when there's lots of hotels and stuff around, but that it's not good to give people a big 'windfall' for a total stroke of luck. The balance between luck and skill in this game is just right as it is, without making things more random by awarding any kind of 'jackpot' for landing on Free Parking.

Question 649

Do we like the rules by which one gets out of Jail?

This is one 'house rule' of ours which we are recommending for general usage.

Under the current rules, if it is either your first or second roll after ending up in Jail, then you have the option either to stay in Jail for your roll, or else to get out of Jail by posting \$50 bail or by playing a 'Get Out Of Jail Free' card. If you come out of Jail at that point, then you position your token on 'Just Visiting' and roll normally. If you choose to remain in Jail for your roll, then you still come out if you roll Doubles, but you do not roll again afterward.

In our opinion as of Session 279, the decision is too easy under these conditions, and therefore too boring. If it's early in the game, then you obviously want to be out of Jail immediately, so that you can keep trying to buy as many good properties as you can during their limited remaining period of availability. If it's later in the game, then you obviously want to stay in Jail in order to avoid landing on other people's Houses and Hotels.

We feel that it's much more interesting to make the decision about coming out of Jail after you have already rolled the dice. You can still pay \$50 or play your card before the roll if you want, with play proceeding normally after that, same as under the current rule. Also, if you do roll Doubles while in Jail, then you must accept the roll but you do not roll again afterward, same as under the current rule.

Difference is, if you roll a non-Double during either your first or second turn in Jail, then you have the option to stay in Jail or to pay your \$50 bail (or play your card), and then you can play that roll normally.

If you roll a non-Double during your third turn in Jail, then you must pay your \$50 (or play your card) and take the roll whether you want to or not, same as current.

This one small change can make things a little more interactive and interesting later in the game, by introducing an extra layer of non-trivial decisionmaking into the mix.

Subsection III-E-15: Scrabble

Question 649.2

Which types of words should be allowed, and which disallowed?

The idea of Scrabble always was to challenge people to use actual words, and not to allow them the 'shortcut' of using any expressions which are not actual words. There was always supposed to be a certain amount of standardization, such that all players would be operating from basically the same set of acceptable expressions, so that

the game would be testing both your recall of the standard words and your strategy of placing them in the right places at the right times.

For this reason, the rules of the game have always excluded 'slang' words, as well as all but the most common interjections, because it is far too easy to claim that any random string of letters is a valid 'slang' word or a valid interjection. ("Remember that time when I got upset and yelled 'QWBJVXZ'?") It is also common practice to use only a single language for your word source, so that multilingual people would not have such a trivial advantage over unilinguals, but of course variations can be allowed in casual settings, although they should not be allowed in tournaments.

Problem is, a lot of folks whom the author has encountered in tournaments have insisted upon using the so-called 'Scrabble Players Dictionary' as their word source, which is not such a bad idea in theory, but it fails in practice according to our perception as of Session 279. That book includes a lot of expressions which appear to come directly from other languages, such as names for certain Vietnamese coins, instead of actually coming from English. Also, some other entries which do not specify a foreign origin still don't sing out as being actual English words, because we have never heard them anywhere nor seen them in print.

While we are not in a position to speculate reliably on anyone else's intentions, it does appear that the publishers were attempting to throw numerous entries into the book which are not actual English words, in order to give players more options and allow them to trounce players who rely on actual dictionaries for their word sources. Maybe they felt that they would sell more books that way. Maybe they were right.

In any case, the result is that some players have trained themselves to memorize the 'Scrabble Players Dictionary' (or at least the special 2-letter and 3-letter lists, which contain so many entries that players have a good chance of qualifying on many random letter strings which they don't recognize as actual words), without any regard to whether the words actually come from the English language, nor to what the words may mean. Someone places a certain expression on the board, another player asks 'What does that word mean?', first player says 'I don't know, but it's in the Scrabble Dictionary'. That happened to the Moderator a lot.

Dictionaries are here to tell us which words currently exist in a given language, not to create words which do not already exist elsewhere. Therefore seems to our group's perception that we have lost the art of placing only valid words on the board during games of Scrabble (as well as card-based variations such as Palabra and Quiddler), and that we have reduced the motivation for people to add words to their individual vocabularies by learning their actual meanings.

Obviously, players can agree on any word source for their games, whether in casual settings or in tournaments. And, if any two opponents agree not to use the 'Scrabble Players Dictionary', then they might have a hard time settling on which reference source to use instead, because each one of them might have a different preference with which she is already more familiar.

We therefore are offering a few recommendations here: First, unless all players at a given table willingly agree to use the 'Scrabble Players Dictionary' as their reference source, we politely suggest that it be discouraged, partly because it includes numerous entries which do not resemble actual English words, and partly because it emphasizes memorization of spelling over building of vocabulary.

Second, if there is agreement to boycott the 'Scrabble Players Dictionary' for the duration of that game, and if the players then disagree about what source to use instead, then we politely offer a temporary default of the 'American Heritage Dictionary', partly because we distrust any dictionary which contains the misleading expression "Webster's" in its title* [*We can't prohibit the use of "Webster's" in a dictionary name, partly because it is in the public domain, and partly because some new lexicographer might come along someday whose name actually is Webster. However, we can discourage it through boycott, on the grounds that we shouldn't be buying any dictionary which is not confident enough in the quality of its own product to place its own unique brand identity upon it. That way, where once the use of "Webster's" may have helped sales for those dictionary-makers, it will now be something to be avoided. Each dictionary can then have its own unique brand, and we can then easily distinguish those brands which do the best job of balancing the goals of documenting the language and helping properly to shape and protect it.] (SO that eliminates a lot of contenders), and partly because they seem to have done a pretty good job over the years of including numerous English words without including too many non-English words. Oxford English Dictionary (OED) is another possibility, but it is way too huge and comprehensive for convenient use in casual games.

Third, we are hoping that someone will come along one day, who has more free time than the Moderator does, but who is just as fussy and fastidious, and who will be willing to create a new dictionary which features these four basic attributes:

(A) No word should be listed unless it has appeared in actual literature somewhere, without any Capitals or 'quotes' or *italics* or any other editorial indicator which might suggest that it is anything other than an actual standard English word.

(B) So that the reader can be confident that the listed 'word' is an actual word, each entry should include two examples from actual literature. The first example should be the oldest known occurrence of the word with its currently-accepted spelling. The second example should be one of the most recent occurrences of the word, so that we can tell that it still is in modern usage.

(C) Every single word which meets the conditions of (A) should be separately listed, including all plurals and other 'forms of the word'. Reason is that a lot of these 'forms' (technically known as 'inflections') have irregular spellings, such that the reader who does not know the text language very well might not recognize that they are forms of other words, and therefore might not be able to find them easily in a 'regular' dictionary.* [If you are unconvinced that this is a real-life problem, then we suggest that you try picking up a book or news article written in French or some other unfamiliar language, and try to translate it one word at a time using a regular dictionary. You will have a hard time, because not all of the expressions which you see in print will appear as primary alphabetical entries in the dictionary.] When all words (both 'roots' and 'inflections') appear separately within the master word list, it is a lot easier to tell how many words exist within the modern language at any particular time of history, and it is a lot easier for people to learn those words, whether it is their primary language or a secondary one.

(D) Don't give it a title which has anything to do with anyone named Webster.

When they finally get around to creating this Best Of All Dictionaries, then we will recommend it for primary use in Scrabble and all similar games.

Question 649.3

If we are agreeing in Section I-D that an Office of Language Services at the Federal level should periodically produce a standard dictionary of American English, then should we encourage this work to be adopted -- either formally or informally -- as a primary authority in Scrabble?

This certainly will depend on whether we end up actually agreeing to having that Office in our final structure, and as of Session 279 we are not as convinced of it as

we once were. If we do have it, then we would now have a hard time justifying the expenditure of Federal resources to assemble and update a special dictionary for Scrabble players, when we have millions of people in our Nation (let alone elsewhere) who are in desperate need of food and shelter and basic medical care.

However, if the Fed is doing so anyway, and if the book contains one main listing of the actual regular words (including all plurals and other inflections), and secondary listings for letters and contractions and abbreviations and proper names and other expressions which readers might find in print but which are not actual standard words, then yes we would be happy to nominate that dictionary as a primary source to replace the 'Scrabble Players Dictionary' and American Heritage and anything else.

In the meantime, as discussed in Answer 649.2, we should continue to use some source other than the 'Scrabble Players Dictionary', so that we can establish by real-life example (preferably both historic and recent) that each entry is an actual English word. However, our primary recommendation at this preliminary point is that the dictionary should be created by a private organization, and if necessary ratified by Executive or Legislative action as being an acceptable reference source for anyone wishing to use the American English language for any official or casual purpose.

Question 643.2

To what extent shall we either allow/encourage or prohibit/discourage the use of 'performance-enhancing drugs' (PED's) in professional or amateur Sports?

Introduced after Session 279, to generalize the Olympic policy discussed in Q647.5: This is another one where different people seem to have different preferences.

We have heard it expressed by some people (both on TV and in 'real life') that PED's should be allowed into professional Sports without restriction, because those fans are simply interested in seeing the biggest and strongest athletes doing the biggest and strongest things, and they don't care what chemicals the athletes may have needed to ingest in order to help them perform at those levels. They also don't care about any comparisons of performance between current players and those of the past. They just want to see the biggest homers, the longest throws, the hardest hits, the fastest runs, and everything else as huge and spectacular as we now can make it.

Some of them will defend their position by pointing out that we have other methods of training and exercise and performance evaluation now which were not available to our predecessors. We have better machines for strength buildup, we have greater knowledge of diet and other aspects of body chemistry, we have video and other equipment which can help us to look at mechanics in greater detail, we have the 'Tommy John' surgery, we have all the computer programs which can give us much more 'analytics' than we ever had before. In short, we already have numerous other advantages over our predecessors which are allowed, so it stands to reason that we will eventually supplant all (or at least most) of their averages and all (or at least most) of their records, as we have already done in many cases. Why should we arbitrarily allow some advantages to modern athletes and disallow some other ones?

We have an Answer: It is because all those other modern technologies still require the athlete to put in time and physical effort in order to take advantage of them, so we still have reason to admire the athlete not only for each specific good play but for

the years of commitment which it took to get to that level of performance, whereas the drugs provide a 'shortcut' which makes the athlete's performance much less meaningful and therefore less worthy of admiration.

The whole reason why we have Athletics in the first place is to be able to see which Individuals and which Teams are currently the best at what they do, so that we can all be inspired to see what is within reach for real-life people to do, if only they possess the combination of talent and ambition and dedication and concentration needed to train hard enough between games and play hard enough during games.

By contrast, when you introduce PED's into the picture, it becomes far less a contest of which Athletes are the best, and it becomes more about which Drugs are the best. While we realize that some folks don't care about the distinction, yet some other folks find that a contest as to which Drugs are the best is not so interesting to watch.

But, as with other similar topics discussed elsewhere in this document, there's a chance that we would upset some people if we do it all one way, and upset some others if we do it all the other way. Do we therefore again reach a finding of 'no finding', and allow different Individuals and Teams and Sports to do as they wish?

Not in this instance. As a matter of Philosophy, we are claiming that Athletics provide us with a great Social Benefit, by inspiring some of us to excel athletically and by moving many of us to admire other people's athletic achievements, all generally helping to make Humanity better in terms of both what we can achieve and the amount of work which we are willing to put in to make it happen, but that those noble objectives vanish if we once allow athletic outcomes to be influenced by artificial chemicals instead of by hard work.

We therefore claim that an Athletics industry which disallows PED's is good not just for those individual Sports but for all Humanity, and that an Athletics industry which does allow PED's is bad for Humanity. We therefore ask that all professional and amateur Leagues (including the Olympics organization) continue to disallow PED's, and to pursue any possible violations aggressively. Baseball in particular might want to give a test to each player who has hit a certain number of home runs since his previous test. Track and Swimming and other similar Sports might want to check any athlete who achieves a certain time, or wins by a certain margin, or does something else unusual and therefore suspicious. [Modified in Third Pass.]

Enforcement should continue to include barring any players from entering their respective Halls of Fame if a preponderance of the available evidence indicates that they used banned substances knowingly. For, we agree with those who feel that those players should have known that what they were doing was bad for their Sport, and more generally bad for Humanity. If true, then they should not be rewarded for their deliberate 'cheating' by providing them with such a positive acknowledgement as enrollment in the Hall of Fame.

Do also please continue to mark with an asterisk any records which appeared to have been set by players who are found to have used banned substances to enhance their performance artificially, or else remove those entries from the record books entirely. The whole idea of the record books -- as with the Sports generally -- is to see which people did the best things, and not which drugs had the biggest effect, so by all means okay to marginalize or ignore in the books anything which one apparently did while he had a lot of performance-enhancing crap in his system.

Those others of you who currently like to have contests to see which of your drugs translate to better performances on the athletic field would do us all of a big favor by instead turning your attentions and your biochemical talents toward seeing which of you can first bring relief to victims of Cancer and Diabetes and HIV and other serious diseases of the human body. That's a competition which we would attend eagerly.

Question 646.5 (continued)

Do we need to make any rule changes to Basketball?

Second suggestion relates to Free Throws. The idea has always been that the player has a free chance at making a basket, so there is to be no interference from any other players. They are therefore required to stand along the 'key' to wait for any rebound on the last Free Throw, but they're supposed to stay outside the lines in order to refrain from interfering with the Free Throw. Trouble is, players have become so eager to get into position for rebounding that they have often left their assigned positions while the ball is still in the hands of the shooter. This can have the effect of interfering with the shooter, and unduly altering the outcome.

Players on both sides have been guilty, and so they both should be subject to penalty. Whenever the refs catch anyone entering the 'key' while the shooter is still touching the ball, the shot (regardless of whether it was made or missed or never attempted) should be taken over, and the overly-eager player should be removed from the vicinity of the key without replacement for the remainder of that sequence of Free Throws. This will mean that the other team will have a much better chance at securing a rebound if the final Free Throw is missed, so hopefully all players will have more motivation to visually confirm the release of the ball before they move.

The penalty can apply to multiple players on the same Free Throw, even if they are on opposing teams, and even if it means that only the shooter will be close enough to his Free Throw to attempt a rebound. Shooter may pretend to shoot in order to draw opponents off the line if he suspects from experience that they are likely to do so, but should exercise caution, for he may draw his own guys off the line as well.

Question 377 (continued)

Shall banks be owned and operated by a governmental entity, or by private interests?

Senator Elizabeth Warren tweeted on 24-Jan-2019 that she was "proposing something brand-new" in introducing a 'wealth tax' on the richest individuals, but we had discussed this concept back in Session 205, and mentioned it in our Report #45, published in the August 2017 issue of the L.A. Mensa newsletter.

Question 647.6

Do we have any suggestions/requests to offer regarding TV coverage of the Olympics?

Yes, we do. It seemed unnecessary in January 2019 that we should ever need to sit through any taped coverage. There are many events, and many athletes competing

in them, and we ought to be able to spread things out in such a way that there is always something going on which can receive live TV coverage around the World.

We strongly suggest that the organizers of each Games should schedule all outdoor events in local daytime, and all indoor events in local nighttime. Many athletes and tourists already need to adjust their sleep schedules from their long travels, so it is not unreasonable to adjust to the local schedules for indoor and outdoor events.

Not only is live TV coverage more exciting for the viewer, but it also helps to bring us together as a global community, everybody watching the same thing at the same time. We were all able to see live coverage in 1972, so why can't we see it now?

Question 418 (continued)

Of these basic types, which is the fairest method of taxation, or is it appropriate for more than one type to be levied at once by a single jurisdiction?

Added in January 2019: If we do decide that we want to exempt items with lower unit prices from sales tax, because they presumably are more likely to be purchased by poorer people, and because by exempting lower-priced items we help to make the sales tax less 'regressive', then there are a few things that we need to do in order to make that happen. Key point to figure out is what that price cutoff should be, which will strike an optimal balance between generating revenue for the community and easing the tax burden on the poor people whom we are trying to feed. That cutoff will need to vary among locations and over time, according to numerous economic factors, so it must be recalculated by each jurisdiction for each budget cycle. In order to make those ongoing decisions effectively, the folks performing those analyses really ought to have good data available on how much total sales volume each jurisdiction has experienced at each level of unit price within the review period. They then would be able to calculate how much tax revenue they would lose for each price level which got exempted. If the data show that exempting the lower price levels would not result in too severe of a drop in total tax revenue, then that jurisdiction could feel a lot more comfortable in exempting more of those lower price levels from taxation. If the data show that exempting those lower price levels would result in substantial revenue loss, then they would need to re-evaluate. Either way, you want to make sure that you have that good data available for your analysis, and so far our group has not been able to discover any examples of such data being available online for either the Fed or any subsidiary jurisdiction of the U.S.A., so we are recommending that we bump that up on our collective to-do list.

Question 647.5 (continued)

Under what conditions (if any) would we wish to allow the exclusion of any Nation from a given Olympic competition?

Session 280 (January 2019): One condition is easy. Other condition is harder. If a 'heavy preponderance' of the available evidence indicates that a particular Nation cheated during a recent Olympic competition [including by steroid use as discussed in Answer 643.2], or in any other significant way violated the rules and policies which have been duly established and ratified by the Olympics' governing body, then one remedy which certainly can be actively considered is to suspend the offending Nation for at least the next time when that particular event comes up in an Olympic

competition, or maybe from the entire next Olympics of the same winter/summer variety, or maybe even for a fixed number of years from all Olympic participation.

If our hangup is about something other than what the Nation in question allegedly did during an actual Olympic competition, then the Question becomes harder.

The whole idea of the modern Olympics is for all Nations to 'take a break' from their various international conflicts, and engage in some friendly fun and games, while in the process taking an occasional moment to recognize and appreciate the great things which Human Beings can achieve if they have enough commitment and dedication. It follows that any Nation which is especially hateful and violent toward its neighbors, to the point where they probably do not recognize the value of this ideal, probably doesn't belong on the same stage.

On the other hand, if the Olympic Ideal demands that all Nations on 'the other side' must stand down their political aggressions in order to participate, then it demands the same thing of us. We too must set aside our political prejudices, and focus on just the People and the Athletics.

Of course, that doesn't mean that you don't get to cheer when someone from your home Nation -- or some other Nation which you happen to like -- does well in the Olympic Games, nor to wish a low medal count for certain other Nations which tend to irk you somehow. That's part of why the athletes represent Nations at the Games, and not just Clubs or Leagues or Corporations, is so that we get to do that. However, wishing a low medal count for some particular Nation is one thing; barring them from participating at all is something else, and we had better have some pretty good reasons available if we are going to take that harsh step for anything other than simple athletic cheating.

Another important point to remember in this discussion: Not only are the Olympics intended (at least in theory) to be conducted outside of any atmosphere of political difference among the Nations, but we generally established way back in early Part I that Nations generally get to do whatever they want within their borders, as long as they are not harming or endangering or threatening other Nations. That's why we have separate Nations in the first place, and not just a single homogeneous society, so that different Cultures which prefer different ways of living can feel free to live their own lives in their own ways, because no one of us is wise enough to decide which national ways are net-better than which other national ways.

As we stated back in Part I, we will evacuate anyone who hates her nation's policies and can't get out any other way (in the tradition of the Scarlet Pimpernel), but otherwise we will not meddle in what a sovereign Nation does within its own borders.

It follows that we are often going to be unqualified to decide that any Nation's purely-internal policies are grounds for exclusion from the Olympics. We therefore are recommending as a partial Answer that any entirely-internal practice or policy should not be considered as a valid basis for Olympic exclusion.

But, what if some policy or practice of theirs actually is affecting one or more other Nations? What if they're at War with somebody? What if they're wantonly polluting the Global Environment? What if they're violating some other duly-established requirement of the prevailing International Oversight Organization?

If any Nation is currently engaged in open and active Warfare against one or more other Nations, or if they are openly threatening any Nation(s) with military or nuclear attack, then they clearly are not interested in Peace at this point in their history, so they have no business participating in the Olympics until they re-learn how to 'play well with others'. They therefore should not be surprised or offended once they hear that they have been banned from Olympic participation pending the permanent cessation of all hostilities.

If they are causing Environmental damage outside their borders, then a sufficiently-verified and sufficiently-heavy violation may be held as sufficient cause for Olympic exclusion, but please be very careful here, because either these judgments can be very subjective, or at least they can appear to be subjective, so whoever is making the case for exclusion had better be making a really strong case.

Same goes for any other violation of actual Global Law (as duly established by the prevailing 'international oversight organization'): If it is severe enough of a problem, and if you have really strong evidence of culpable participation, then you can consider some amount of overall Olympic suspension, but again you had better be prepared to justify your decision to the inevitable wave of protests.

If it is not a violation of actual Global Law, then any hangup which some of us might have about whatever they're doing is probably going to be a matter of personal or cultural preference, and may therefore not be sufficiently robust of a cause to justify exclusion from the Olympics. If their ways are not your ways, then maybe it's you who needs to change, or maybe nobody needs to change, but in any case don't use that as grounds for Olympic exclusion unless and until the Global Governance collectively agrees with you through due process.

In our model, any decision by the International Olympic Committee (or any other entity which may oversee the Olympics in future) to suspend any Nation from any amount of Olympic participation may be appealed to the House of Nations, which is one of three equal houses of the Earth Congress, and which is specifically tasked with deciding any issue involving international interaction, including as to athletic competition, as can be seen in Appendix G of the final package.

SECTION III-F: LANGUAGE

Question 650

Any need to clarify rules of Language as part of this effort?

At the time that we assembled our 'black book' of preliminary ideas back in the mid-1990's, when things were not quite as goofy as they later became (!), we envisioned a Federal agency called the 'Office of Language Services', which would somehow keep track of the ongoing evolution of America's primary language(s), and provide updated models which would serve as the basis for Education, Diplomacy, Contracts, Journalism, and other fields where clarity of communication can be highly helpful.

We were prepared to argue that the cost of the agency would be justified by different improvements that it would render in our Society, such as by reducing civil litigation and criminal prosecutions (because laws and contracts would be understood more easily), and also by allowing immigrants to assimilate into our Society more easily so that they could contribute to our economic growth more quickly.

As of Session 280, however, we were not sure that we actually need an 'Office of Language Services' at the Federal level, with so many citizens lacking Food and Shelter and Medical Care. It may be far more cost-effective to allow academic institutions like the University of Chicago, or dictionary publishers like American Heritage, to use their expertise to provide ongoing documentation of our current vocabularies and spellings and grammars, which they would be doing anyway. If their private efforts ever require any official rulings from the Federal Government, then a simple Congressional legislation usually can accomplish that task much more easily and cheaply than a separate cost-center in the Executive Branch ever could.

Whether such an agency exists in the Federal structure or not, though, we still want to have some amount of discussion in this document about the topic of Interpersonal Communication, because we have some pretty big Social problems in this area, and any Society does better when its members communicate better with one another.

We therefore will be highlighting here a sampling of the problems which currently hang us up the most. If we end up overlooking any of your personal 'pet peeves', then we are hoping that the examples presented within the Subsections below will provide a context and guidance for addressing any other specific issues.

Question 650.5

Before getting to any specifics, what opinion -- if any -- shall we render on the topic of 'Ebonics'?

This is an expression which we hadn't heard in the news much for a few years prior to Session 280, so maybe it is no longer perceived as a problem or issue requiring our collective social attention. Or, maybe it's still an issue which has just been getting eclipsed by other news.

In any case, let's do make it generally clear that -- no matter what specific clarifications or standardizations we might accomplish in the course of this Section -- we yet fully expect that some Regions and some Subcultures will continue to develop and maintain 'dialects', minor variations in Vocabulary and/or Pronunciation which can often develop when any group communicates mostly within itself, but which hopefully can still be recognized (more or less) by outsiders.

This is a big part of what happens with Language generally. 'Control freaks' such as the Moderator might love to insist that there is only one Vocabulary, and only one way of Spelling and Pronouncing everything, and only one way of constructing your Sentences, and that those ways should always be exactly the same, here and everywhere, now and forever. Sadly for us, we don't get to do that in 'real life'. Language has always been living and flowing, and has continually adapted and evolved as different peoples in different areas at different times felt net-best for them. Can we ever hope to stop that raging river, even if we wanted to? We doubt it. We have a few specific suggestions here to clarify/standardize certain expressions which are in common use within our current Society, and we are generally hoping and pleading for improvement in our Language Education, both for our 'primary' language and the 'secondary' languages which we hear prominently in certain areas. Nevertheless, we must reluctantly acknowledge that the overall Rules and Standards are going to need to change further over time, and that variations by Region and Subculture will still develop here and there, whether we like it or not.

That said, we probably don't want to help that process along too much by actively encouraging divisions within our primary Language, or within any prominent secondaries. It's unavoidable that Language must evolve, and that there will always be some regional variations in a large Nation like ours, and some of those variations can be very colorful and beautiful, but we still want people to be able to understand one another as much as we can practically manage. That's the primary purpose of having any kind of Language in the first place, so that we can express ourselves to our neighbors, and understand what they have to express to us.

If we all spoke many different Languages, then we would have a harder time accomplishing much of anything, and our lack of mutual understanding might someday escalate into armed conflict, as it has done so many times in history.

Our formal education therefore needs to emphasize a standard Language which we expect should be generally understood throughout our Nation, with other Languages and Dialects to be taught supplementally only as the need locally arises and as resources are locally available.

To apply the general principles to the specific example of Ebonics, we are allowing that some regional school districts may want to educate their local students in that variation (there has been disagreement as to whether it properly should be called a Dialect or a Language, so let's just not call it either one for right now), so that they will be better able to understand the related Vocabularies and Pronunciations when they hear them. However, we recommend against teaching Ebonics as a standard or 'primary' Language, because that would make it harder for students to communicate effectively with adults from other Regions and Cultures when the time comes.

According to a CNN report from 1997* [*www.cnn.com/US/9701/16/black.english/], the school board of Oakland CA stated that they "would not try to classify Ebonics-speaking students as bilingual in order to obtain Federal funds", as others apparently alleged, so that's good. Regardless of what their actual intentions may have been, we concur that it would not be appropriate to create any special definitions of anything in order to increase Federal funds. To the contrary, that's one of the big lessons which we want to take from 'subsidiarity' (defined in Part I), is that the Fed should not be making local funding decisions like that at all. If you think that something is important to be taught in your local community, then you arrange to do so from local resources. Leave the Fed to focus on issues affecting the entire Nation.

Question 9.5

Should we have an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in the U.S. Constitution?

Added between Sessions in February 2019: We were amazed at ourselves for not having previously thought to confront this issue directly somewhere in the course of this document. In any case, we had been hearing renewed cries for an ERA within the news media and the social media, so we figured better make sure to address the matter here, in some sequence to be determined later. It now occurred to us that this public plea is not going to go away, and that we are not ever going to achieve Lasting Peace within our society until we get this matter settled once and for all.

Yes, we therefore should have an 'Equal Rights Amendment', but as long as we're doing it, let's make dang sure that we're doing it right, because we don't want to

have go through this painful and divisive debate ever again. Specifically, we feel that such an ERA should not be only about Women, although Women certainly may and should be specified in it. Rather, it should be about all segments of our Society, and should cover all Gender Identities, all Sexual Orientations, all Religious Affiliations, all Racial and Ethnic Backgrounds, and possibly other categories as well. (We are tempted to include Geographic Locations, Chronological Ages, Left- and Right-Handed, Body Shapes & Sizes, and others, but we don't want to go overboard, as long as we get the main idea across that everybody is and should be protected.) In short, we can get behind the concept of an ERA as long as we make sure that it covers everybody in our Society, but that is a necessary condition of our support, for we do not want to do only a partial job if we are here to solve Everything.

Specific language probably should be along the lines of "All the Rights which are extended in this Constitution and all its Amendments shall apply in full force to all ... , regardless of ...". We probably also want to take the opportunity in this Amendment to specify any difference between Citizens and pre-Citizens and Resident Aliens and Visiting Aliens any other levels of national affiliation which may possibly merit different levels of Rights, and then we should specify any such differences within the text of the Amendment. We may even want to say something about Prisoners in custody, that they have some basic rights too, like the heat which got denied to them in the Metropolitan Jail of Brooklyn during the wave of extreme cold which hit in early 2019.* [*<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/lawsuit-filed-against-brooklyn-jail-went-limited-power-heat-during-n966476>] We will work out specific draft language for the Amendment during the final packaging process, as we get this topic structured as its own series, where first Question can be the basic 'should' Question, and the second Question can be about which Rights should be specified in the Amendment for which classes of national affiliation, and then the third Question can be what the language should be.

Subsection III-F-1: Grammar

Question 651

Shall we continue to have a rule that 'split infinitives' are bad?

As a widely-known example of what we are talking about here, the purists claimed that Captain Kirk should not have said "to boldly go" in the opening to 'Star Trek'. In their opinion, he should instead have said "to go boldly", or some other construction.

The idea was that the phrase 'to go' was considered to be what grammarians call the 'infinitive', which is the basic root form of any verb, and which then gets modified in various ways to deal with singulars and past tenses and other such adjustments.

In older languages such as Latin, the infinitive was just a single word* [*For example, according to Cassell's Latin Dictionary (5th Ed., 1968), *ire* is the primary infinitive which means 'to go', although there are multiple alternatives for various specialized uses. Curiously, *ire* does not appear in the Latin section when you are trying to translate back into English, which is an example of the problem described in Answer 649.2 within Section III-E. Any word which appears in one half of any translating dictionary should appear in the other half as well, so that the unfamiliar reader can compare halves to make sure that the selected translation fits the specific situation.], and so it therefore could not be split up with 'boldly' or any other adverb. If the infinitive could not be split up in Latin, then the purists felt that it also should not be split up in English.

What some of those folks may have missed, however, but we noted in Session 281 (February 2019), is that 'to go' is actually not the 'infinitive'. The base word of 'go' is the actual infinitive, and that's what gets modified into 'going' and 'gone' and any other inflection, without involving the 'to' lead-in in any way. Instead, the entire expression 'to go' is an 'infinitive phrase'* [*See <https://englishsentences.com/infinitive-phrase>, even though they used the older definition of 'infinitive' which included 'to', instead of recognizing 'to' as a separate 'infinitive connector', as we are now here describing it.], which is a construction that allows us to get the infinitive form into a regular sentence when we want to.

Our use in English of a two-word 'infinitive phrase' in our sentences not only allows us to insert adverbs in front of the actual infinitive, but it practically encourages us to do so. There is a subtle-but-important difference between 'to go boldly' and 'to boldly go', and we want to be able to express that difference in our language. It's not just that we're 'going', and it happens to be 'boldly'. Rather, to 'boldly go' is an actual thing, and it's more meaningful that way, so we should get to use it that way.

By way of comparison, we get to insert the adverb before the verb in constructions like 'This could really help us', so we do not see any real reason to prohibit a construction like 'This person wants to really help us', merely in order to satisfy a technicality which has no relevance in our modern language, and which sometimes actually takes some meaning away from our expression.

In summary, the fact that we now have two words to describe an 'infinitive' means that they can be split, and to do so often seems to be the clearest and easiest way to express your message. Therefore, we are suggesting that the 'split infinitive' (which is actually the splitting of an 'infinitive phrase') should now be allowed in English. Teachers should no longer assess penalty marks for it, and students should politely challenge any teachers or others who still try to correct them for it. Simply tell them that you read it in "The Answers To Everything" as the new accepted usage. Just don't be too klutzy about it by inserting a long and complex phrase instead of just a single adverb, because simpler constructions will usually work better for you.

Question 652

Shall we continue to have a rule against ending clauses with prepositions?

As of Session 281, we don't think so. We can end a clause with a verb which takes a direct object appearing earlier in the sentence (as in 'This is the ball which I kicked'), so we do not see a good reason not to be able to end a clause with a preposition taking an object appearing earlier in the sentence (as in 'These are the goals which we aspire to'). In fact, trying to rearrange a sentence in order to avoid this may make it more awkward and less easily understandable. As with the split infinitives discussed in Answer 651, though, do please try to avoid any awkward constructions.

Question 653

What case of pronouns is appropriate in the predicate position?

For those unfamiliar with the terms, what we're talking about here is a construction such as 'It's me' or 'That's her', which we hear in ordinary conversation all the time, but which the classical grammarians would insist should be phrased as 'It is I' or 'That is she' instead.

Without going into too much detail, we're going to settle this issue by first introducing a few vocabulary words to the casual reader who might not have gotten them in school, or who maybe did get them but later forgot.

The first is the 'case' of the pronoun. They call it the 'nominative' case if it is either I or We or He or She or They, because it can be used at the beginning of a sentence to identify the name* [*The word 'nominative' comes from the Latin *nomen*, meaning 'name'.] of the 'subject'. They call it the 'objective' case if it is either Me or Us or Him or Her or Them, because it can be used in the 'predicate' of the sentence as the object of whatever action has been taken by the 'subject', or as the object of a preposition.

Thing of it is, when you have an expression such as 'It is [insert pronoun here]', the individual(s) being referenced by that pronoun did not receive any action taken by any 'subject', and also is/are not the object of any preposition. Instead, the use of what they amusingly call the 'copulative verb' of Is or Are or Was or Were in that sentence means that you are basically equating the 'subject' and the 'predicate', saying that they're basically the same person(s). They therefore figure in that circumstance that the case of the pronoun should be the same as the case of the 'subject', and that it should therefore be the 'nominative' case.

As sadly often happens, though, the classical grammarians live in one world (the author knows, he's been there), and everybody else lives everywhere else. They attempt to sway how the language should be, instead of documenting how it is.

In this instance, we feel that they should be accepting that people customarily say 'It's me' and 'That's her', figuring out the appropriate grammatical terminology to explain what they're saying, and teaching those uses in the interest of social unity.

But, can we convince the grammarians that they should be abandoning their argument that equating the 'subject' and the 'predicate' by using the 'copulative verb' means that the pronoun in the 'predicate' must not take the 'objective case'? Fortunately, we don't need to. We can define a third case which will preserve current usage, but which will satisfy the grammarians at the same time.

This is going to be another one of those times [compare Answer 633.6] that we will not be setting a good example for the rest of the World, as much as we might like to always be* [*This is a split infinitive. Suck it up. See Answer 651.] doing that. Instead, we will follow the example of where a different practice is working well elsewhere.

In this instance, we will take an example from the French. Instead of only two pronouns (I and Me) which English has to describe the 'first-person singular', the French have three (*Je*, *Me*, and *Moi*). They use the nominative '*Je*' in the 'subject' position (as in *Je t'aime* for 'I love you'), and they use the objective '*Me*' as a direct object (as in *Vous me chatouillez* for 'You tickle me'). They also have '*Moi*', which they describe as the 'disjunctive' case, and they use it both as an object of a preposition (as in *Sauvez quelqu'uns pour moi* for 'Save some for me') and especially in the equative construction of *C'est moi* to mean either 'It is I' or 'It is me'.

What we are therefore proposing as of Session 281, rather than 'requiring' millions of Americans to change their manner of speaking (because good luck making that happen....), is simply to label their existing uses of 'It's me' and 'That's her' as examples of the 'disjunctive case' of pronouns, something which we didn't have in English grammar before, but let's please have it now. Those same pronouns can still

be considered as 'objective case' when used as a direct object, indirect object (as in 'Read me a story'), or prepositional object. However, we can consider them as the 'disjunctive case' when used in the equative constructions, following an example set by the French, so we're not inventing anything new here. Agreed?

Subsection III-F-2: Vocabulary

Question 654

In what sorts of circumstances is the use of the word 'literally' appropriate?

Funny thing about that. This was a 'pet peeve' of the author going back way before our 'black book' of preliminary ideas was assembled back in the mid-1990's, and we assembled numerous examples of good usage and poor usage at that time, with the intent of including them in the final packaging here, but as of Session 281 the problem had gotten way worse, so we are now more eager to address it than ever.

We are favoring the originally-intended use of 'literally', and no other. Let's explain.

The word 'literally' was originally intended as the opposite of the word 'figuratively'. We often use various expressions in a 'figurative' sense as 'metaphors' in order to create a linguistic effect, describing something in an exaggerated manner which is not actually happening in real life, as in the following examples:

She was walking on air.
He bit the dust.
That car cost me an arm and a leg.
She was drowning in praise.
He was so transparent that you could see right through him.
Don't cut off your nose to spite your face.
He called me and literally belched fire through the phone.

In those particular instances (the last of which came from an actual letter written on 10-Dec-1991), the thing which the phrase is describing would be extremely unlikely to happen in real life, so these expressions are always 'figurative', and it therefore would always be inaccurate and improper to add the word 'literally' to them.

Every once in a while, however, a phrase like this which is usually used 'figuratively' is used 'literally', meaning that the thing which the phrase is describing actually is happening in real life, as a rare exception to the usual thing. When that happens, the speaker will often add the word 'literally' to highlight the fact that she is using a common phrase in an uncommon manner, as in the following examples:

He had the strength of ten men, literally. People sometimes say figuratively that somebody 'has the strength of ten men' if he's just really strong, but the phrase would apply literally if they actually measured the guy's strength, and it actually turned out to equal the strength of ten regular guys.

The speaker screamed until he was blue in the face, literally. People sometimes say figuratively that somebody is 'blue in the face' when they're just really mad about something, but usually their faces don't actually turn blue. Every once in a while, though, if someone's face actually turns blue from anger (or maybe it was just really cold), then you could add 'literally' to this expression.

The child was starving, literally. People sometimes say figuratively that they're 'starving' when they're just really hungry, but if they're still strong enough to say that they're 'starving' then they're probably not 'literally' starving. However, if you obtain a warrant and enter a house where severe child neglect has been taking place (remember the Turpins of Perris?), then you might discover that a child has been malnourished to where she meets the medical standard for 'starving', so could add 'literally' here.

He was at death's door, literally. People sometimes say figuratively that somebody is 'at death's door' when they're just really sick. Even if someone is in a terminal condition, though, and even if

he then dies, there usually is not a literal 'door' involved anywhere. However, if they are carrying a terminal patient into a hospice or mausoleum for expedited disposition, then maybe at that point you could declare 'literally' that the patient was at death's door, but not otherwise.

They waited until the last minute or until **the eleventh hour, literally.** People sometimes use these expressions figuratively when something has been procrastinated until close to some given deadline, but it usually is not the literal 'last minute' or the literal 'eleventh hour', so you would not add 'literally' to the expression. Once in a while, though, something is actually delayed until there are between 60-120 minutes remaining, in which case you could say that they 'waited until the eleventh hour, literally', and then only if you are operating on a 12-hour clock. Or, if something is delayed until there are fewer than 60 seconds remaining before the deadline (like a couple of the Baseball trades in 2018), then you could say that they 'waited until the last minute, literally', but not otherwise.

He ate his words, literally. People sometimes say figuratively that someone 'ate his words' if he once discovered that he had said or written something which he now regretted, but it usually does not involve any literal ingestion of anything into the body, so you usually should not add 'literally'. However, if the guy lost a bet on who wrote the better speech, and if the bet called for the loser to eat the paper on which the words were written, then you could say that he 'literally' ate his words.

I'm a happy camper, literally. People sometimes use the phrase 'happy camper' in a figurative sense to describe someone who is in a general state of contentment, but they usually are not in an actual camp at the time, so to add 'literally' would be inappropriate. However, if somebody is staying overnight at an actual campsite, and is still happy, then you could say that he's 'literally' a happy camper.

Trouble is, people have recently been using 'literally' in a different manner, to provide simple emphasis to a regular statement of non-exaggerated fact, as in the following examples to be avoided:

He was speechless, literally.

It was so noisy that you couldn't hear what she was saying, literally.

It was so cold that my hands were numb, literally.

In these cases, the fact reported in the main part of the expression is a straight and simple statement, something which happens in real life all the time. You therefore are not starting out with a 'figurative' expression and using it in a 'literal' sense on an exception basis. To the contrary, you are not adding any meaning or other value to the sentence at all by sticking 'literally' anywhere in it. All that you are doing is showing the listener that you do not understand how to use 'literally' correctly.

As a free extra bonus, here are a few examples of good and bad uses of 'literally' in actual real-life journalism:

Bad Anaheim fire of 31-Mar-1997 "literally reduced the apartment building to ashes". Fires will do that ordinarily, so inserting 'literally' adds nothing here.
"You have to put yourself in [the opposing party's] shoes, literally".¹ It was only to mean that you need to be able to anticipate what the other party is going to say in his/her case, and had nothing to do with anybody's shoes.
A certain traffic accident "literally happened six minutes ago".² Did they mean that it literally happened, or that it was literally six minutes ago? Either way, it does not describe an ordinarily-figurative expression in an unusually-actual sense, so could have dropped the extra and misleading word without at all changing the meaning of the sentence.

[¹Harvey Levin on 'The People's Court', broadcast 14-Jun-2004]

[²KNX radio, between 10-10:30am PT on 27-Nov-2017]

Good **Where is the creative genius that produces these miniature masterpieces of frozen water, quite literally out of thin air?**¹ People sometimes say figuratively that someone produces something 'out of thin air' if its origin is unclear, but it usually does not actually come out of the air, and even if it did the air is usually not very thin at the planetary surface where people live. In this exceptional, case, however, the journalist was talking about Snowflakes, which literally do get produced in the 'thin air'.

Police in New York City were on a wild goose chase, yes literally.² People sometimes use the phrase 'wild goose chase' in a figurative sense to refer to any search which turns up nothing. In this case, though, the TV cut to footage of a wild goose strolling along the causeway. They really were chasing a wild goose. That was good, that was funny, that was right, more like that.

Many people have waxed rhapsodic about Auberne [a region of France], **this person quite literally: Here is the 'Auberne Rhapsody' by Saint-Saens.**³ Usually, when someone is 'rhapsodic' about something, it does not involve an actual rhapsody in terms of musical composition, so it's usually only figurative, but this time it was literal.

[¹Caltech 336, Vol. 1, No. 1, 11-Jan-2001]

[²Tony McEwing on 'Good Day L.A.', broadcast at 7:52am PT on 17-Jun-2004]

[³KUSC radio, 4-Nov-2011]

Are we all getting the concept here? The word 'literally' is not to be used as mere emphasis for ordinary statements of ordinary fact. People who do so might think that they're sounding 'hip' or 'cool' or 'trendy' or some other postwar adjective, but they actually come off just sounding ignorant, and it's a shame because some of them are actually very smart, and it would be unfortunate for their statements to be overlooked simply because they are using 'literally' in an incorrect manner.

Question 655

Under what conditions (if any) should it be considered acceptable to say "ain't"?

We were taught while growing up that "ain't" is improper and unacceptable under all conditions. It was considered incorrect, sloppy, and unfit for polite society.

We are suggesting as of Session 281 that it may be time for a promotion.

According to our 1981 hardbound edition of the *American Heritage* dictionary (remember from Answer 649.2 that we distrust any dictionary calling itself *Webster's*), the primary definition of "ain't" is as a contraction for "am not". This makes perfect sense to us, because we have two other present-tense negative contractions to go with various pronouns ("She isn't" and "They aren't"), one future-tense negative contraction ("We won't"), and two past-tense negative contractions ("I wasn't" and "You weren't"), but we have no negative contraction other than "ain't" which goes with the first-person singular in present tense. If you want to be able to express "I am not" with a contraction, and you don't want to interfere with the main pronoun with "I'm not", then "I ain't" seems to be our best candidate.

However, the Usage Panel for *American Heritage* (comprising 100 experts who voted on various controversies treated in the book) overwhelmingly disapproved the use of "ain't" even as an ordinary contraction for the first-person present-tense singular, even though "I" has no other contraction available which stands for "am not". We are only speculating here, but we imagine that their collective disdain for "ain't" was fueled largely by the fact that "ain't" has been used in recent decades as a generic substitute for numerous other contractions of different persons and tenses.

We claim that it's a bum rap. Just because the word has been misused at numerous times, doesn't mean that we can't keep it in everyday use with its original meaning.

Therefore, with as much humility as we can muster, we are suggesting to overrule the Usage Panel, and to declare as a collective society that "ain't" is an acceptable substitute for "am not", but still is not officially acceptable under any other condition. In other words, if it is considered grammatically acceptable to say either "She's not coming" or "She isn't coming", then it should also be considered grammatically acceptable to say either "I'm not coming" or "I ain't coming". It is so ordered.

Question 656

Shall we consider it acceptable to use the personal pronouns 'he' and 'him', and the possessive adjective 'his', when a generic unisex reference is being made?

We had this Question on the books back in the mid-1990's, so no it was not added in response to the recent rise in the presence of women in Congress and other areas of leadership, nor in deference to the female victims who have recently come forward with reports of chronic sexual abuse by certain powerful celebrities. However, even though the Question was added earlier, the Answer probably should be considered within the context of these recent social developments.

Specifically, we have a confession to make here, but it ends well: The original 'black book' of preliminary ideas from the mid-1990's actually did suggest that we should continue to use 'he' and 'him' and 'his' in unisex constructions, even though we explicitly acknowledged in those notes that the custom was sexist in origin, but yet on the grounds that folks had previously attempted to introduce a new set of unisex pronouns (including 'e' to mean either 'he' or 'she') into our language, and that all such attempts had failed.

It was especially astonishing in Session 281 for the author to read that those notes from over 20 years earlier even went on to claim that we could "only clarify and codify the rules that are in common usage at least somewhere, not make up entirely new ones". How wrong we were!

This then is yet another example of how the Moderator changed his personal mind during the course of working on this Project, so again the reader should feel no shame in doing the same. Changing your mind is the first step toward Wisdom.

The reports and actions of recent years have demonstrated far more clearly than ever before just how much Women have been unjustly marginalized all over the world for centuries. The use of separate pronouns for males and females, with no third set to designate a unisex gender, is only one example of this. It may seem petty to some, but in its subtle way it actually is sending a very powerful message: What it's saying is that any meaningful Thought or Action which is ever undertaken by anyone -- and which is ever going to be the focus of any sentence in our language -- is almost always going to have been undertaken by a Male, and that we use the feminine pronouns only when we are specifically referring to Females for some reason, so we simply don't need a third set of pronouns to refer to people generally.

We need to rectify the imbalance between Men and Women in our society, and in order to help that process we need to rectify the imbalance between Men and Women in our language.

However, the 'black book' did make one important point: All previous attempts at introducing a set of all-new gender-neutral words into our language have failed to gain enough traction for successful implementation. Part of the reason why is that not everybody 'got the memo' that any change was being proposed, but hopefully that gets better now with our improved social communications. Even with the technological advance, though, another part of the reason is that it's hard for any panel or the whole Society to judge which of the competing proposals is net-best.

That is why we advocate a different approach, one which sends the message that Women deserve to be treated with far more respect than they were getting before, but which does not require wholesale rewrites of all our dictionaries and grammars.

We mentioned it in Answer 643.3, and we will rearrange the Questions during the final packaging such that this generic policy is established before that specific application. To sum it, we now offer our recent usage of feminine pronouns for successful and ethical people, and male pronouns for criminals and other losers, as 'affirmative action' to reverse the trend of thought until we achieve Equality.

At that point, we can re-evaluate (whether the Moderator is still alive at the time or not), but we probably will want to go with using the feminine pronouns and possessive adjective for all generic unisex references, because again we don't want to bother with trying to get new words into the language by force, and because it occurs to us that the Guys can use a break from being our Grammatical Go-to's.

Question 657

What about expressions like 'chairman' and 'congressman' and 'postman'?

Even our 'black book' of preliminary ideas -- assembled back in the Dark Ages of Pre-History -- recognized that many of these expressions can be easily replaced by unisex alternatives. Those unisex alternatives were appearing in real life a lot more as of Session 281, so that's good. Seems like a good and important trend.

Where the 'black book' suffered on this point is where it suggested that this ongoing conversion process was not one of our higher social priorities. We now feel differently. How we refer to people with our language both expresses how we feel about them, and influences how we treat them. The more that we continue using terms like 'chairman' to refer to someone in a position of authority, the more that we will assume that only Men should be undertaking those roles, and the more that we will subliminally prefer hiring and electing Men for those roles.

It's got to stop, and it's a big priority.

Question 658

Shall we permit the continued use of the phrase 'Senators and Congressmen'?

Even if we did not have a gender-based hangup about the term 'Congressmen', we still would have a hangup about the fact that the term refers to everybody in Congress, and not just in the House of Representatives. When you refer to 'Congressmen' (or its proper unisex equivalent), you are referring to both Senators and Representatives, so it is always redundant to add 'Senators' to the term.

We maybe could go with 'Congresspeople' to replace 'Congressmen', but something about it feels a little too 1970's for the author's taste. We suggested in Session 281 using the term 'Legislators' when you are referring to members of both Houses collectively. It's the same number of syllables as 'Congresspeople', and the emphases come in the same spots, but it is fewer letters, and to us it looks a little more dignified. [By the Third Pass, we had used 'Congressmember' a lot in this document, and have seen it used elsewhere, so accepting as a good alternative.]

Besides, if we adopt the tricameral model proposed in Section I-E, the phrase 'Senators and Congressmen' would become even less applicable than ever. In the meantime, if you want to refer to the current House of Representatives, you should use 'Representative'. If in the future you want to refer to that third House which is based on Geographic Area, then you can refer to them as 'Delegates', because we may want to go with the name 'House of Delegates' for that third assembly.

Question 658.1

Shall we continue to rely on the current strict use of 'continual' and 'continuous'?

Well, for starters, we don't know how "strict" the usage is, because we encounter mixed usages all the time. In any case, it would be helpful if we clarified the terms.

The adjective 'continual' and the adverb 'continually' refer to events which recur on an ongoing basis, such as 'continual' traffic problems resulting in someone 'continually' showing up late for work. By contrast, the adjective 'continuous' and the adverb 'continuously' refer to conditions which remain the same without interruption, such as 'continuous' high temperatures or a planet 'continuously' rotating.

Trouble is, there's no really easy way to remember which is which, so the words get mixed up a lot, even by professional journalists.

It may not always make a big difference in casual settings. However, if you ever want to be taken seriously as either a speaker or a writer, then you need to be aware that your work is going to be evaluated by folks who know these various grammatical distinctions, and who will judge you according to how well you also know them, even if your subject has nothing to do with grammar or language.

They figure that if you haven't taken the time to learn the basics of vocabulary and grammar, then you probably also haven't made the larger time investment required to become an 'expert' in any other subject. They therefore feel that they should not bother to spend any precious time reading or listening to any more of your words.

Maybe that's a valid judgment to make, and maybe it's not, or maybe it's really a case-by-case thing. In any event, though, all speakers and writers do themselves a favor by learning and consistently applying the current accepted standards of Spelling and Vocabulary and Pronunciation and Punctuation and Grammar, because not doing so will often distract their intended audiences undesirably.

We therefore suggest as of Session 281 that people find a way to learn the difference between 'continual' and 'continuous', and to use the terms consistently in all their formal writing and speech, including in Journalism.

If a 'mnemonic device' might assist you, then one possibility for your consideration is that 'continual' ends with the same letter that 'late' begins with, and it's easy to remember that being late is a repetitive event rather than an ongoing condition, so maybe you could associate the terms that way. Conversely, the word 'continuous' ends with the same letter that 'same' begins with, so maybe that would help you to remember that it is referring to a condition which remains the same at all moments.

Question 658.2

Shall we continue to rely on the current strict use of 'farther' and 'further'?

As with the previous Question, we don't know how "strict" the usage is, because we encounter mixed usages all the time, but we can still aim for clarification.

This one hopefully will be easier to remember than the previous one. The adjective 'farther' refers to actual physical distance, as in 'my electric car can travel farther on a charge than yours', so hopefully you can remember that 'far' means 'far'. By contrast, the adjective 'further' refers to comparisons of a more figurative nature, as in someone being qualified to advance 'further' in her career than someone else.

Again, maybe not a huge distinction, and we certainly have much bigger problems to tackle in our world, but we are here to address Everything, so we cannot allow this opportunity to pass without taking a moment to call your attention to these points.

Question 658.3

What other words/expressions in our vocabulary do we feel should be either modified or at least clarified?

Following points appear in the same order in which they had been handwritten into the 'black book', and subsequently treated in Session 281. [More were added later.] Some points will involve changes and some will not, so the thorough reader will need to check Everything:

Percentage

This term is often misused, especially in the Sports world, and most especially in Baseball. For a Sport which has placed so much emphasis recently on 'sabermetrics' and other statistical analysis, you would think that they would be a lot more precise in the terms which they use to express everything, but not so, at least not yet.

The most frequent offenders are the expressions 'On-Base Percentage' and 'Slugging Percentage'. We don't need to go into the technical definitions of those expressions here, but the important point is that they are both routinely expressed as three-digit decimals (as in ".424" and ".587"), in exactly the same way as the Batting Average.

We therefore claim that we should be saying 'On-Base Average' and 'Slugging Average' instead for consistency. The term 'Percentage' should be used only when we are talking about some particular portion of 100 (as in a candidate receiving 60% of the vote, meaning that she received 60 votes out of every 100 cast), because the word comes from the Latin *per centum*, meaning 'for each hundred'.

Irregardless

This non-word comes from people mixing up '**regardless of**' with '**irrespective of**', which mean basically the same thing. While we reluctantly accept that some continual evolution needs to happen with our language* [*As another example of our Answer 658.1, the evolution happens in stages, not every single second, which is why it is 'continual' and not 'continuous'.], yet we see no need to allow inaccurate expressions to enter our

language masquerading as 'words'. In this instance, 'irregardless' contains a double negative, so technically it means the exact opposite of either 'regardless' or 'irrespective', and so it therefore should not be used as a synonym for them, nor for any other purpose.

Unchartered territory

What they really mean is '**uncharted territory**', referring to territory (either literal or figurative) which is still new and therefore has not yet been placed on any chart.

When you 'charter' something, it means that you are reserving it for your paid use, as in when you 'charter' a boat or a plane. You don't ever 'charter' territory, so it makes no sense to refer to 'unchartered territory'. Let's all pay attention here.

Concerted effort

People sometimes say that a solitary individual is making a 'concerted effort' to accomplish something, but this is inaccurate. When an effort is 'concerted', it means that it has been undertaken 'in concert', meaning that it involves two or more people working together. One person alone cannot make a 'concerted effort'.

Champing/chomping at the bit

The original and correct phrase here is '**champing at the bit**'. It comes from a time when people rode horses more frequently than they drove cars, and refers to when a horse is chewing on the 'bit' (the part of a bridle which goes into the horse's mouth for stability) because for some reason he is impatient with his present situation. We can 'chomp' on food, but we can only 'champ' on a bit, and it's usually only horses who ever have a bit in their mouths, but some folks say 'chomping at the bit'.

The phrase 'chomping at the bit' fails on a couple of levels. First, it involves the changing of a word to one which sounds similar and has a related meaning and derivation, but which yet has come to mean something different. Second, especially if you work in the field of Journalism, not only are you making a technical mistake but you are starting out bad by using a cliché which is so remote in its time of origin that many of your audience don't even know what it means or how to use it correctly. If you must use a cliché at all which is based in antiquity, then please at least always use it right, but better to find a more modern expression.

Lie, Laid, Lain

This is one where we are going to need to make a change. The textbooks have been insisting one thing, but nearly everybody is actually saying something else in real life. If we can't change the usage to match the textbooks, then we should be changing the textbooks to match the usage.

To recap the current 'official' rules, and to re-introduce a couple of vocabulary terms from your primary-school English classes: The infinitive 'lie' -- even when it does not involve telling an untruth -- can be used as an 'intransitive verb' but not as a 'transitive verb'. A 'transitive verb' is one which involves a direct action which is received by a 'direct object'. When you kick a football, 'kick' is the 'transitive verb' and 'football' is the 'direct object'. By contrast, an 'intransitive verb' is one where no other object is directly involved (except possibly yourself), as when you 'sunbathe'.

When you go and 'lie down' to take a nap, you are using 'lie' in an intransitive manner, and 'down' is a simple adverb. When you are doing the same thing to something else other than your own body, they want you to use 'lay' in a transitive manner, as when you 'lay' a cloth down on the ground for your picnic.

As if that were not already complicated enough, the textbooks make it worse: When you want to refer to lying down (intransitive) in a past tense, they want you to use 'lay', the same word which they also want you to use in the present-tense transitive. If you want to refer to laying something down (transitive) in a past tense, they want to use 'laid', as in 'the Marines laid the flag upon the coffin'.

Not tricky enough yet? Now we get to the 'past participle', which you use when you are talking about some previous time, and you are referring to some action which took place sometime prior to that. As a general example to refresh, in the sentence "When we interviewed the candidate last week, she had already taken five other interviews that day", the word 'taken' is the past participle of the infinitive 'take', and it allows us to place the described events in a clear sequence. Trouble is, the past participle of 'lay' is 'laid', which is the same as the regular past tense, but for 'lie' the past participle is the different 'lain', which we almost never hear anymore in real life.

However those usages may have evolved, not very many people understand the technical distinctions anymore, and some of those who do will deliberately use a more familiar construction, simply so that they do not come off sounding like a fussy and fastidious stickler for technical purity instead of a 'real person'.

As a result, a different usage has developed, where people say that they are going to 'lay down' instead of to 'lie down'. Moderator previously opposed this change, because he was a fussy and fastidious stickler for technical purity (and to a large extent still is), but as of Session 281 now embraces it.

To get a sense of what really turned us around, consider the following example: "When she entered the bedroom, he was lying in bed." Under the old rules, this sentence could have two completely different meanings, one in which the male subject was merely reclining, and one in which he was actively telling untruths in bed, which certainly wouldn't be the first time that that's ever happened.

If we allow 'laying in bed' to mean reclining instead of 'lying in bed', then we can distinguish the two scenarios much more clearly.

We therefore now support the use of 'lay' to mean placing either your own body or something/someone else onto a surface, and we reserve 'lie' for when you are telling a falsehood. In the latter instance, we can continue to use 'lied' for both the past tense and past participle. In the former, using 'laid' for the simple past is easy, but should we use 'laid' or 'lain' for the past participle? Again, we're going to go with the more common usage here, and select 'laid' instead of 'lain'. Nobody ever says 'lain' in real life, and it hardly ever appears anymore in print. If we can use 'lied' as both past tense and past participle, then we can do the same with 'laid'. So ordered.

Junior

For multiple centuries now, we have often appended "Junior" (abbreviated "Jr.") to the name of any male who carries the same first and last name as his father or

grandfather. If the same name continues to additional generations of the same line, then we start using "III", "IV", etc., as with Kings and Popes.

First change that we need to make here is that we should be allowing the usage to extend to female offspring if desired. This becomes even easier if/when we allow the new custom suggested in Answer 535, where at least female offspring -- although we are now thinking all of them -- generally take the last names of their mothers.

Second change is that we need to make it clear that any suffix like "Jr." or "III" is not a part of this person's last name! We unfortunately see it a lot on athletic jerseys, such as the one reading "BRADLEY JR." for Jackie Bradley Jr. of the Boston Red Sox. His last name is Bradley. His father's last name was Bradley. If his wife Erin had taken his last name, then she would have been Bradley and not Bradley Jr. Their first child (born in 2016) was given the last name of Bradley and not Bradley Jr. Since his last name is Bradley, only "BRADLEY" should be appearing on his jersey, and only 'Bradley' should be mentioned by the commentators when for easy convenience they happen to be referring to different players by their last names.

Only exception to the above is if you have a situation where Ken Griffey Sr. and Ken Griffey Jr. are field coaches for the same team, and so both would have "GRIFFEY" on their jerseys. In order to tell them apart from a distance, it would make sense for them to wear "GRIFFEY SR." and "GRIFFEY JR.". It would also make sense for the commentators to use "Senior" and "Junior" when referring to one of them doing something in the dugout or coming out onto the field of play for any reason.

Make head spin/swim

We probably shouldn't be using this expression much at all anymore, because people's heads neither spin nor swim in real life (not by themselves, anyway), and because as with the 'champing' and 'chomping' the origin of the expression is so obscure by now that it really has very little relevance to modern readers/listeners.

However, to the extent that it still wants to stick around in our modern language, let's please at least make sure that we are using it correctly and consistently.

For historical comparison, making the head 'swim' appeared in a 'Peanuts' comic strip from 26-Jan-1964, and making the head 'spin' was written into the 1989 'L.A. Law' episode "Urine Trouble Now" involving the Gatling Brewery.

With only these two datapoints, it's tempting to assume that the earlier usage was correct, and that the later variation was incorrect. It's also possible that the writers deliberately used 'spin' in 'L.A. Law' because the character speaking the line was an executive for the nasty defendants who eventually paid a settlement on the claim.

In any case, the head as we noted does not either 'spin' or 'swim' literally* [*This is a correct usage of the adverb, as described in Answer 654.], but under certain conditions it can feel internally as though it is doing both. With that being the case, there is no really compelling reason to mandate one usage over the other, beyond mere grammatical consistency, which is a 'nice-to-have' but for some lower-priority uses we can maybe cut folks some slack. It could be argued that 'swim' is more metaphorical and more colorful than 'spin' in this context, but that's pretty narrow, and some may disagree.

Therefore, as much as we fussy and fastidious grammarians might prefer a clear and consistent usage, this might be one where we need to stand down our objections, and let folks use whichever cliché verb they prefer, if they really must use either.

Like, As

This debate goes back to at least the 1960's, when cigarette commercials were woefully allowed to air on general-access TV, and when the Winston brand famously advertised that their cigarettes tasted good "like a cigarette should". Even way back then, we read in various newspapers and heard on TV (no Internet, remember...) that some purists had argued for the slogan being changed to "as a cigarette should". They pointed out that 'like' is a preposition which takes only a noun as its object, and that 'as' is a coordinating conjunction which modifies an entire clause.

We imagine that Winston loved having this debate go on in public, because it brought that much more attention to their brand. For all that we now know, they may even have selected that language deliberately in order to piss off the grammarians and get them talking about cigarettes instead of grammar. Or, perhaps they even felt that anyone dumb enough to smoke tobacco probably wouldn't be smart enough to know about this distinction, let alone care about it.

In any case, even though we blissfully do not need to worry anymore about cigarette ads appearing on TV, they still currently are allowed to appear in print, and the general issue can also apply to any advertiser of any product: Should we insist that 'like' and 'as' are always used correctly in advertising, or shall we allow informal familiarities in the interest of greater market penetration and increased sales?

As with other such issues, the Fed has a lot more to be concerned about than this, and so have the rest of us, so this probably should not be among the highest of priorities. However, there is an important factor to consider here, not just for 'like' and 'as' but for anything: Having only one standard usage makes it easier for children and immigrants and diplomats to learn our language, and adhering to the standard usage enables us all to be taken more seriously in our speech and writing. Any politician or celebrity or journalist or advertiser who uses his position of mass influence to encourage a non-standard usage of the language, without explicitly arguing that the usage should be changed, is basically telling our kids -- and everybody else -- that it's okay to 'dumb down' and have multiple competing versions of the language floating around, and that expressing yourself in a clear manner to educated individuals is not all that important.

Should we be sending such a message? We doubt it. Communication is important, and Education is important, and we don't need any greedy corporations telling us otherwise just so that they can sell us more of their filthy poisonous crap.

We probably do not need to spend time constructing any FCC regulations about it, so ordinary consumers can get the message across to the corporate advertisers by boycotting any products which are advertised with improperly-constructed slogans.

Comprise

This infinitive and its inflections ('comprised', 'comprises', 'comprising', etc.) are misused frequently, and as long as we are here talking about Everything we would love it if this problem could get fixed as well.

People often say incorrectly that some larger quantity A "is comprised of" several smaller quantities B, as in 'the sophomore class is comprised of 75 students'. What they don't realize is that technically (at least according to our *American Heritage* dictionary), the Whole 'comprises' the Parts, so they should be saying '**comprises**' instead of 'is comprised of'.

When you want to describe it the other way around, then the Parts 'constitute' the Whole, as in '75 students **constitute** the sophomore class'. We do not require any 'is comprised of' or any 'is constituted by' or any other such complex and confusing construction. Just remember that the Whole 'comprises' the Parts, and that the Parts 'constitute' the Whole, and on this point at least we will be fine.

Subsection III-F-3: Spelling

Question 659

When a verb ends in one consonant, is it always appropriate to double it when adding a suffix such as '-ed' or '-er' or '-ing', or always inappropriate, or does it depend on the word or the suffix or some other factor?

This is another one where our 'black book' of preliminary ideas offered one suggestion for the group's consideration, but where we ended up developing a different standard during the succeeding 20+ years. That different standard has worked pretty well for us, and can be summarized and remembered very easily.

Basically, notwithstanding our previous paradigm (which we now see was more complicated than really needed), we should now simply double the final consonant if the final syllable of the infinitive is stressed, or if the first syllable of the suffix is stressed. Otherwise, doubling the final consonant is useless and should be avoided.

For example, comparing the words 'cancel' and 'excel', we see that they each have two syllables and end with the same three letters, but that the two words stress different syllables. Thus, when we want to form the past tense of 'excel' (which has the final syllable stressed), we should double the final consonant to make 'excelled', because otherwise the result of 'exceled' would look as though it should be pronounced 'ex-SEELED', which would not be correct.

Conversely, the word 'cancel' has the stress on the first syllable, so we can easily form 'canceled' for the past tense without making it look as though it should be pronounced in any but the most common way.

In addition, even though the first syllable of the infinitive 'cancel' is stressed, such that the final consonant need not be doubled while forming the past tense, yet the first syllable of the suffix in 'cancellation' is stressed, which is understood more easily by English students if we double that final consonant.

Question 659.1

What should be the correct spelling of the word currently spelled as 'judgment'?

This is another one where the Moderator changed his mind during the course of this Project. If he can do so on some points, then you the reader can do it on others.

We fussy grammarians tried carefully over many years to preserve the 'correct' spelling of 'judgment', even though the similarly-constructed 'acknowledgement' has traditionally taken an 'e' before the '-ment'. However, as of Session 281 we must reluctantly admit that we had been waging an unnecessary war all that time. Again, it is far easier for people to learn our language (or any other) if we make our rules more consistent, and insist on arbitrary differences less.

In this instance, if we can simply add '-ment' to the infinitive 'acknowledge' in order to make the noun form of 'acknowledgement', then we don't see why we should need to drop the final 'e' of the infinitive 'judge' before doing the exact same thing.

As a point of comparative info, the 1981 hardbound edition of *American Heritage* allows 'judgement' as an alternative spelling, but all the examples use the primary spelling of 'judgment'. It does not present a reason for the dual approaches, but it does note in the etymology that the word comes from the Middle English *jugement*, which of course does have an 'e' before '-ment'. We therefore are allowing for the distinct possibility that somebody (perhaps a Justice on the Supreme Court?) mistakenly dropped the 'e' one day, and it somehow became the standard usage, which all the 'fundamentalist footsoldiers' like the Moderator have needlessly and fruitlessly labored to preserve and protect.

We now claim that 'judgement' should be the new 'judgment', and should take over as the standard 'correct' spelling.

But, when should the effective date of this change be? With various other usage adjustments, we exemplified the newer usages within the text of this document, making them effective immediately. In this case, however, we hesitate to adjust any previous occurrences of 'judgment' retroactively, partly because it's just a very tough emotional transition, and largely because we don't want fussy readers getting turned off of the earlier parts of the document because they once see 'judgement' and run away. Better to make the effective date of this change to be immediately after the publication of our final package, unless and until anyone wants to stand forward and argue why it should now be the other spelling, in which case you had better have some better reason than "we've always done it that way" or any similar variation.

Question 659.4

What other words should have their spellings either modified or at least clarified?

There are many which we could cite, but that would take up too much room, so we offer the following few examples to help guide the way for other similar issues:

Its/It's

We understand that this is a tough one, because the apostrophe can be used in two distinct ways in English. It can be used either in a contraction (such as "she's" for "she is"), or in a possessive adjective (such as "Mary's"). When readers who are still learning English come across the word "it's" in print, it is not always immediately obvious whether the word is being used as a contraction or as a possessive.

We can therefore easily forgive people for not always getting this one right, especially if you're in a hurry or something, but here's a quick trick which hopefully

will help you to remember the rule: There is also the word "its", which does not take an apostrophe. We know that all contractions take apostrophes, whereas some possessives (such as "his" and "her") do not. When we see "its" without an apostrophe, we therefore know that it cannot be a contraction, so it must be the possessive, and then "it's" with an apostrophe is the other one by elimination.

Lose/Loose

This one is a lot simpler. Each of 'lose' and 'loose' is an actual English word, with an actual English meaning. But, their meanings are way different from each other.*
[*Please note the correct use of 'different from', as is discussed in an amendment to Answer 658.3 below.] The verb 'lose' means the opposite of 'win', whereas the adjective 'loose' is the opposite of 'tight'.

This never used to be a problem, but we suspect that people began to mix them up when they started relying more on the 'spell-check' features in their various desktop and mobile applications. They start to type a word one way, they make some kind of typo, and the spell-check delivers the spelling of the other word. Both the sender and the receiver see the words in their incorrect contexts, it happens several times, and before you know it they begin thinking that those are the correct spellings.

It carries over to where other people are trying to learn our language. That's what we want them to do, right? Some folks say that if people are going to come and live here then they should at least learn to speak our language. We also want to make things easier for our kids, if they are to take over the management of our society when they grow up. To make it easier for others, we must do it right ourselves.

If you need a trick to help you remember the difference, then consider the inflection 'loosen', meaning 'to make loose'. You never see that word spelled 'losen', do you? That spelling will never come up on your spell-check, and if you try to force-type it then your app will give you multiple alternatives. The correct spelling must be 'loosen', so the correct spelling must be 'loose' for the adjective which means the opposite of 'tight'. Thus, by elimination, 'lose' is correct for the opposite of 'to win'.

Subsection III-F-4: Punctuation

Question 661

Where should we place commas and periods in relation to quotation marks?

We never accepted what the textbooks told us for this one. They said that if you include a quoted expression at the end of your sentence, then the period to close the sentence must appear inside the quotation marks, whether the expression which you are quoting included a sentence-ending period or not.

We believe that the whole original idea of using quotation marks is to separate what you wrote from what somebody else wrote. If you include anything else within the quotation marks beyond what the first writer wrote, then you are misquoting.

Same goes for single quotes around unfamiliar vocabulary words such as 'infinitive', as we introduced in Answer 651, and as we have just now reproduced here. You will notice here that the comma separating the subordinate clause falls outside of the second quote mark, again because it is not part of the expression being quoted.

Generally, if you are quoting any kind of written expression, the only punctuation which should appear inside the quotation marks must be in the original expression.

Why, then, did they do it the other way for so long? We are not entirely sure, but the 2007 book "Comma-Sense: A Fun-damental Guide to Punctuation", by Richard Lederer and John Shore, asserted that periods and commas were originally placed inside quotation marks in order to save the elements from getting crushed in the old printing presses, and that the convention stuck around through our electronic age, even though those authors agreed that the convention is grammatically faulty.

It is a somewhat different matter if you are quoting somebody's oral statement in a written format, which we see in novels and newspapers all the time. For example:

"Mark my words, the Patriots will lose the Super Bowl sometime within the next ten years," the sports commentator boldly predicted.

In this instance, the quoted sentence would have ended in a period if it had been made in writing. As it is, it was spoken on the air, so there was no actual period that we need to deal with or worry about. If we had included a period in place of the comma appearing after 'years', then it could make things very clumsy, because we are adding that last phrase about the sports commentator to the sentence, and it is part of the sentence itself, so we generally should not have a period before the actual end of the complete sentence. We therefore use the comma instead, as sort of a 'compromise', to show that the quoted sentence was ending, but that our written form of the overall sentence was not.

As of Session 281, we see no big reason to change this practice. The one change which we do insist upon is that any written text appearing within any quotation marks (either single or double) should include only material which appeared in the original source, and that any punctuation which we are adding to the overall construction should be placed outside the quotation marks.

Question 660

With three or more items in a series, should a comma be placed before the last item?

This is the so-called 'Oxford comma', which some commentators feel as of Session 281 should be included, and which some others feel should not.

The supporters of the 'Oxford comma' note that the comma easily guides the reader to separate all items within a given series, especially when some of the items are actually compound nouns or complete clauses themselves, as in these examples:

My favorite circuses are Cirque du Soleil, Barnum & Bailey, and the United States Senate.
Either the manager will fill the vacancy immediately, or the department will consolidate two or more positions, or else the company will defer the decision to the next budget cycle.

They also point out that omitting the 'Oxford comma' from even a short series can materially change the meaning of the expression, as in the famous joke with the punchline "Eats, Shoots and Leaves".*

[*We have seen this joke attributed to humorist Nevil Shute, and actual historical references are sketchy, but it was broadly popularized in the 2003 book of the same title by British radio personality Lynne Truss. Here is the version of the complete joke appearing on the back of that book:

A panda walks into a café. He orders a sandwich, eats it, then draws a gun and fires two shots in the air.

"Why?" asks the confused waiter, as the panda makes towards the exit. The panda produces a badly punctuated wildlife manual and tosses it over his shoulder.

"I'm a panda," he says at the door. "Look it up."

The waiter turns to the relevant entry in the manual and, sure enough, finds an explanation.

"Panda. Large black-and-white bear-like mammal, native to China. Eats, shoots and leaves."]

The opponents of the 'Oxford comma' argue that most series include a conjunction such as 'and' or 'or' before the last item, so adding a comma after the second-to-last item would be redundant and a waste of space, which was a big deal back in the days of paper newspapers, when every character mattered for maximizing content.*

[*This point of historical reference had been raised back in Session 65, in the context of evaluating voting methods, but we responded at the time that it seemed to be a lame argument on their part, since they could have saved more space by dropping the line or paragraph or article or newspaper in its entirety.]

However, as we see in the second example above, a conjunction might even come before other items in the series, not just the last one, and still it makes the reading easier when all the items in the series are separated by commas.

Both for general clarity of reading, and also because minimizing character usage is not nearly as important in our modern electronic era as it was while we had paper newspapers, we favor the placement of a comma between each pair of items in a series, whether any conjunctions are also used in the series or not.

Subsection III-F-5: Footnotes

Question 662

Is it better for footnotes to be placed at the bottom of the page, or at the end of the chapter, or at the end of the book/article?

Used to be that all footnotes would be placed at the bottom of the page, so that readers could easily see whether they included simple reference info or some actual supplemental text to provide additional illustration to the main passage.

Some authors got crazy with it, though, and included either a lot of tiny footnotes containing simple reference info, or a small number of very long footnotes containing extensive supplemental text. This sometimes meant that the footnote section on a given page was larger than the main text, and that the footnotes sometimes even needed to 'bleed' into the following page, which could be a further problem if that page had footnotes of its* own to be managed. [*Please observe correct usage of "its" as a possessive, in accordance with Answer 659.4 above.]

Some short-sighted folks thought that they would fix the problem by requiring all footnotes to appear at the end of the chapter, or all the way to the end of the book. However, this causes an additional problem: The reader who is in the middle of some chapter in the book does not know whether a given footnote provides a simple reference citation or whether it provides some potentially-interesting supplemental text. In order to find out, we need to locate the footnote, either at the end of the chapter or at the end of the book, and it's a big pain and hassle either way, especially when you go through the trouble and find only a boring citation for your

reward. If there are several footnotes, then you need to hold your place at where they are located, and then flip back and forth, disrupting the main reading flow.

Our 'black book' of preliminary ideas from the mid-1990's suggested a compromise, by which all the boring reference citations could be stuck at the end of the chapter or book, but all the potentially-interesting supplemental text could remain on the main page. However, as of Session 281, we were not big fans of this approach.

Footnotes are footnotes, and each one should appear at the 'foot' of the page containing whatever point the footnote is referring to. That makes it easiest for the reader to see quickly whether anything interesting is happening there. If not, then you can move on. If so, then you can absorb the added text without flipping pages. Even if it is just a boring citation, just seeing that it is there comforts the reader that external support for the statement is available if desired, and again it's easier for the reader to derive that comfort without needing to flip to the end of a chapter or book.

If you are concerned about a footnote running so long that it 'bleeds' into the next page, then we suggest that you re-edit your work in such a way that this does not happen. Either work it into the main text somehow as its own topic, or else move it into an appendix. It's not the fault of our original footnote placement that some authors happened to put too many words into their footnotes, so we should not need to change our ways just because of their poor writing or editing.

[Noted in the Third Pass our exceptional usage in this document, where the footnote appears directly after the text which it is illustrating. We do so largely because the passages here have been amended so many times that we did not know what the final pagination would be until the end of the Third Pass. Also, when this document gets combined with the partial findings of the other panels in the Fourth Pass, and Q's are rearranged more logically in the Fifth Pass, we want those footnotes sticking with their original passages without getting 'lost', so we are keeping them together.]

Question 662.1

Is it better to use "op. cit." and "Ibid." as standard footnote abbreviations, or some more modern notation?

To refresh, "Ibid." stands for the Latin *ibidem*, meaning 'in the same place', and is used in a footnote to state that the reference citation of the current statement is exactly the same as in the footnote immediately preceding. Its cousin "op. cit." is short for the Latin *opere citato*, meaning 'in the work cited', and is used in conjunction with the author's last name (and possibly a different page number) to refer to a book cited in some footnote earlier than the most recent one.

We get it that Latin words and expressions and abbreviations are generally becoming less and less relevant in our modern society, and that trying to teach these usages to our schoolchildren will often just increase their desire to go outside and play.

Nevertheless, at least as an exception, we continued in Session 281 to advocate for the use of these abbreviations to mean the things indicated. When we use the same convention to mean the same thing, it makes it easier for the casual reader to skip over it if desired, and also for the critical reader to locate the markers which point to where additional information can be found. Abbreviated forms of these standard expressions are even easier to either locate or ignore, as the reader may prefer.

We theoretically could come up with some arbitrary English-language expression for each of "op. cit." and "Ibid." if we really wanted to, and then abbreviate it for space efficiency, but that would constitute extra work for both the people inventing the new rule and all the others who are asked to learn it. Far simpler all around to use the Latin abbreviations which have been with us for many years. Teach in secondary school what the expressions mean, and then use them happily. [Changed later.]

Subsection III-F-6: Numbers

Question 662.4

Do we prefer the American system of defining a 'billion' to mean 10^9 , or the British/French system of a 'billion' meaning 10^{12} , or something else?

The values of a 'thousand' ($=10^3=1,000$) and a 'million' ($=10^6=1,000,000$) are the same in both systems. However, when we begin to speak about a thousand multiplied by a million (that is, ten to the ninth power, or 10^9 , or 1,000,000,000), we in America simply call that a 'billion', but the British refer to it as a 'thousand million'. Only when you multiply that quantity by another factor of 1,000 (to make 10^{12}) do they call it a 'billion', whereas we in America call that a 'trillion'.

Maybe we are prejudiced for having grown up in America, and maybe we don't want to require our American audiences to learn more new ways of doing things than are absolutely necessary. In any case, as of Session 281 we advocate for the shorter and simpler method. It is easier to say and write 'billion' than 'thousand million', and it is easier to say and write 'trillion' than 'million million'.* [*Did you notice how the comma and period are properly placed outside the single quotes in that sentence, as described in Answer 661?]

In this case, it happens that the American system is the shorter one, so there we go.

Question 662.3

Shall we continue to use Base 10, or shift to Base 8 or Base 12 or something else?

We did not see any big reason as of Session 281 to vary from using Base 10 for our normal societal operations, and using Bases 2 and 8 and 60 only in special fields.

Subsection III-F-7: Measurement

Question 662.5

What about this whole 'metric system' business?

We realize that some people like to hold on to their traditional ways generally, and specifically that some Americans don't like to be told what to do by foreigners. In this instance, though, we are afraid that we must advocate in favor of change.

Just as it was helpful for the British to abandon their 'farthings' and 'shillings' and 'guineas' in favor of a decimal-based currency, and just as we Americans made things easier by reporting the unit prices of our stocks in hundredths of a dollar

instead of 'eighths', it's getting pretty close to time for us to realize that the rest of the World has the drop on us when it comes to physical measurement.

Under their 'metric system', you have base values of 'meter' for length and 'gram' for mass and 'liter' for volume, and every multiple or fraction of that base value is expressed by either multiplying or dividing that base value by some factor of 10, as in 'kilogram' to mean 1,000 grams, or 'centimeter' to mean 1/100th of a meter.

It's easier for us to express our own measurements with these terms (for example, '1.9 meters' is easier than '6 feet, 3 inches'), and it's also easier for us to communicate both politically and scientifically with the rest of the World, which makes us more of a productive and efficient global society, instead of a bunch of isolated tribes all doing things the hard way just for the purpose of being stubborn.

We probably don't need to change our various standards for Carpentry (after all, a '2x4' doesn't really measure two inches by four inches, anyhow) or other fields where conversion would require a massive mechanical effort. However, there are several easier steps which we can take to get more Americans thinking in metric terms. One of these is to convert the field measurements at Baseball stadiums from feet to meters. Football and Basketball can decide internally whether to resize their standard arenas to a round number of metric units (do you want to go 100 meters down the Football field instead of just 100 yards?), or whether to keep the same basic size (47ft for Basketball = 14.3256m) but express it in meters instead of feet.

In the meantime, manufacturers of smaller-scale industrial products (such as thermometers, meat scales, gas pumps, etc.) are encouraged to convert to metric measurements at their earliest practical convenience. What is their incentive for doing so? Our model of Federal agencies includes an Office of Measurement Standards, which is already tasked with spotchecking new measuring equipment for accuracy, and assessing various penalties when problems are found. That same agency can establish timetables for metric conversion, subject to Congressional specification, and can similarly penalize manufacturers who convert too slowly.

That said, we should also keep in mind that setting arbitrary timetables for metric conversion has been attempted in America before, going back to the 1970's, and as of Session 281 it has not worked completely, if at all. We therefore recommend that the Fed should make the process more gradual, and accept smaller increments of progress which can be established and monitored and enforced more easily, but still making sure that the overall progress is continually getting expedited.

In sum, the faster that we can dialogue with the rest of the World on common issues using common terms and standards of measurement, the sooner that we have a shot at being accepted again by the rest of the World as a global Partner, and possibly even as a global Leader. If we decide to simply stay our own way, then they will go theirs, and pretty soon we will be shut out of the international loop in Business and Politics and Diplomacy and everything else.

Question 662.6

Should we continue to use 'weight', or should we instead use 'mass'?

Many of you folks may think that this a trivial matter which does not belong even in an outline purporting to cover Everything, and you might be right. However, the

author once attended a 'town hall' meeting with the local representative of Congress, and no kidding somebody else raised that issue at the microphone, even with all the other national problems then needing to be solved. So, we will give it a brief look.

In strict scientific terms, 'mass' refers to the amount of physical 'stuff' which a body contains, whereas 'weight' refers to the degree of gravitational attraction the body experiences when near some other massive body. That is why a body in Earth orbit still has about the same amount of 'mass' as normal, but feels about zero 'weight'.

Also in strict scientific terms, our current 'pounds' and 'ounces' are units of 'weight', whereas the 'grams' and 'kilograms' of the metric system are units of 'mass'. If we convert either partly or completely to metric in America, then we will be talking about 'mass' units instead of 'weight' units. Should we therefore still be speaking in terms of needing to 'lose weight', or instead in terms of needing to 'lose mass'?

Most folks are neither Scientists nor Astronauts, and so the distinction would make very little difference to them. With the many other changes that we are asking folks to make in how they view things and do things and express things, we have a hard time as of Session 281 bringing ourselves to offer them this recommendation as well.

Besides, even if/when we do convert to metric, a dieter is still interested in losing 'weight', because he still wants to reduce the degree of his gravitational attraction toward the Earth, regardless of his relative altitude at any given moment. The fact that he needs to reduce his 'mass' in order to reduce his 'weight' does not alter the fact that he is trying to lose 'weight', so the expression is still technically correct.

Subsection III-F-8: Pronunciation

Question 662.9

Recognizing that minor variations in Pronunciation occur naturally among different regions within a large Nation, do we yet have any specific recommendations to offer?

We do have one, and it's another where the author changed sides over the years.

The word in question is 'short-lived', along with its less-frequent sibling 'long-lived'.

The regular word 'lived' (being the past tense of the infinitive 'live', meaning to 'exist' or 'reside') is pronounced with a 'short' vowel sound, same as 'give' or 'lift'. A lot of folks therefore understandably assume that the second syllable of 'short-lived' would be pronounced in the same way, as if to say that somebody 'lived short'.

That is not actually the case, however. When we have a construction with an adjective in front, followed by a hyphen, and then the word ends in '-ed', the base of that second element is actually a noun, not a verb. Examples are 'short-sighted', 'long-legged', 'red-breasted', 'yellow-bellied', 'double-edged', and 'loud-mouthed'.

Following these rules, when we say that something was 'short-lived', we are actually saying that it had a 'short life', so to make that clear we should be using the 'long' vowel sound, same as 'wife' and 'knife'. Just as we change the 'f' to 'v' when making the plurals of all these words, we do the same thing when we convert any of them

into a modified past participle, but we do not change the base pronunciation. The word 'lives' (as the plural of 'life') and 'wives' and 'knives' all rhyme with 'arrives'.

In other words, if someone has 'short sight' then you say that he is 'short-sighted', and if something has 'short life' then you say that it is 'short-lived'. But, because that latter word is a noun form, and is only changing one letter because a suffix is being added, the modified form is pronounced in the same way as the original. In sum, 'short-lived' should rhyme with 'arrived'.

Question 662.7

Should we make any adjustment to the 60-second Minute, the 60-minute Hour, and/or the 24-hour Day?

Some folks might argue, if we are making such a big push toward the 'metric system' so that each unit of physical measurement is bigger or smaller than each other unit by some factor of 10, then why would we not want to do the same thing with our Time? Shouldn't we have a 10-hour Day, a 100-minute Hour, and a 100-second Minute, and then adjust the standard length of the Second accordingly?

If we were starting completely from scratch with our Timekeeping, then this might be a defensible argument. As it is, we have billions of analog and digital clocks in the world which would all need to be recalibrated or replaced if we change the structure of our Day, and so the change might cause more problems than it solves.

Besides, a big argument in favor of metric conversion is to get us more in sync with the rest of the World, but behold the rest of the World is still using the 24-hour Day, so converting our Time measurements would actually take us out of global sync.

You might then suggest that we ask the entire World to change simultaneously, but we have yet another reason for keeping things as they are: The 24-hour Day has an advantage over its decimal equivalent, in that it is easily divisible by 3 and 4 and 6 and 8 and 12. If you want to have 6 watches per Day on your naval vessel, then it is far easier to measure them out at 4 regular Hours each, than to use $1 \frac{2}{3}$ of the 'new' Hours. Same goes for any other reason for dividing your Day into 'shifts'.

At some future point, maybe at least for the limited purpose of interplanetary or interstellar travel (where we would not need to be tied so closely to the sidereal rotation of the Earth), we might look at this issue again. For our foreseeable Earth-based needs, though, we are probably fine as we are with our current Clock.

Question 662.8

Should we make any adjustment to the 360-degree Circle, or any other Circular measurement?

Most 'regular' folks know (don't they??) that there are 360 Degrees of Arc in a circle. What many of them don't know, unless they're Cartographers or Navigators or some other kind of specialist, is that a Degree of Arc comprises 60 Minutes, just like an Hour of Time, and that a Minute of Arc comprises 60 Seconds.* [*Please observe again, as noted in Answer 658.3, that the Whole comprises the Parts.]

This then is another argument which might come up more often as we move closer to the 'metric system' for other measurements in America: Why would we need to adopt decimal-based measurements for some quantities and not for others??

As with Answer 662.7, part of the reason is because there is little or no reason for us to change when the rest of the World is currently doing it the same way as we are. Also as with Answer 662.7, having 360 Degrees in your circle instead of 400 allows you to divide your circles and quadrants into 'thirds' and 'sixths' and 'twelfths' without fractions, which can be useful for a variety of reasons.

Therefore, not hearing a really big cry in favor of change, we recommend against it.

SECTION III-G: RACES, RELIGIONS, & OTHER GROUPS

Question 663 (continued)

To what extent -- if any -- should any of the foregoing apply differently to different races, ethnic groups, religions, gender identities, sexual preferences, hand preferences, political persuasions, areas of the country, or any other groups?

We had no bigots present when this Question was considered in earnest during Session 282 (February 2019), to argue in favor of differentiation by population segment. Everyone who was present agreed very trivially that there should never be any such differentiation, and we feel confident that many/most folks -- both in the 'general public' and in the political community -- would agree with us.

For, in a world full of several billion people running around randomly, which is the starting condition of this whole Project, who is to say which people are 'superior' to which others, and on what bases would they make those distinctions?

Trouble is, there are many other folks out there who still do not agree, who still feel that our various Rights and Privileges should apply differently to different groups.

Answer therefore is trivial to the Question as phrased, but the bigger Question (coming up later) is how to convince the Bigots to abandon their paradigms.

Question 664

What is the final goal that we want to achieve with respect to race relations, or to relations among individuals of different racial backgrounds?

The final goal -- as we hope that we all can agree, except for the extremist bigots for whom some of us now pray [pause] -- is for race or other personal attributes not to matter at all for anything anymore. If you will not trust a white guy's perspective on this point, then perhaps you would place greater faith in the words of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*:

When we allow freedom to ring--when we let it ring from every city and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last, Free at last, Great God a-mighty, We are free at last."

[*The entire text of the 'I Have A Dream' speech can be downloaded in PDF from <https://www.archives.gov/files/press/exhibits/dream-speech.pdf>, and it's a great read.]

Because this speech was delivered over 50 years ago, when things were even worse off than as of Session 282, Dr. King was focused mostly on one particular stage of our overall social evolution, so he didn't take the time to specify different gender identities, sexual preferences, tall and short, thin and fat, left- and right-handed, likes or hates the designated hitter, etc., but he did say "all of God's children", so we imagine that he would have agreed to a policy of non-discrimination for everyone.

Question 665

Should any special provisions (including admission or employment quotas, busing, housing subsidies, etc.) be made by Government to force individuals from different racial backgrounds to do stuff together?

At this stage of our evolution, we suggest not. It may have been helpful at one time, but continued efforts are contrary to the goal stated in A664. Also, any attempts at retribution only continue to engender hatred and resentment among racial groups.

Certainly okay to have laws prohibiting discrimination, but it probably would be better to avoid specific mention of 'race' in those laws. Rather, phrase them so as to prohibit discrimination on the basis of *any factor not relating to the job*, to distinguish between fair and unfair discrimination.

Question 666

What penalties should apply to an individual guilty of unfair discrimination?

At the very least, the guilty party should be forced to leave his position of authority, so that he cannot cause any further damage. He probably also should be required to attend counseling or a standardized course of ethics to relieve him of his bigotry.

Beyond this, jail time is probably excessive, as would be any monetary damages to the victim, because nobody is injured if the discrimination is reversed before any damage is sustained. However, if the victim needed to front any legal fees or other costs in order to combat the unfair discrimination, then the guilty party should be covering those, following the principles which we established in Section I-F.

Question 667

Do we agree that it is worthwhile to try to relieve bigotry among the populace?

The bigots might not agree, but it is our group's position as of Session 282 that it is.

Question 668

If so, then what steps shall we take?

Some people might never allow themselves to change their mind on any subject, and they will forever hold to whatever they were taught as children or later ideated on their own, because they are not willing to confront the possibility that they may have been wrong about anything for so long of a time. Nevertheless, as of Session 282 we feel that we may at least have a shot at convincing some of these folks to modify their positions, and the following points may help to do it:

First, whether you believe in Creation, or Evolution, or Some Third Thing, or Nothing, all belief systems seem to agree that all humans now alive descended from some common source. That makes us all Cousins, so when you are visiting war or bigotry or unfair discrimination on any other persons, you are doing it to your own family.

Second, because for some reason a lot of bigots seem to consider themselves Christians, you might get their attention with the Bible phrase "Judge not, that ye be not judged".* [*Matthew 7:1] You don't need to believe in God or the Bible in order to understand and appreciate the universal logic of this principle: If we maintain a society in which people are judged and delimited on the basis of irrelevant personal factors, then sooner or later it may happen to you, too. If you want to be left alone to live your life freely, following only the Basic Social Rule of not injuring or threatening others against their will, then you stand a much better chance if you refrain from encouraging or promoting that kind of culture, which means that you shouldn't set a bad example by judging or unfairly discriminating against others.

Third, we have read that some folks consider the expression 'African-American' to be inaccurate, because the expression has been used to describe Caucasians who had been naturalized from South Africa. We are now thinking it better to eliminate reference to both race and nationality entirely. Only time that you ever need to refer to a person's ancestry is when you are looking for a suspect or a missing person, in which case you should refer only to a 'descent', such as 'European-descent', 'African-descent', 'Hispanic-descent', and 'Asian-descent'. Following this line, we could use 'American-descent' to refer to our own indigenous populations.

Question 669

Shall we try to ease relations among different religious groups?

Even if you don't believe in Religion, you should at least believe in Peace. If you don't believe in Peace, then as of Session 282 we need for you and your buddies to vacate our Civil Society, and to form your own Nation where you get to beat each other up, for whatever you think that's going to accomplish.

If you do believe in Peace (again, whether you believe in any Religion or not), then you should be opposed to any agent which threatens it. You therefore should be opposed to any Religion which seeks for any reason to bring War to others.

If your own current Religion currently advocates any form of Violence to any people for any reason (certain folks really blew it with the Crusades and the Inquisition, for example), then you should either seek to change their policy, or else abandon that Religion in favor of one which promotes Love and Peace.

Question 670

If so, then how shall we proceed?

First, everyone needs to recognize that there are many different faiths, plus numerous variations and sub-variations. Since we can't *all* be right, some of us -- probably most of us, and maybe even all of us -- are wrong on one or more points. Each of us, then, must allow for the possibility that we are individually wrong on one or more points. We therefore should not hold it against our neighbor just because she may have a different religious perspective, for she may possibly be right.

Further, notwithstanding the Canaanite Wars or the Maccabean siege or the assaults on the Vatican or the Islamic Jihad or any other military struggles of our past in the name of Holy Religion, virtually all 'real' religions in our modern world preach Peace, Love, and Harmony among neighbors, and decry violence and hostility.

Let us therefore put down our swords, live together in Peace, and have a sane dialogue on any ethical or philosophical or cosmological or other issues which currently cause us to want to have different religions in the first place.

Question 671

Is there any valid reason to harbor or display any hostility toward participants of alternate lifestyles, particularly those with sexual preferences different from ours?

At the risk of duplicating our statements in Section III-B (especially Answers 489-492), no as of Session 282 we still believe that there is no such valid reason.

Question 646.4b

Can we recommend at this time any improvements in Football statistics?

Added in February 2019: It always disturbed us that the Quarterback would receive statistical credit for the entire distance acquired in any pass play. Seems to us that the Quarterback should get distance credit for getting the ball to the point of reception, but that should be it, no more credit after that, because his job is done at that point, and he cannot possibly have any material influence on the rest of the play. Conversely, the Receiver should continue to get distance credit not only for getting to the point of reception, but also for any subsequent advance of the ball, unless and until he once surrenders possession of the ball to another player.

Question 646.6

Can we recommend at this time any improvements in Basketball statistics?

Added between Sessions in February 2019: If it has already happened then we have not yet heard about it, but in any case we have long felt that an accurate statistical measure of a player's overall performance is to add up all the team points acquired while the player is on the floor, subtract all the team points allowed, and then divide the difference by the number of minutes played. This statistic reflects both offensive and defensive effectiveness, as well as the fact that players can pass and post and 'punch out' and do other things to help their team to score, even if they are not getting any Baskets or Assists or Rebounds or other individual stats on their own.

Question 658.3 (continued)

What other words/expressions in our vocabulary do we feel should be either modified or at least clarified?

Only

Added between Sessions in February 2019: There is not much ambiguity about what this word means, but there does seem to be considerable confusion as to how it

should be used, and this confusion can cause huge differences in the meaning of your sentences.

The trick with 'only' is that it can easily modify many different words of several different parts of speech, so it's not always clear which modification the speaker or writer actually intends. For this reason, we recommend that it be placed directly next to the term which it is modifying, in order to make the meaning clearer.

Question 437.5

Do we have any product suggestions to be advanced by American industry?

Showers

One suggestion which we introduced between Sessions in February 2019 [we added more later] is to create a better approach in our shower management. Some showers are designed with a single knob which controls both volume and temperature. Problem with that approach is that closing the knob in order to save water during certain portions of your shower often causes the temperature setting to adjust, so the water is either too cold or too hot when you turn it back on, and you need to waste more time and water while you readjust the temperature.

Our idea is for one shower head which controls volume while another maintains temperature, so that you can adjust either setting without affecting the other. The author asks no royalties for this idea, but would appreciate if you would please kindly mention in all your various publicities that your invention was based on an idea described in 'The Answers To Everything', so that we can generate additional book sales and spread further all the other messages contained within this document.

Question 658.3 (continued)

What other words/expressions in our vocabulary do we feel should be either modified or at least clarified?

Consider the following examples. When you know that the word 'only' is modifying the expression immediately following, each sentence has its own unique meaning, so you should place the word where your intended meaning will be clearest:

Only the team's coach hoped that Martinez would pitch on Wednesday.
The only team's coach hoped that Martinez would pitch on Wednesday.
The team's only coach hoped that Martinez would pitch on Wednesday.
The team's coach only hoped that Martinez would pitch on Wednesday.
The team's coach hoped only that Martinez would pitch on Wednesday.
The team's coach hoped that only Martinez would pitch on Wednesday.
The team's coach hoped that Martinez would only pitch on Wednesday.
The team's coach hoped that Martinez would pitch on only Wednesday.

The same principle can apply to any word or phrase which modifies something else within a sentence: In general, the modifier should be placed as close as possible to the expression which it is modifying, or else the meaning might become distorted. Good example is this Yahoo headline from 22-Feb-2019:

"NBA coach Don Nelson sports new look and talks about smoking pot at press conference"

The way that this is phrased, it looks as though at some point he had smoked pot at a press conference, which is usually not a good idea for anybody. What they apparently meant according to the article is that he was smoking pot at other places and times, and that he was merely talking about it at the press conference. To make that fact clearer, the headline probably should have read:

“NBA coach Don Nelson sports new look and **talks at press conference** about smoking pot”

SECTION III-H: THE ANSWERS TO EVERYTHING ELSE

Subsection III-H-1: Dates & Time

Question 672

Best to keep year count as current, or to reflect a better estimate of Christ’s birth, or to align with Jewish or Chinese or other calendar, or to tie to some other event of great historical significance?

As our ‘black book’ of preliminary ideas also noted, we did not observe as of Session 283 (February 2019) any big push to change our year-numbering to either the actual year of Christ’s birth, or to any other particular historical event. It is only a mild inconvenience to refer to the presumed fact that Christ was born in 4 B.C., or 4 ‘B.C.E.’, and that inconvenience affects only certain communities within our society.

Besides, although 4 B.C. is a more likely date for Christ’s birth than the ‘zero singularity’ which early Church leaders attempted to create in their calendar, there is evidence to suggest that the date may have been as early as 6 B.C. or 7 B.C., so changing all year references by a factor of 4 would not necessarily tie us definitively to Christ’s birth date.

If we were going to change to anything, then it may be better to base everything on the Founding of Rome (753 B.C.), because that civilization is historically important for both the Christian and Secular communities.

However, any problem with our current year-numbering appears to be so small that it’s probably not worth the effort which would be required to decide upon a particular convention, and then to get the World’s buy-in (good luck with that), and then to engineer the change in the unlikely event that everyone agrees to it.

Thus, while we are open to further discussion if anyone cares that much about the matter, yet we see it as low-pri enough that we recommend No Change at this time.

Question 673

If keeping the current year-numbering convention, then do we want to make any change to the current use of the abbreviations ‘B.C.’ and ‘A.D.’?

Same deal as with Answer 672. It’s something which has been discussed, and can be discussed further, but it appears in our group’s perception as of Session 283 that it is not a big enough issue for either our group or our entire Society to bother with, so not pushing any change in this area at this time. Keeping the DH out of the NL is much more important.

Question 674

Do we wish to adopt the European custom of abbreviating dates in the format of 'D/M/Y', or encourage them to adopt the American 'M/D/Y', or keep both systems, or do something else?

What you do in your private correspondence is your own affair. And, if your job does not involve interacting with any foreign entities, then there may not be a big reason for you to change whatever you're doing, regardless of where you live.

However, for those individuals and corporations and governments which interact with foreign entities, we feel from experience as of Session 283 that you would do yourselves the most good by defaulting to the DD-MMM-YYYY format (as in '25-Feb-2019'), such that not only does the Day come first, but you are making that fact clearer than it would have been if you had used all numbers.

But, you may ask, why should we Americans change to their practice? Why shouldn't they change to ours? Answer is: You are right that we shouldn't always need to change our ways to match those of other people and other Nations, but sometimes it makes more sense to do so, and we feel that this is one of those times.

Two reasons why: First, it is more natural and more logical for the date to flow from smallest time unit to largest time unit; our American way of mixing up the order is the one which makes less sense, and therefore is harder to defend. Second, when you are specifying Days and not just Months, then the Days must matter more for whatever topic you are discussing at the moment, in which case it often/usually makes the most sense to lead your expression with the most important element.

Question 675

Do we want to reset the date of the New Year back to the Winter Solstice, or stick it in March as the Romans did, or leave it as is, or do something else?

This is one area where we do favor a change, and specifically as of Session 283 we favor setting the Calendar New Year back a few days to be line with the Solar New Year, that is, with the Winter Solstice. We would 'lose' a few days in the conversion, but that has happened before when people changed their calendars, and the Earth has continued to rotate on its axis without interruption.

Societies have long recognized the Winter Solstice as the 'effective date' of the New Year, because it clearly and uniquely demarcates the entire life cycles of our planet. Even the Romans eventually changed their minds on this point, which is why they converted from beginning the year in March (which is why September is now in the 9th position instead of its original 7th* [*Latin *septem* = 'seven'], and why October-December similarly shifted) to doing it in January, although for a time the old Julian Calendar began its year even earlier than the Winter Solstice. Spring is when we see the greatest appearance of new plant and animal life, but much of that development goes back to when the Earth is beginning to warm up again after the Winter Solstice.

If we were going to have our calendar year begin anywhere close to the Winter Solstice (as we currently do, and which makes perfect sense), then why would we want to 'miss' it by 9-10 days? Just define that the previous December 22 [changed later] is the new January 1, and then your Calendar will finally match with Real Life.

Question 675.5

Do we want/need to do anything with Time Zones or the International Date Line?

We wish as of Session 283 that the Time Zone boundaries would follow State boundaries more closely, so that we would know how far ahead or behind any particular American city is from wherever we are. As it is now, Nebraska and Idaho and Kentucky and Tennessee and the Dakotas and other States are crossed unnecessarily with multiple Time Zones, making things confusing for some of us.

We initially figured that all of Idaho should be in the Mountain Zone (it's a pretty mountainous State in general), that all of the Dakotas and Nebraska should be in the Central Zone (they look pretty central to us), and that all of Kentucky and Tennessee and Alabama (and probably also Mississippi) should be in the Eastern Zone.

However, that superficial analysis was based on maps of the existing Time Zones, which we wanted to streamline but not completely change. When we looked at the actual Longitudes of some major American cities, we found that the lines may need to be shifted even further. Here is the breakdown of major cities for 15-degree zones counting from the Prime Meridian:

- Zone 8 (105-120) = San Francisco 122, Las Vegas 115, Phoenix 112, Billings 108, Santa Fe 105
should cover all Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico
- Zone 7 (90-105) = Rapid City (W end of South Dakota) 103, Baton Rouge 91
line should follow Mississippi River, and border between Minnesota and Wisconsin
- Zone 6 (75-90) = Eau Claire 91, Baltimore 76, Allentown 75, New York 74
should include New York and New Jersey
- Zone 5 (60-75) = Montpelier 72, Bangor 68
should include all of New England, but nothing besides

But, we also saw that they then defined Zone 0 as surrounding the Prime Meridian by 7.5 degrees on either side. Inserted new Question at this time as to that practice:

Question 675.6

Where should the 'first' Time Zone of the Western Hemisphere begin and end?

There certainly is an argument in favor of doing it however we're doing it now, because changing it would require time and energy which probably should be devoted to higher-priority challenges.

However, we should also remember that a core premise of this entire Project is to assume that we are starting everything from scratch, so we were still curious in Session 283 to know what we would have decided if all the maps had not already been made.

As a matter of theoretical arithmetic alone, we probably would have suggested having the first Time Zone of the Western Hemisphere cover from 0° to 15°, the second from 15° to 30°, and so on, because it is relatively easy to divide any given Longitude by 15° in order to figure out the likely Time Zone for that location.

However, as a matter of practical geography, we are yet siding with the current practice, where there is a single 'first' Time Zone for the entire World, generally extending 7.5° on either side of the Prime Meridian. We realize all too well that this means a range of 7.5°-22.5° for the first 'full' Time Zone in the Western Hemisphere, a range of 22.5°-37.5° for the second 'full' Time Zone, and so on, which is much clumsier from an arithmetical standpoint. But, when you look at an actual map of Europe, you can see that the city of Lisbon has a longitude of 10° West, meaning that -- with a slight adjustment for Portugal and Ireland -- the whole of Western Europe can be in the same Time Zone if we keep the fundamental lines where they are, and even here in America we can understand the utility of keeping it that way (for otherwise our 'head' in New England would be cut off in its own Time Zone), so currently recommending No Change on that point.

Question 675.5 (continued)

Do we want/need to do anything with Time Zones or the International Date Line?

We don't ever hear anybody suggesting any change from the current Prime Meridian as the starting-point for all our mapmaking, so we do not seek to change it. To the contrary, its current placement allows the International Date Line to zigzag between Asia and North America, which seems perfectly natural, so no we do not have any hangup about the International Date Line either.

Question 675.7

Given the placement of the fundamental Time Zone(s) of the World, where specifically should the Time Zone boundaries in America be?

According to Answer 675.6, we are keeping Zone 0 at its current general range of 7.5° West to 7.5° East. This means that Zone 1 should generally cover a range of 7.5°-22.5°, Zone 2 should generally cover a range of 22.5°-37.5°, Zone 3 should cover 37.5°-52.5°, and Zone 4 should cover 52.5°-67.5°. Zone 5 should cover 67.5°-82.5°, which is where we begin to see the first cities on the American mainland.

From here, we looked in Session 283 at the longitudes of certain American cities which are located on the Western or Eastern edges of the ranges which generally cover the American mainland. We can summarize the key spots as follows:

- Zone 5 - 67.5°-82.5° - includes Bangor ME 68, Montpelier VT 72, New York NY 74, Allentown PA 75, Baltimore MD 76, Miami FL 80, Akron OH 81
- Zone 6 - 82.5°-97.5° - includes Atlanta GA 84, Pensacola FL 87, Baton Rouge LA & Eau Claire WI 91, Dallas TX 96
- Zone 7 - 97.5°-112.5° - includes Abilene TX 99, Rapid City SD 103, Santa Fe NM 105, Billings MT 108, Flagstaff AZ 111, Phoenix AZ 112
- Zone 8 - 112.5°-127.5° - includes Yuma AZ 114, Las Vegas NV 115, San Francisco CA 122

Given these placements, we seem to be correct already that the boundary between Zone 7 and Zone 8 should come up between California and Arizona (Yuma is close enough that it can remain happy in Zone 7) and continue along the Eastern edge of Nevada. As a change from current practice, though, we claim that it should then shift over to the Western edge of Idaho and follow that up to the Canadian border.

In order for Abilene to remain in Zone 7 while Dallas remains in Zone 6, it would be necessary for the interzonal boundary to split the State of Texas as well as its

Northern neighbors, but again our primary recommendation here is to avoid splitting up any States, so we think it better for the boundary to travel up the Western edge of Texas and Kansas and Nebraska and the Dakotas, still leaving plenty of room for several large States (including Montana and Colorado) to occupy the Mountain Zone.

Since we are fudging the Zone 7 line a bit West, we can do the same with Zone 6, so Atlanta gets to stay in the Eastern Zone even though its longitude theoretically places it in Zone 6. That boundary coming up along the West edge of Georgia should continue up along the Eastern boundaries of Tennessee and Kentucky and Ohio, even though Akron technically falls within Zone 5.

This means that Ohio and almost all of Michigan and Indiana would need to switch from Eastern to Central, but this makes sense both Geographically (wanting to get all complete States within their natural 15-degree zones to the extent that we practically can) and also Historically (since Ohio and Kentucky and the rest were added to the Union after the establishment of the 13 original States). Most of Florida lies within Zone 6, and Florida was not one of the 13 original States, so some folks may want to place it in the Central Zone; however, most of Florida is also directly South of Georgia, which we are keeping in the Eastern Zone, besides which it's hard to call any State 'central' when it possesses a large Eastern border which overlooks the Atlantic Ocean, so our primary recommendation is to keep Florida in the East.

Let us know if you need any help with other areas of the World, but hopefully you folks can figure it out if you simply make sure not to divide any State or Province which takes up less than 15 degrees of total Longitude.

Question 675.8

Can we now eliminate Daylight Saving Time?

Session 283: Yes, do, and make sure that no State gets to set its own timeframe apart from that which we have figured out in Answer 675.7 for the entire Nation.

Our group's perception from Twitter and Yahoo and numerous in-person discussions is that opinions vary as to Daylight Saving Time these days. If you the individual reader already oppose it, then you may feel free to skip to the next Question. For any who may still support it, we ask that you please consider the following points:

First, for those who cite that Benjamin Franklin proposed the concept (and that we therefore must obey), apparently he supported a different concept where certain tradespeople might want to change their times of getting up and working over the course of the year, but did not advocate in favor of everybody changing their actual clocks.* [[*https://www.history.com/news/8-things-you-may-not-know-about-daylight-saving-time](https://www.history.com/news/8-things-you-may-not-know-about-daylight-saving-time)]

Second, for further historical background, it appears that the practice of changing clocks was first legislated in 1918 as a wartime savings measure, and that the legislation was repealed the very next year. After this time, different States and Localities developed their own systems, which understandably developed quite a bit of cross-confusion over time. The current practice was formalized in 1966 under the "Uniform Time Act", so it would need to be repealed at the Congressional level.

Third, for those who claim that the current practice of making all non-Arizonians in the Nation change their clocks twice a year somehow helps Farmers or any other

workers, we politely suggest that we are not thereby doing anything for Farmers or others which they can't do for themselves if they wish. Any individuals in any industry who wish to change their personal schedules such that they 'gain' an hour once each year, and then 'lose' it again six months later, are perfectly free to do so.

They are also perfectly free to adjust their rising time more gradually over the course of the year according to the periodic shift in sunrise time, or to adjust their retiring time according to evolving sunset times, or to keep their schedules at fixed times throughout the year, or else to take each new day as it comes. Whatever your personal or professional preferences may be, you may do as you please, but it is not necessary to take the rest of us with you. Just as you get to do things your way, please let the rest of us do things our way, please do not any longer require us to change our daily schedules according to your set schedules, and please do not any longer make us go through the annoying process of switching all our analog clocks.

Instead, simply designate that when you are standing in the middle of your natural Time Zone, and when the Sun is at its highest point in the sky, that time is defined as 'Noon', and then base all your other times of the day upon that one astronomical singularity. 'Noon' was always intended to mean the middle of the day, the natural demarcation between when the Sun appears to rise and when it appears to set, and it is why the hands on our analog clockfaces were designed to point straight up at that time, up to where the Sun may be found at that moment.

There is no valid reason that we can see to define 'Noon' arbitrarily as anything other than the time when the Sun is at its highest point of the day in the middle of your natural Time Zone, so let's all simply set our clocks to the Sun one final time as may be needed, and then let's simply live our lives with no more clock changes.

Subsection III-H-2: Holidays

Question 675.9

Shall we continue to observe Holidays in our modern society?

We're thinking Yes, and as of Session 283 we're going with Yes, but even as we say Yes we must acknowledge that there are arguments in favor of No.

One argument in favor of No alleges that Holidays place too much of a strain on our economy, in terms of both our reduced production and the costs of any civic celebrations. Another argument in favor of No points out that Holidays tend to mess up our various local schedules, such as how you never know whether the trash is going to get collected on its regular day or on the next day.

These certainly are valid points to consider, but let's also consider what our Life would be like if we did not have any Holidays in our schedule at all: If every week were exactly the same as every other week, all year and every year, forever, if we are stuck eternally in the same weekly loop, then we become Slaves and Robots, our Existence would become very dull and boring very quickly, we would become depressed on a Global scale, our economic production would eventually go down, and we would suffer as a Species. That can't be the right way for us, not if we are seeking to observe our Basic Principle that any Species should be continually working to at least maintain and hopefully improve its position within our planetary Ecosystem, lest it drop out of prominence and eventually out of existence.

It's important to break up our schedule once in a while, if only to affirm repeatedly that we are the Masters of our schedule and not Slaves to it. It's also important for both kids and adults to have something to look forward to at least sometimes, not just within the week but also on a seasonal and annual scale. It also adds some 'spice' to our lives when we occasionally do or see something outside of our normal routine, whether it be a vacation getaway or watching a town parade.

Besides, whereas schoolchildren get several long breaks throughout the year (as described in Section III-C), working folks get only 1-2 weeks of paid vacation per year if they're lucky, and in any case they can use an occasional Holiday to break their routine, and to give them some extra time for errands and/or recreation.

We're doing all this weekly work for a purpose, and it must be for more than keeping ourselves in Existence, because that too must have a purpose. If all that we are doing is Working, without ever Enjoying anything, then we're just wasting all our time and effort. We must at least occasionally take some time to Enjoy our lives while we can, and whatever weekly work we wreak will keep us in a position to be able to do that, but never should be allowed to prevent us from ever doing so.

So yes, notwithstanding the periodic drop in economic production, and the costs of any community celebrations, and the inconvenience of needing to shift your weekly schedules around, let us by all means continue to allow ourselves to take an occasional break from our normal routine to celebrate a New Season or a Big Anniversary or a Great Citizen or anything else which makes our community happy.

Question 676

To what extent shall we retain the custom of celebrating certain Holidays on the nearest Monday?

This may possibly depend on whether the actual 'Day' falls on a weekend or on some other day of the workweek, so let's consider each scenario separately.

If the normal 'Day' which is the nominal focus of the community celebration falls on a Saturday or Sunday, then many/most folks in the community would already have the time available to observe and participate in any Big Parades or other local activities which are scheduled to celebrate that 'Day', so there is an argument that those activities should be conducted on that actual 'Day', and not on the nearest Monday.

However, many folks by now have become so accustomed to getting a 'day off' for that holiday, regardless of whether it falls on a weekend or not, that they might now consider that they are getting 'gypped' if we now tell them that they must observe a regular weekly work schedule when the actual 'Day' happens to fall on a weekend. It would therefore likely cause folks to have less faith in our overall Agenda here, so we're afraid that we probably need to concede them this their expectation, even though it may not strictly be necessary, but yet in favor of the Greater Good.

If the normal 'Day' which is the nominal focus of the community celebration falls on a Tuesday through Friday, then there are arguments in favor of conducting the celebration on the actual 'Day'. One argument is that keeping it on the actual 'Day' helps us to focus more on the original reason for the celebration. (The lyric goes 'Born on the Fourth of July', not 'Born on the First Monday of July'.) Another argument is that having a 3-day weekend for every Holiday also becomes predictable

and boring after a while, whereas one of the key reasons for having Holidays in the first place (see Answer 675.9) is to break up our normal routine.

However, this is another one where we probably will just need to defer to present practice and current custom. We have heard complaints over the years when certain Holidays have been observed on weekdays other than Mondays, that it causes too much stress to reconstruct their weekly schedules around those dates, worse than if we simply observed them all on Mondays. We philosophically favor doing it on the actual dates, for the reasons given above, but if most folks really want it the way that we're currently doing it, and if they are willing to accept the larger points of our Agenda (such as No More War, No More Income Tax, Abandon Political Parties), then this probably can be one of those elements where we 'let them win the little ones'.

Question 677

What would we have done if Washington and Lincoln had been born in different months?

Our research from Session 283 indicated that Washington's Birthday was celebrated unofficially during his lifetime, and became a Federal holiday in 1879.*

[*<https://www.whitehouse.gov/articles/great-debate-presidents-day-washingtons-birthday/>]

Meanwhile, here's a trivia Q to stump your friends: In what year did Lincoln's Birthday stop being its own separate Federal holiday? Answer is, it never was its own separate Federal holiday!* Instead, Lincoln's Birthday has been recognized for many years as a Holiday in several States, but never at the Federal level. It was attempted several times, but never successfully. [*<https://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/us/lincolns-birthday>, <https://constitutioncenter.org/blog/how-abraham-lincoln-lost-his-birthday-holiday-2>]

The sources also show that the 'Presidents Day' now recognized on the third Monday in February (by the Uniform Monday Holiday Act of 1971) technically recognizes Washington's Birthday only, even though Washington was actually born on February 22, which can never be the third Monday. However, it also appears that 'Presidents Day' was invented at least partly because Lincoln was also born in mid-February, and partly because previous efforts to give Lincoln his own separate Federal holiday had always failed, so 'Presidents' Day' apparently was some sort of compromise solution.

These historical points suggest to our imagination that Washington probably would have retained his own birthday as a separate Federal holiday if Lincoln had been born in any other month, and that it probably would never have been converted to a generic 'Presidents Day'. Meanwhile, Lincoln might have had a better shot of getting his own separate Federal holiday if his birthday had not fallen so close to that of Washington, and if we therefore could have gotten another holiday worked into our 'Master Calendar' without taking two full days out of an already-short month. We may never know for sure, but that's our guess, and we're sticking to it.

Question 437.5 (continued)

Do we have any product suggestions to be advanced by American industry?

Automobile Service Indicators - added between Sessions in March 2019

Some cars do this to some extent already, but too many newer models still do not do it, and we need to make it a standard expectation at this point: We have numerous

sensors embedded throughout the vehicle to indicate when there is some problem which needs servicing, but too often a sensor triggers only a 'Service Engine Soon' light, and provides no other useful information. We are therefore required to figure out whether to take the car in for inspection, and if we do then we must face the embarrassment of telling the service attendant that we have no idea what the heck we are doing there, except that the one-phrase computer said that we should come.

Cars routinely have displays now which can show maps and satellite images and all manner of other video output, so at this point in our technological evolution any sensor finding any trouble within the vehicle should be able to trigger a message or display showing both *where* the trouble is and *what* the trouble is. We then would have much more information available to help us decide what is to be done next.

Question 678

What action (if any) do we now wish to take with the current 'Presidents Day'?

As noted in Answer 677, we think it pretty unlikely as of Session 284 (March 2019) that we would have invented a generic 'Presidents Day' if Washington and Lincoln had been born in different months. We don't feel that such a fluke of history should be responsible for our having a Holiday which we would not have had otherwise.

In addition, whatever our various political persuasions, we probably can all agree that not all of our Presidents have been all that good. You may personally feel that some of them downright sucked, and in at least some cases you may very well be right. If some of our Presidents have been so lousy, then do we really need or want to honor all of them as a group with their own Holiday?

Something else, we originally celebrated Washington's Birthday not just because he was a President, and not just because he was the First President, and not just because he was broadly considered to have been a Good President, but rather also for the numerous other contributions which he made to our Nation over the course of his career, including (but not limited to) his command of the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War, and his leadership of the convention which constructed our current Constitution. It could be argued that focusing on only the Presidential period of Washington's life might be doing a disservice to his overall historical legacy.

Moreover, we feel troubled that this method of paying homage to our entire pantheon of National Leaders begins to get a little too close to what numerous totalitarian states have done in the past (and perhaps also in the present...). Declaring a Holiday to celebrate your National Leader is a means of granting him/her an almost-divine status, and of concentrating additional power in that individual, which is fine if you want to live in a dictatorship or other form of Monarchy. The whole idea of America, though, both historically and in our model per Answer 38, is that we are not an autocracy, that the power rests within the hands of the People, and that we will fight to the death (and usually win) against any jackass who tries to take too much power unto himself.

In this kind of environment, is it really 'socially healthy' for us to take a national day off from work so that we can spend the entire day thinking about what a wonderful National Leader we have, and how much He has done for us, and how much we can't

live without Him, and how we should be willing to give Him whatever financial and electoral support He may ever ask of us? We suspect not.

The office of U.S. President is a very important one in our Constitutional Republic, not only as the CEO of the Executive Branch, but also as a participant in the Legislative process, and with authority (at least currently, although we removed it in Answer 300) to nominate appointees within the Judiciary, and as the diplomatic and moral head of our entire Nation. And, we do not argue but that the job is a very tough and stressful one, at least for the incumbent who takes it seriously. But still, is it really right to single out one political position for a generic annual Holiday, especially within a Nation which prides itself on bestowing Equal Rights to All, and even more especially when we probably wouldn't have had the Holiday at all except for the historical fluke of Washington and Lincoln both being born in mid-February?

We think not, and we offer a variety of alternatives for the public's consideration:

Our primary recommendation is to go back to recognizing Washington's Birthday as its own Holiday, again not just because of his Presidential tenure but for all the contributions and sacrifices which he made to this Nation in his lifetime, and for the lasting successes which he repeatedly achieved against devastating odds. It may not really need to be a take-off-from-work day, especially for Banks and the Postal Service. Maybe just Federal workers outside of the Postal Service could be given the day off, but our core economic production shouldn't be stopped just for that. We can still be given Public Service Announcement (PSA's) over our radios and TV and online media that it's Washington's Birthday, as they already do for other Great Americans in our history.

A possible alternative, if you really like the idea of having a Day to celebrate our Presidents, is to have additional Days to celebrate our Speakers of the House of Representatives and our Chief Justices of the Supreme Court. That way, we would reinforce the message that the U.S. President has certain powers but also certain limitations, and shares power with other national leaders, and is not an absolute ruler who gets to do and command whatever he wants.

We offer that suggestion somewhat facetiously, basically to show that all three governmental Branches have approximately-equal importance, but we don't really envision taking three days off each year just to meditate upon the blessings provided to us by our Government. Even one Holiday may already be too much. But, if you think that one Holiday is just right, and that it should be for multiple Presidents and not just Washington, then another possibility is to change 'Presidents Day' to 'Good Presidents Day'. That way, at least you would remove from public worship those individual Presidents who failed to satisfy the proper expectations of their positions.

Assuming that we stick with our primary recommendation to restore Washington's Birthday, we like the idea of making it a day off for Government workers (except for selected key services) but not for private industry. As discussed in Section III-C, schoolchildren could still attend school on that day, but teachers should plan on using at least part of the day to focus on Washington and his struggles.

The day should be observed on Washington's actual birthday of February 22 (or March 4 under the new calendar recommended in Answer 675 [later changed], or March 5 during leap year), except that when it falls on a weekend the affected employees can still be given the following Monday off, but not otherwise.

Question 676 (continued)

To what extent shall we retain the custom of celebrating certain Holidays on the nearest Monday?

We had decided in Session 283 that it is okay to have some Holidays celebrated on a nearby Monday, but some other Holidays should not be. As an amendment to that rule, we suggested in Session 284 that birthdays and historical anniversaries should be celebrated on their actual days (with some possible exceptions of Monday when the day falls on a weekend), but that more generic observances (such as Memorial Day, Labor Day, etc.) may happily occupy certain Mondays as a matter of routine.

Question 678 (continued)

What action (if any) do we now wish to take with the current 'Presidents Day'?

As for Lincoln's Birthday, that's a slightly trickier area. As of Session 284, many folks recognize that Lincoln also endured many struggles and overcame many adversities, and made huge and permanent contributions to our Nation against devastating odds. Some folks consider him to have been our second-best President, behind only Washington. Mount Rushmore places him in at least the Final Four.

However, there are certain areas of our Nation where previous residents had major political disagreements with Lincoln. That's a big difference between those two Presidents: Washington was respected and supported nearly unanimously, whereas Lincoln (whether he intended it or not) ended up being a more polarizing figure. Even with everything which we have achieved from Reconstruction to the Civil Rights Movement and through our present day, we can yet understand that certain folks in certain communities still may not be quite ready to celebrate Lincoln by a separate Federal Holiday. If they had been, then it probably would have happened by now.

Probably best for the present, therefore, to leave Lincoln's Birthday as a matter for observance at the State level. States choosing to observe the holiday can give the day off to government employees at State and Local levels (again, except for key services), but Federal employees would need to continue to report to work. As with Washington's Birthday, and any other, it should be observed on the actual birthdate of February 12 where it is being observed at all (or Feb 22 [changed] under the new calendar recommended in A675), and schoolchildren can be given special lessons on that day about Lincoln and his struggles, although we should keep the national eye on whether the narrative is being expressed differently in different areas.

When all States in the Union have come around to recognizing Lincoln's Birthday as an official Holiday, then we can resume discussing the possibility at the Federal level. When that happens, please don't get too hung up on the days falling so close to each other on the calendar, for again we are giving the day off only to selected government employees, and not shutting down America's farms and factories.

Question 678.3

How do we currently feel about 'Columbus Day'?

Yeah, as of Session 284 we are quite ready to drop 'Columbus Day', partly because 500 years is plenty enough observance for anyone whose last name isn't 'Christ', and

partly because we have learned more in recent years about how Columbus tainted his legacy by abusing the peoples whom he so accidentally discovered.

Some have suggested that we convert 'Columbus Day' into an 'Indigenous Peoples Day', in order to focus attention on the Nations which existed in the Americas before the Europeans sailed over to colonize and occupy them. While the sentiment sounds noble, the 'real' motivation feels more like folks still want to have a Holiday in mid-October, because Halloween is just too far away yet, and they will happily settle for any excuse that they can get. Doubt our word? Have your 'Indigenous Peoples Day' if you wish, but move it as far away from mid-October as you can practically get, possibly tied to some other Big Event of history. That way, we could drop all observance on October 12, and not give any more historical attention to that nasty guy than he rightly deserves. Betting that you're going to get a lot of resistance, though, from folks who don't ever want to give up any Holiday once they've won it.

Regardless of how that debate may play out, and although it was not specifically asked before, we also take this opportunity to suggest that it may be about time to change the name of the 'District of Columbia'. Mexico has a similar zone which they simply call their '*Distrito Federal*', so we could simply call our zone the 'Federal District' until someone on Madison Avenue comes up with a better brand, one which doesn't glorify any one individual as much as it does the best attributes our Nation.

Question 679

Shall we continue to encourage stuffing candy down our kids' throats on Halloween, Christmas, Easter, birthdays, etc.?

Sorry, gang, but we must urgently recommend against it. American kids were eating too many sweets as of Session 284, and suffering from obesity and periodontitis and juvenile diabetes already, and we do not need to exacerbate the problem by giving them even more sweets on certain days of the year, and basically say to them 'yeah sure please by all means eat more sugary snacks, the more sugar the better'.

We can understand a few extra treats on Birthdays and certain Holidays, with the express understanding that they are to brush teeth and gums shortly after any consumption, and that parents should actually observe to make sure that it's happening, both for the kids' good and to reduce your family dental expenses. But, let's please not go overboard, as with a whole basket of treats at Easter, a whole bag of treats for Halloween, and a whole stocking of treats at Christmas.

We don't want to be total Grinches, and again one of the big reasons for having Holidays at all (see Answer 675.9) is to take a break from your normal routines and disciplines and to do something special for yourself, in celebration of your continued life upon this beautiful Earth. Just let's not go overboard, let's find and maintain a good balance between dangerous indulgences and good health.

Question 680

But, if we are reducing candy emphasis, then what is there left for kids to do on Halloween?

There are two bad things about Halloween as we currently observe it: One is the whole concept of kids asking for -- and being given -- large amounts of sugary

snacks which are probably doing the kids far more harm than good. Other is that we are training our kids to knock on the doors of strangers, when we probably should be teaching them to stay away from such places for their own protection.

There are some interesting stories out there about how our general concept of Halloween and specific 'trick-or-treat' practice began. Regardless of the romance, though, maybe we should be toning this holiday down some, maybe even entirely.

We get that the Day has its roots in honoring our deceased friends and relatives, and that we still may want to do that on at least an annual basis. We also understand that some adults who like to watch Horror films are particularly fond of doing so in October, and most especially on Halloween.

We therefore suggest this as of Session 284: Whatever you would do to honor your dead, and/or to get in touch with our 'supernatural sides' (whatever that means), do find some way of involving your kids in the practice, so that they can learn and participate and join in the family/community experience, but make it some way which does not involve either watching Horror films or knocking on strangers' doors or eating a wheelbarrowful of candy.

Question 681

If we are reducing candy emphasis, then candy companies and their employees will not have as much work: Wouldn't this be bad for the economy, as well as the individual workers and their families?

We don't want the economy to be supported heavily by the creation and distribution of sugary ingestibles which will rot our kids' teeth and destroy their diets. We want our people to be healthy, and in particular we want our kids to be healthy, so -- while we can still allow the production and consumption of candy on a moderated basis, and please keep making with your dental hygiene as you do so -- yet the engines of our economy should be directed much more toward foods and other products which will improve the health of our people and especially our kids.

If this means (as it probably does) that some candy companies (perhaps all of them) need to reduce production and lay off workers, then as tough as the transition will be for some families, we yet regretfully hold as of Session 284 that it is in our Nation's best interests in the long term. Sorry, it's gotta be that way.

Candy companies and candy workers who have not already done so should therefore actively consider retooling and retraining to make other products or perform other services, which are less destructive and more net-beneficial. Don't wait to get laid off or go bankrupt, start the process now, get out of that building before it collapses.

Question 658.3 (continued)

What other words/expressions in our vocabulary do we feel should be either modified or at least clarified?

Verbal, Verbally - added between Sessions in March 2019:

A lot of folks mistakenly say 'verbal' or 'verbally' when they really mean 'oral' or 'orally', as when an employer says that you will get a 'verbal' warning first and a

'written' warning second. In fact, nearly all 'written' warnings are also 'verbal', so the expression of 'verbal warning' is technically ambiguous.

The adjective 'verbal' and the adverb 'verbally' both come from the Latin *verbum*, meaning 'word'. When some kind of idea is expressed 'verbally', it means that the presenter is using words to express the idea. If the presenter is instead using 'non-verbal communication', it means that she is not using words, but rather is using pictures or gestures or music or some other medium which does not involve words.

Nearly any statement which is presented in writing relies most heavily on words to convey the intended messages, so 'written' statements are also 'verbal'. If you wish to refer to a statement which is spoken as opposed to written, then we advise you to use the correct 'oral' instead of 'verbal', because 'oral' comes from the Latin root meaning 'mouth', and therefore refers specifically to statements made by mouth.

Question 644 (continued)

Shall we allow/encourage or prohibit/discourage the 'designated hitter' rule?

Added in March 2019: Exhibition games are held during Spring Training basically to audition prospects and give everybody some physical and mental conditioning before the regular season starts, so it would not hurt anything for each team to abide by its own roster rules whenever the teams come from opposite Leagues. We suggest that it would be better that way, so that both the players and the coaches get practice under the same rules which they will observe during the regular season.

Question 681.5

Should we continue to observe anything resembling our current Thanksgiving?

We understand as of Session 285 (March 2019) from recent revelations that the romanticized view which we learned in primary school, of the Pilgrims from Plymouth and the natives of Massachusetts Bay sitting down together at a long feasting-table for several days in the early 1620's to celebrate the Europeans expanding their colonial activities in North America, may not have been completely accurate. Even if that one particular incident did actually occur as portrayed in our Grade 3 history books, it still presaged an imperial aggression by the Europeans which lasted for several centuries, and which resulted in the suffering and slaughter of millions of indigenous inhabitants, and the permanent marginalization of their cultures.

Some may yet argue that the European invasion resulted in more good than harm overall, but fortunately we do not need to settle that question here. Regardless of how our European ancestors got here, and of what they did once they got here, the simple and undeniable reality is that their lasting influence can be seen throughout our Nation, in our demographics and our language and our municipal structures and our industries and many other aspects of our society. It is not practical to expect that we could undo everything which we have done. Even if we could, it probably would do more harm than good overall, so the best practical course is simply to own our moral mistakes, learn from them and teach the lessons to all future generations, and let's all move forward as best as we practically can under the circumstances.

Wherever you are in the World, though, and whatever period of history you are living in, and whoever your ancestors were, we still always need to generate enough food to sustain our population. We probably must continue to do so through affirmative agricultural action, because the 'hunting-and-gathering' model probably will not work for a planet of several billion human inhabitants. In other words, we still need to farm, and we still need to generate harvests, mostly in Fall so that we can remain healthy during the cold Winter. Whenever we do generate a successful harvest, and store enough food to last us until next harvest, that certainly is a cause to celebrate.

Different cultures have celebrated their harvests for millennia, and we need not be any different on that point. Just because our forefathers committed some 'bad acts' distant centuries ago (which didn't begin or end with their treatment of the native inhabitants during their colonial expansion), that doesn't preclude us from living our own lives now (does it?), nor from celebrating whenever we accomplish anything (such as generating a good harvest) which has redeeming social value.

It is also not inappropriate to express Thanks for what we have, both generally and for the recent harvest. If you happen to believe that one or more transcendental beings may have been at least partly responsible for the bounteousness of the harvest, then please feel free by all means to express your Thanks to them in some non-disruptive manner. Whether you believe in any transcendental beings or not, however, we all would do well to express Thanks to all the men and women who worked in their various ways to create this harvest, and to bring it to our tables. Kids can (and should) also thank their parents for all the work which they performed during the year, not just in earning incomes to bring food into the house but also for all the support which they provided to maintain a happy and harmonious home.

While we are celebrating our harvest and thanking everyone who helped in any way to provide it, we should be allowed to treat ourselves to a larger-than-usual meal if there is enough left after setting aside for the Winter. As we discussed in Answer 675.9 for Holidays generally, we should not be required to live as Slaves and Robots, doing and eating the exact same thing every day and every week of our lives. If we have generally managed to work and produce and come out net-ahead for the year (both on the Family scale and as a Society), then by all means we get to reward ourselves by eating a bit more than we usually do. For, if we do not allow ourselves to earn any rewards or bonuses for good work, then (as described in Section II-A) we diminish our own motivation to keep working hard, and our whole Society suffers. Rewards make people happy, and we want happy, so rewards are good.

If we can therefore just keep our focus on the harvest-festival aspects of this Holiday, and use other times of the year (especially the 'Indigenous Peoples Day' which Answer 678.3 is suggesting for mid-April) to remind ourselves of the bad things which we have done in the past, and which we are asking ourselves never to do again, then we can use the occasion to have a happy time together as a Society. In sum, then, Thanksgiving is still okay to have, if we do it right.

Question 681.6

Do we have any strenuous objection to continuing to celebrate Thanksgiving on a Thursday?

No strenuous objection in Session 285. We realize that many private companies give themselves the following Friday off as well, and that this might translate to a bigger

dip in production within certain industries. However, again, the idea here is that we are giving ourselves some time off at the end of a busy harvest season, to celebrate the fact that we have managed -- even with an extra-big meal and with at least one day off of work -- to come out net-ahead for our fiscal year. As long as we are still coming out ahead even after a second day off, then yes let's please reward ourselves not only with an extra-big meal, but also with some extra time to enjoy it.

Question 681.7

In what month should we be celebrating Thanksgiving in America?

In order for it to be a true harvest festival, it may make more logical sense to celebrate it in October, as the Canadians do, and we would have no strenuous objection if that concept ever gained enough popular support here in America. However, we understand that folks have come to expect those four big Holidays (Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's) to come in consecutive months. If we were to move Thanksgiving to October, then either we would be scrunching two big Holidays in October while leaving November mostly empty (although there still are some other observances typically happening in that month), or else we would need to reschedule Halloween into November (which would mean also moving All Saints Day from November 1 on the calendar of certain religious groups, because the term 'Halloween' comes from an expression meaning 'the day before All Saints Day'). Seems like too much of a disruption from our angle, accomplishing too little. Okay for Canada and America to celebrate their Thanksgivings as they currently do.

Question 681.8

What about the emphasis on eating Turkey for Thanksgiving?

This tradition stems largely from that same old image of the Pilgrims and Indians sharing a few days of Love and Peace and Food before all the bad stuff. Turkeys were also indigenous to America, and were a major source of sustenance for early settlers. In using Turkeys as our default entrée for Thanksgiving, we continue to connect our current feast with that historical event (or, rather, with our romanticized view of it), but we advised in Answer 681.5 that we should rebrand Thanksgiving as more of a generic harvest festival than of a commemoration of anything which the Pilgrims allegedly did. If we continue to emphasize Turkeys for Thanksgiving, then we make it much harder for ourselves to get away from that whole Pilgrim image.

We therefore are making in Session 285 a very tough suggestion, tough not only for America but also for the Moderator, who loves the big classic Thanksgiving dinner of 'Turkey and all the trimmings'. If we really want to disassociate Thanksgiving from the old Pilgrim image, so that it can become less of a 'day of atonement' and more of a day of celebration for our entire Society, then we probably need to de-emphasize Turkey as the default entrée. Switch in the Ham or the Roast Beef or perhaps some non-Meat dish, and save the big Turkey dinner for Christmas or some other feastday.

Question 682

Do we want to keep Christmas on December 25?

See, here's the thing with that: Even for that subset of the population (and you know who you are) which believes that Jesus possessed some level of 'divine nature'

(whatever that means), and that His birth is therefore a worthy subject of annual celebration, we don't really know for sure even approximately at what time of year He was actually born. Rather, it appears that early Church leaders tried to associate Jesus' birth with the Winter Solstice (because they were heavy into converting previous Pagan rituals to Christian branding), and they simply miscalculated.

Even if you believe the whole story in the Gospel of Matthew about this big worldwide Census allegedly ordered by Caesar Augustus (curiously, this big event was not mentioned by Tacitus or any other contemporary Roman historian of whom we are currently aware), requiring all families to travel to their hometowns for registry, it is unlikely that such massive crisscrossing travel would have been scheduled for the coldest time of the year. Probably would not have been done during the hot Summer, either. Spring is a possibility from a standpoint of climate, but it might have constituted a big economic problem if many people had to leave their farms when so much cultivation work needed to be done worldwide. Fall seems most likely, after the work of harvest so that people had both time and food available for travel, but before the coldest months of Winter. However, that is only speculation, and we don't really know for sure.

Why not leave it where it is, as either December 25 in the current calendar, or [early January] under the revised calendar suggested in Answer 675? It's a way to go, and we imagine that a lot of folks would prefer it that way, if only for the sake of Tradition. To our group's perception, though, it causes a couple of problems:

First, it gives people a false understanding of our history, making them think that something happened at a certain time (Holiday songs such as 'In the Bleak Mid-Winter' and 'The Last Month of the Year' are pleasant pieces, but don't help our historical cause) when it actually happened at a different time in all likelihood.

Second, several other religions seem to want to conduct major festivals in conjunction with the Winter Solstice, such that this opportunity which we have -- to celebrate the beginning of another Solar Year as an entire Species -- is squandered by degenerating into a mere highlight of our various religious differences.

Our recommendation as of Session 285 -- both for Christianity and for all other religions -- is to allow the Winter Solstice to be the Winter Solstice, and let's all celebrate it together as a single Family, whether you follow this religion or that religion or no religion. We are all riders on this planetary Bus, and we all get to celebrate having survived to the beginning of another Bus loop, as well as to honor the memories of our fellow humans who stepped off during the recent loop.

Any religion which wishes to commemorate some other big event -- especially when (as with Christ's birth) they don't know exactly in what time of year the event allegedly occurred -- is asked to please select some other time of year which does not conflict with any other major festivals (especially religious ones) in our 'master calendar'.

That all said, September probably is the best time for Christmas, both for the historical reasons mentioned above (speculative as they are), and because you would still be getting your same four big Holidays happening in consecutive months (Christmas in September, Halloween in October, Thanksgiving in November, and New Year's Eve in December), so you all could still have your big 'Holiday season'.

Question 683

Do we want to continue/encourage the practice of exchanging gifts on Christmas?

We have read various historical accounts suggesting that the practice of exchanging gifts near the Winter Solstice goes back as far as the Roman Empire, if not earlier. Maybe all those stories are true, or maybe some are apocryphal. Fortunately, we do not need to settle that question here. What we do need to do here is to figure out whether it's a net-good thing for us to be doing now and moving forward.

We claim as of Session 285 that the practice should be continued, but reduced.

Specifically, we believe that it should be continued (and even encouraged) when the recipients are kids. Moderator vividly remembers the excitement building up over several days as wrapped presents began to accumulate under the tree, and hitting its peak when we arose early on Christmas morning, knowing that we finally had license to open all our presents. We always had a fun and thrilling time opening our presents, and playing with them for months and years afterward. Our parents knew us very well, they always had a great knack for picking out things which we did not already have but definitely would enjoy, and they had the resources to buy them which we kids did not have at the time. Those memories are among the most precious in Moderator's life, as they are for many folks, and not for the Wide World would we ever consider depriving any child of those delightful experiences.

However, it's different when we are talking about adult recipients. We have become so conditioned that we always need to be giving gifts every Christmas, and should always expect to receive them, that some of us close our eyes to the fact that we are often waging an unsuccessful campaign. For, after a certain point, many adults end up possessing -- either from previous gifts and/or by their own purchase -- all the toys and games and books and clothes and gadgets and other things which they could ever possibly need or want. After that point, you are giving someone something which either they already have or else they do not want.

This creates problems on a couple of levels. On the individual level, it creates mounds of annual stress as we try to figure out for each adult on our 'list' something which he definitely would want but for some reason does not already have. As the average age of your 'list' goes higher, and as your recipients accumulate more stuff, the objective becomes increasingly difficult, and the exercise becomes increasingly stressful. For some folks (including the Moderator), the stress level can get so high that it makes us hate the holiday, and even hate the entire time of year, because it means that oh crap we gotta deal with the chore of Christmas shopping all over again. Receiving unwanted gifts can be a stress source too, because first we must act as though as it's something that we've always wanted, and then we need to decide whether to allow the increased house clutter or else to deal with regifting. We know about the stress, and we complain about the stress, but we keep on doing the same thing, year after year!! It was only when the Moderator finally announced to all friends and family some years back that he was withdrawing from participation in all further gift-exchanging that he finally began to enjoy Christmas again.

On the macro level, the practice of adult gift-exchanging encourages manufacturers to create products which are of little or no usefulness or value, and which recipients just throw away, or stick in the back of a closet or a drawer somewhere, whereas we

want such manufacturers to focus on making stuff that people can actively use and enjoy. While the occasional 'gag' gift might be cute, we generally want to buy only those items which the recipients would naturally be inclined to buy for themselves, given the opportunity. But, if we buy things that certain adults would want, then again it's likely that they already have them, so we scrounge around looking for things which they might not buy for themselves, but then even when we find them there's a good chance that the recipients might not ever do anything with them. Making and buying gifts which the recipients would not be likely to buy tends (with some exceptions) to diminish the availability of goods that people will actually use and enjoy, making these items cost more than they really need to. It therefore is in our macroeconomic interest to diminish (if not eliminate) the practice of seasonal gift-exchanging when it comes to adult recipients.

Christmas can be really nice for getting together with family, going to church (for those who are into that sort of thing), enjoying a big meal or two, playing games, watching old movies, listening to cool music, and thinking about the significance of the event being celebrated (whatever month it actually happened in). There's plenty to do and enjoy in conjunction with the Holiday without making it a stress source by commanding ourselves to locate unique-but-desirable gifts for all our adult friends and relatives, so we suggest giving that a rest and seeing how it works out for you.

If anybody asks you why you are not giving X number of presents, as 'expected', then just tell them that you would rather focus on the meaning and value of the Holiday itself, than follow along with the rest of the sheep on some misplaced and stressful and economically-destructive tradition.

Question 684

Shall we allow/encourage the tradition of erecting and decorating Christmas trees?

This is another Pagan practice originally having nothing to do with Christmas, and we don't particularly care as of Session 285 for the idea of killing more trees than we already are, especially when we are simply decorating them for a week or two and then throwing them away.

Christmas trees can also be a big fire hazard, especially when you wrap them up with electrical wiring, and also especially when they dry out and get discarded. Controlled burning of Christmas trees releases dangerous carbons back into the atmosphere.

Multiple historical sources available online discuss the back-and-forth feelings of the White House when it came to 'official' Christmas trees, as in the following:

White House Christmas trees fell out of favor around the turn of the 20th century. Conservationists denounced cutting down young trees in forests to make Christmas trees, calling it "arboreal infanticide." Some critics wrote President William McKinley in 1899 urging him to drop the White House "Christmas tree habit." McKinley did, except for a small tree in the kitchen for the maids.

The policy continued when President Theodore Roosevelt took office in 1901 after McKinley was assassinated. An ardent conservationist, Roosevelt banned cut Christmas trees in the White House.* [[*https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2018/11/27/think-melancias-red-forest-is-kooky-consider-christmas-tree-once-hidden-white-house-closet/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.52c95449ff3d](https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2018/11/27/think-melancias-red-forest-is-kooky-consider-christmas-tree-once-hidden-white-house-closet/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.52c95449ff3d)]

Our group is siding with Teddy here, even though he got 'overruled' by subsequent Presidents who apparently saw the practice as politically useful even if environmentally irresponsible. We can decorate our homes (including the White House) for Christmas without killing any trees in the process.

It helps the cause somewhat to erect artificial trees which can be reused for several years. However, as long as people keep buying artificial Christmas trees, they will keep buying Christmas trees generally, and a lot of folks probably will continue to buy natural trees if only not to be forced into using artificial substitutes. Better for us all if we simply get away from Christmas trees entirely.

Of course we recall the story that we told in Answer 683 about Moderator's happy memory of wrapped presents piling up under the Christmas tree, and of course a part of us will be sad to see that Tradition go away, but the good news is that we can still continue the core traditions of Christmas lights (energy supply permitting) and non-electric decorations and family feasting and Christmas gifts for the kids, without messing with trees at all. If you really wish to have some fresh greenery in your home for Christmas, then maybe you can trim some holly branches or something similar from your yard, something which doesn't kill the core plant and which doesn't create that much of a fire hazard or an environmental pollution when discarded.

Question 685

Shall we continue to proactively teach children about the existence of Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, the Great Pumpkin, and other such characters?

They confronted this issue in the classic film *Miracle On 34th Street*: Mother may judge it net-best for various reasons to keep her child focused on reality, but what if a certain character whom we thought was fictional turns out to be real? Even if that doesn't happen, it still can be healthy (up to a point, anyway) for both kids and adults to have fantasies, because it helps us to have fun in the 'Imagi Nation' which we can't always enjoy in our boring and pedestrian 'real life'.

It also can be a bad look for a parent (like the DA in the film) to affirmatively tell his child that Santa Claus currently exists, and then appear later on to have been a liar.

We solve both problems by advising parents to take a non-committal approach with respect to such ideals. Don't go out of your way to affirmatively tell your child that these different characters are real if you don't know it for sure yourself. If your child comes up to you at some point and asks you if any/all of these characters exist, then simply tell the actual truth as you know it, that you don't know for sure that they actually exist because you haven't met them, but that it's possible that they may exist anyway. In other words, you don't know, because in fact you don't know.

In sum, don't proactively teach your children about the existence of such characters, but also don't deny it if they hear about them from other sources.

Question 678.1

What general policy should we observe as to giving gifts for holidays?

Added while packaging Session 285: Following the reasoning outlined in what we are currently calling Answer 683, we claim yes for kids but no for adults.

Question 678.2

Should we be giving gifts on Father's Day?

Also added while packaging Session 285: We see TV commercials encouraging kids to purchase power tools or golf clubs or other such gifts for their dads on Father's Day. If I'm an active dad, though, and if I'm into power tools or golf clubs, and even if my collection is still not complete yet, then I'm not going to want my 9-year-old picking out those items for me. If you still really want to keep celebrating Father's Day, then find some way of doing so which doesn't involve purchasing gifts which Dad doesn't really want or need. It's an economic problem on the large scale (as described in A683), and on the small scale it places Dad in the awkward position of needing to pretend to like the unwanted gift. Help your Dad, don't give him stuff.

Question 659.4 (continued)

What other words should have their spellings either modified or at least clarified?

Anything ending in '-ough' - added between Sessions in March 2019

One of the biggest problems of the English language, making it very difficult for children and immigrants and diplomats to learn, is the fact that we so often use the same letter combinations to represent different word sounds. In the specific case of '-ough' (as famously satirized in an old 'I Love Lucy' sketch), the same letter combination represents completely different sounds in the common English words of 'tough', 'though', 'through', 'cough', and 'bough'.

Do we want to change any or all of these words in order to make them more phonetically consistent? In a larger sense, do we want to simplify the spellings of all difficult English words in order to make them easier to learn? We observe that sentiment being expressed from time to time, including on Twitter, but we are not sure how seriously the proponents are really intending it. Do folks realize what a huge undertaking that would be, first to get everybody's approval across the nation (especially including within the Education and Government sectors), and then to rewrite all laws and contracts and dictionaries and textbooks and other documents?

We sympathize with the desire for simplicity in our language, to make learning it easier for ourselves and others. (You want immigrants to speak English? Make it easy!) But, at some point, simplification can create more problems than it solves.

We therefore do not specifically recommend at this time that any English words (not even those ending in '-ough') should be changed for purpose of phonetic consistency. However, neither would we strenuously object if enough folks ever felt enough collective desire for simplification that the process could become net-worthwhile.

Question 437.5 (continued)

Do we have any product suggestions to be advanced by American industry?

Toy Weapons - added between Sessions in March 2019

We understand (all too well) the corporate urge to make and sell whatever products people will buy, and that families have a long history of buying toy handguns and toy

rifles and toy sabers and other 'toys of mass destruction' as Birthday or Christmas gifts. The intent may be innocent enough, but givers may not be aware of the long-term psychological impact which such toys can have on a young mind.

When you give that gift, you are sending the message that it's okay to pretend to be hurting and killing people. Every time the child plays with that gift, he is creating a 'muscle memory' for holding the weapon and assuming an offensive posture with it. It becomes more natural and comfortable the more that he does it, and in many cases it makes him want to continue to wield weapons in his real adult life.

Even if he eschews the criminal life in favor of channeling his offensive tendencies into the Police or the Military, that can still be a problem too, because we have all seen or heard about official powers occasionally having been abused because the individual officers turned out to be too aggressive for their professions.

Manufacturers who create toy weapons for kids may thus be creating a social blight which they do not intend. Maybe we can legally prevent them from making toy weapons, and maybe not, but in any case we politely ask and encourage them to reconsider their priorities. Even though you make money on the sales, do you really want to be perceived by the public as promoting increased violence in our society through repeated psychological conditioning of our young children? We hope not.

Air Conditioning - also added between Sessions in March 2019

Many air-conditioning systems which we have seen (both in cars and in buildings) have separate switch positions for Cooling and Heating. Each switch position often has its own thermostat setting for when the system is supposed to stop generating the conditioned air. Problem with that approach is that sometimes the temperature keeps on progressing in the opposite direction, so that you need to get up and switch back from Cooling to Heating, or the other way around.

It would be far easier for us if we could simply designate one desired temperature on each air-conditioning system. Whenever the ambient temperature is more than one degree above the target, the Cooling system kicks in until the target is reached. Whenever the ambient temperature is more than one degree below the target, the Heating system kicks in until the target is reached. All that we need is an on/off switch and a setting for desired temperature, then everything should be automatic.

Subsection III-H-3: Traffic

Noted in Session 286 (March 2019): Thought that we'd never get here!! We've got lots to say in this Subsection, hoping that we remember it all.....

Question 685.9

Should we be addressing traffic improvement at all as part of this effort?

Funny thing about that. In the 1969 film *Gamera vs. Guiron* (at least in the English-language version satirized on 'Mystery Science Theater 3000'), the juvenile lead character Akio spoke repeatedly about his vision of an ideal society, in which there would be neither War nor Traffic Accidents. Everything else seemed to occupy some much-lower level of priority in his mind. We have had fun with that bit ever since.

We have already outlawed War in our model. Can we possibly consider our agenda to be complete if we do not heed the rest of Akio's message and obey it as well?

Actually, according to our research* [*See <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0064360/> and <https://www.tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Film/GameraVsGiron>], the dubbed version which we hear is a literal translation of a Japanese expression meaning 'urban chaos', so perhaps Akio was not really focused so much on automobile collisions after all.

In any case, whether the phrase in the 'MST3K' version was intended literally or not, Traffic has long been a problem in many cities (both in America and elsewhere), reducing productivity, increasing human stress, contributing to harmful atmospheric emissions, and draining our economic resources when vehicles need to be repaired or replaced and human injuries need to be mended. It is therefore an economic and environmental problem as well as a social one, and so is well within the ability of individuals and communities to fix, and also well within the scope of our group's Mission of offering suggestions to help fix any political, economic, or social problem.

Question 686

Who should have the primary authority of establishing speed limits?

It should be whoever owns and operates each roadway which has such a speed limit. If it is a U.S. Highway (such as 'Route 66'), then the U.S. Department/Bureau of Transportation should decide it. If it is an Interstate highway (such as the 'I-10' or the 'I-80'), then the State should decide for any segment of the highway lying within its borders. If it is a State highway (such as California's 'SR 1', commonly known as 'Pacific Coast Highway' or 'PCH'), then the State should decide. If it is a County road, then the County should decide. For all other streets and highways, the County should decide, except for any segments lying within the borders of an incorporated City, for which segments the City should decide. There, did we leave out anything?

This is one of the best examples of the 'subsidiarity' principle described earlier, because the smallest jurisdiction is in the best position to determine the best speed limit, since they know most about local traffic patterns, road conditions, weather, etc. Higher levels of government generally should focus on higher-level issues.

This was a big issue during the 1970's, when the U.S. Federal Government responded to the so-called 'energy crisis' by mandating that no Federal or State or Local roadway in the country was allowed to have a speed limit any higher than 55mph. Lot of folks complained at that time, both on the specific grounds that a speed limit of 55mph is allegedly unsafe (see the 1976 film *The Gumball Rally* for contemporary documentation), and on the general grounds that the Fed allegedly had no business micromanaging regulations affecting only local jurisdictions.

Perhaps those Federal regulators genuinely thought that their harsh measures were saving fuel resources at a time when they supposedly were in short supply, or maybe they simply saw it as another opportunity to push around the locals some more. In any case, we hopefully have 'wised up' as a society to some extent in the interim, because many speed limits were blessedly higher as of Session 286, although the Fed still likes to micromanage a lot more than it really should.

If this should ever happen again, with any Federal agency trying to impose harsher local regulations than it is able to enforce with only its own resources, then we

should no longer stand for it, and we should seek proactively to identify those offending regulators, and their bosses, and their bosses' bosses, and reach out with our free press and our social media and our legislative representatives to compel those officials to change their policies under penalty of losing their jobs.

If the fuels needed for our transportation ever become so limited that people become tempted to reduce maximum speed limits again (tough to imagine, with the U.S. still among the highest exporters of oil in the world* [[*https://oilprice.com/Energy/General/Citi-US-To-Become-Worlds-Top-Oil-Exporter.html](https://oilprice.com/Energy/General/Citi-US-To-Become-Worlds-Top-Oil-Exporter.html)]), then we should allow free-market economics to fix the apparent problem. As prices for the scarce resources continue to rise, more people will need or elect to skip out on some of their traveling in order to save on fuel expense, so we will save fuel that way. Don't need to mutz around with the speed limits at the Federal level anymore. Leave it to the locals.

Question 686.5

Should streets and intersections surrounding a Federal building be policed by only Federal officers, or should Local police be allowed to deal with it?

We claim that any nearby streets are still part of the City (or should be), and that they therefore should be policed by City officials. We cannot realistically expect Federal personnel to be experts -- or even good apprentices -- when it comes to Municipal traffic control. That's not their skill set. That's not what we pay them for.

Local police generally have the most experience when it comes to Municipal traffic control, and each specific Local police force knows the specific Local conditions of topography, weather, traffic patterns, etc., so is in the best position to keep the Automotive Peace within any Federal governmental districts.

Besides, pursuits may start within a particular Federal district and then proceed into non-Federal territory, or a pursuit may begin outside and proceed into the Federal district, or it may pass through the Federal district and continue outside. In any such case, the fugitive is attempting escape his pursuers, or at least slow them down, by crossing Federal boundaries in hope of confusing everybody and/or requiring them to engage in complex intergovernmental negotiation, while precious minutes go by during which we might otherwise have apprehended the fugitive.

We cannot allow him to achieve this objective. We must allow Local police officers to have full peacekeeping authority anywhere within their City/County limits, even on land which is titled to and operated by some agency of the Federal government, including to continue and conclude any pursuit of Local fugitives.

Question 687

To what extent should police, state troopers, etc., be allowed to break the very traffic laws which they are endeavoring to enforce?

We understand that all emergency vehicles sometimes need to drive fast and make a lot of noise and run red lights and do other things which we might ordinarily condemn on our streets and highways. We put up with it on an occasional basis in exchange for those services being available to each of us in case we ever need them.

However, if a particular emergency vehicle is not presently engaged in an emergency service, then we expect as of Session 286 that its driver will obey all applicable traffic ordinances, same as everybody else. Multiple reasons why:

1) In general, it causes a great deal of stress to any society whenever its leaders and their uniformed enforcers are perceived (whether accurately or not) to be 'above the law', and free to do anything that they want without legal restriction. It is a fundamental principle of Answer 38 (or will be by the time that we get through with final packaging), at least for America if not for the whole World, that we do not wish to live in a perpetual condition of Terror, in which we fear our protectors at least as much as we fear all the lawbreakers who are not wearing uniforms.

2) In the specific case of traffic control, it would help the Police's supposed objective of legal obedience if they set a good example for the rest of us, and if they show us continually that yes you can drive a little or you can drive a lot, but in any case you still can and should obey all traffic regulations at all times. These should include staying within the posted speed limit, coming to a full stop behind any limit line, not crossing a red light, signaling when turning or changing lanes, and other rules.

3) In the even-more-specific case of velocity control on the highway, it defeats the purpose if the state troopers (or other equivalent) drive faster than the speed limit in order to 'catch up' to any ununiformed speeders who have probably already outrun them and gotten off the road. It would be far more effective if the state trooper (or equivalent) drove at the posted speed limit when not in active pursuit, acting as a 'pace car' to control the velocity of all drivers to the rear. If any driver then decides to drive significantly faster than the rest of the pack, then he will be clearly visible to the highway patroller, and an easy target for pursuit and apprehension.

Question 688

But, can police concentrate on driving legally and enforcing the laws at the same time?

Notes in 'black book' ratified in Session 286: Any officer who can't do both at the same time should be assigned to somebody else as a partner, and tasked with either the driving detail or the policing duties of watching for suspicious activity, handling the radio, etc., according to personal preference, skill set, and personnel availability.

If the issue is that the posted traffic signs are too obscure for the police to see clearly, then they should arrange through channels for them to be fixed, and in the meantime should cut the rest of us some slack for not being able to see them either.

Question 689

But, police drive all day, every day: Even with partners sharing the duties of actual policing, is it reasonable to expect drivers of police vehicles to pay attention to all traffic laws all the time?

Damn right. Lots of people drive all day, but they still are expected (with good reason) to follow all applicable traffic regulations. Driving a lot doesn't mean that you get to drive unsafely or discourteously.

Question 690

Can't police and state troopers find violators faster if they drive in excess of the speed limit?

This was covered as #3 in Answer 687. If all highway cruisers act as 'pace cars' when not in active pursuit, then nobody will ever pass them without running the risk of being spotted and stopped. If the cruisers are strategically assigned such that one passes through each stretch of road every few minutes, then no one will ever have the opportunity to become a long-distance speeder without being spotted and stopped by one of the 'pace cars', so we should be seeing fewer violations.

Question 691

Will police be able to see enough of the neighborhood if they drive within the speed limit, and remain stopped at every red light?

This was covered in the first paragraph of Answer 688, that they should split the driving and crimespotting details between partners wherever needed. Second paragraph also noted more generally that any conditions which the officers perceive as excessive for them should also be considered too excessive for others to be morally enforceable. In short, if they don't want to do it, then don't make us do it.

Question 692

Should police be required to obey all posted parking restrictions?

We feel as of Session 286 that we can cut the police some slack here, if they are on official business at the time and not on a 'Code 7', and if they get out of the way of any fire hydrant before the Fire Department gets there and needs to use it.

Question 686.7

Should carpool lanes exist? If so, then should users be required to have two or more licensed drivers in the car, or is it sufficient to have two or more random individuals? If the former, then should there be an exemption for babies?

We feel as of Session 286 that we do not need to deal with the specific sub-questions, because we are generally finding that we should get rid of carpool lanes, except when the local population approves a particular carpool lane overwhelmingly.

First reason, they often just concentrate traffic to fewer lanes more than encourage actual carpooling. Many users of carpool lanes would have had the qualifying number of passengers in the car anyway on those particular occasions, so there's little or no actual reduction of traffic volume resulting from those lanes being there.

Second reason, carpool lanes actually contribute to traffic delays, as a result of cars changing lanes to get into or out of them, requiring other drivers to brake while the greedy carpoolers cut over in front of them, whereas we might have gotten all that traffic off the road faster if we had allowed it to proceed more forward instead of laterally.* [*A prime example is the segment of the CA134 to the east of the I-5 near Glendale CA. The exit ramp from the southbound 5 creates two new lanes on the left side of the eastbound 134, and then a

new carpool lane immediately starts on the 134 to the left of those. Several drivers from the preceding eastbound 134 are eager to get into the new carpool lane, so they routinely cross over in front of the two new lanes of cars coming in from the 5, requiring them all to slow down or stop. This backs up traffic on the right-hand lanes of the southbound 5 for as much as two miles. Another good example is where the westbound 210 transitions to the northbound 210 in Pasadena CA. Transition lanes are on the right, but many greedy carpoolers have been driving in the left-hand carpool lane of the westbound segment for as long as they can, and then cut over several lanes of traffic in order to get to the northbound segment. Without the carpool lane they might have positioned themselves in the right-hand transition lanes much earlier. Even though fairly few cars do this, it is easily enough to block and back up the westbound traffic for several miles, and the traffic always clears up directly after that pesky interchange.] We generally should not be changing lanes any more often than we really need to, and especially should not be cutting off other drivers in the process any more than absolutely necessary. Carpool lanes therefore encourage good drivers to do bad things.

Third reason, when we're all stuck in traffic, and a loud truck or motorcycle whizzes past us in the carpool lane, the noise can freak us out, especially if we're in a convertible or have the windows down, but sometimes even if not. Of course, part of that problem may also be that the whizzing vehicles are simply too loud, and if so then we also need to deal with that, but in any case let's please not set a special lane aside for loud vehicles to freak out any more innocent drivers than they already do.

We claim that it is not realistic to expect more than a small fraction of us to be both able and willing to go out of our way to conform our daily schedules to those of any other persons who happen to live and work in the same locations as we do. Not all of us can leave the house or our jobs at the same time every day, and many of us need or like to make other stops (sometimes long ones) on the way home. As a practical matter, many of us still need to drive solo on a frequent basis, and maybe on a regular basis, no matter how much you may wish us all to be carpooling wherever we go. It is more important therefore to allow us to use all available lanes, so that we can all move more freely and more quickly, and get off the road faster.

Question 693

What rules should we have in place for determining how to place lane arrows on freeway signs?

We claim as of Session 286 that every lane which will get the driver where she wants to go should be marked with that destination and an arrow on at least one sign approaching the corresponding exit or interchange, so that we can minimize the number of lane changes (and resulting traffic backup) which will be required. Also, no lane which will not get the driver where she wants to go should be marked on a sign with an arrow as though it will, since it will result in a last-minute lane change, backing up traffic further. Any lane which will split into two separate roads should have two arrows pointing to it, so that the driver knows that she has the option.

We have observed numerous violations of these principles in different areas of the country* [*One example is on the transition from westbound CA 134 to northbound I-5. As of March 2019, two separate signs hanging over the two lanes of the upcoming transition each contained only two arrows, one for each lane. The arrow on the left says that traffic there will head toward Los Angeles, and the arrow on the right says that traffic there will head toward Sacramento. Anyone in the left lane wishing to head toward Sacramento therefore feels that she needs to merge into the other lane, but in fact she does not need to do so, because both lanes actually will get the driver to the Sacramento-bound highway. Signs should each have a third arrow pointing from the 'Sacramento' indicator to the left-hand lane, indicating that drivers in that lane can get to either highway segment from there without merging any further.], so all highway owners should check their signs for accurate routing, and drivers should report violations to the highway owners as applicable for remediation.

Question 693.3

What can we do about drivers who violate traffic rules directly in front of us, other than yell at them and flip them off?

Maybe the yelling and the flipping-off make you feel better, and maybe they don't. In any case, the problem is still happening, so we need a more effective approach.

Honking is a temptation, and maybe needs to happen on the rare occasion that somebody is on a collision course with you for not knowing that you are there, or for some other acute emergency. Other than those rare exceptions when it is needed for safety (which is why we can't outlaw it), honking as a means of simply expressing disapproval of someone else's driving is generally to be discouraged, because it can freak out nearby drivers who are not in any way involved with the violation.

We understand that some drivers on at least some occasions like to flash their bright lights so that they shine into the mirrors of the driver ahead, if he is driving too slowly or recently changed lanes without signaling. That tactic is not as dangerous as the honking, because it does not impact the drivers on either side of you. However, there still can be a safety issue for the driver who is being flashed, so that should be considered, and for that reason some jurisdictions may treat the practice as illegal (even though in committing a smaller sin the rear driver may be attempting to prevent a larger sin). We therefore are not encouraging the practice. If you feel that you must do so in a given instance, though, at least make sure (1) that there is no oncoming traffic which can get blinded by your unreflected bright lights, and (2) that no vehicles (especially trucks) are in either of the neighboring lanes between you and the offending driver and can thus get confused by your signal.

The longer-term solution is that we need a way to record and report these occurrences, so that local law-enforcement agencies can take the appropriate actions. Only then will poor drivers begin to drive more safely, if not out of courtesy then at least out of fear.

Specifically, we envision as of Session 286 that some clever person or group will someday (hopefully soon) develop a front-end camera which eventually can be standard equipment on all newer vehicles. The camera will keep a record of the recent trip, with data appearing on every frame of the date and time and location and direction. Resolution should be high enough to capture license plates in motion. Like the security camera at a bank or convenience store, the footage can be erased to free up storage if nothing interesting happened on the trip. If something interesting did happen, then there should be some technology available which can 'clip out' the applicable footage and discard the rest. The clip can then be reported to local police agencies for action.

What exactly happens with the footage after that may need to be debated further by the lawyers, partly because one single clip recorded by a civilian driver may not be considered sufficiently compelling evidence for prosecution. Even if it is, the rule of allowing defendants to confront and cross-examine their accusers may require the other driver to appear in court to certify that she witnessed the violation and recorded the footage, and for multiple reasons some folks may prefer not to deal with any of that. Also, we may be violating our previous standard (see Answer 312) that only marked police vehicles get to cite people for traffic violations.

What may need to happen, then, is that prosecution can proceed only if enough drivers report violations against the same perpetrator separately. The resulting pattern should be enough to persuade the attorneys of the poor driver not to seek trial (for, under our Section I-F, guilty people who seek trials and lose should be subject to additional penalty for wasting our public resources), so the recording drivers would probably not need to appear in court. Even if they do, then there should be enough 'safety in numbers' that they would not need to fear reprisals.

Or, even if the lawyers find that no combination of civilian recordings can be sufficient to enable a criminal prosecution, perhaps they can be permitted to come into play when assessing penalties for bad drivers who are actually caught by the police. If it can be shown that this bad driver did not only this one bad thing but a whole string of bad things, we might nominally keep the focus of the prosecution on this one bad thing which the police caught, but yet assess a stiffer penalty so that we can more easily capture the bad driver's attention.

This step can be made easier if we also have our local police issue warnings whenever they receive these clips of poor driving. If the drivers once become aware that people are ratting on them to local law enforcement, then they might get 'scared straight' even with no actual criminal prosecutions ever happening. If they continue their bad behavior even after the official warnings, then penalties for future transgressions can be expanded when they are actually caught by the police and prosecuted by the legal system.

Question 693.4

What can we do to mitigate noise pollution from motorcycles in quiet neighborhoods?

Noted in Session 286: If you're going to live in a quiet neighborhood, then it stands to reason that we should expect that you will be quiet also. That's part of the compact, quiet people want to live together in quiet neighborhoods, and those who like noise (or at least are not bothered by it) can congregate elsewhere.

We therefore should not be tolerating loud motorcycles driving through quiet neighborhoods, especially on a regular basis. They should have quieter vehicles, or else they should move to other sections of town. No one gets to be a Jerk.

Cities and towns perceiving this to be a problem should set up pages on their local civic websites, where residents can register complaints confidentially, including the date and time of each offense. If the noise really is bad enough to warrant correction, then enough complaints will have been generated along a certain path of travel within a particular time window to be able to identify the likely culprit. When enough such violations have occurred, a warning notice can be sent to the perp's home, and actual disciplinary measures can be taken if the offenses continue.

Question 693.5

What can we do to mitigate noise pollution from motorcycles on highways?

Even if/when we get rid of carpool lanes as recommended in Answer 686.7, and even if we enable the front-end cameras to record traffic violations as recommended in Answer 693.3, and even if/when we get loud vehicles out of the quiet neighborhoods

as recommended in Answer 693.4, we still can have the problem of loud motorcycles freaking out innocent drivers on regular streets and highways.

We have heard it argued as of Session 286 that it improves safety for motorcycles to be loud, because the car drivers know that they're coming and can plan their lives around them. However, our individual experience has been that we often cannot hear the motorcycle until it is right up next to us, where it suddenly becomes so loud that we freak out, in which case our sudden uncontrolled movement (including possibly from a heart attack) can actually endanger the motorcyclist even more.

Because the motorcycles can ride between traffic lanes, they do not require carpool lanes in order to freak people out. The front-end cameras which we propose might not be able to capture everything happening in neighboring lanes, especially if a motorcycle is whizzing by too fast for his license plate to be clearly visible in even one single frame of video. Some folks in quiet neighborhoods can be persuaded to quiet their vehicles or switch to quieter vehicles, but some may prefer to move to noisier places, or they may have remained there all along. The problem therefore can still remain on our regular streets and highways, so the Question is still relevant.

Unfortunately, the agility of motorcycles often/usually prevents them from being identified, so we probably cannot realistically expect to 'catch them in the act' very often or at all. If we require some noise test periodically when the vehicle is being reregistered, then a truly jerky owner will strip off whatever parts are making the extra noise until the test is over, and then reinstall them.

We therefore offer two suggestions here: First is that we are hereby asking very nicely for the drivers of all loud motorcycles (or all loud vehicles, actually) to voluntarily quiet their vehicles down somehow, or at least to be courteous when driving near other vehicles and not drive hugely faster so as to freak them out. In offering this suggestion, though, we are painfully aware that anybody who is truly jerky is probably not going to be reading this document at all, let alone responding to any of our calls for courtesy. We do point out that keeping our fellow citizens in good mental health will make this a happier and more productive society for all of us, and that being excessively loud and freaky will work against our mutual societal interests, and maybe this will help, but it also may not.

Second suggestion is a combination of our A693.3 and A693.4 approaches. Even though we may not be able to record the license plate with our front-end cameras of motorcycles whizzing by us in a neighboring lane or between lanes, we can still at least record that something whizzed by, and we have the date and time and location and direction from our front-end cameras. If we later report that clip on the local webpage for that community, and if others report it too, we might be able to establish a complete path of travel for the offending vehicle, and in that manner might be able to identify the possible violator with enough confidence to allow the issuance of a warning, which may at least help the problem.

Question 694

To what extent should we allow/encourage speed bumps in streets and parking lots?

Notes from our 'black book' of preliminary ideas were ratified in Session 286, as follows:

The actual decision may rest with the owners of the parking lots, and some majority (we would settle for 2/3, but we'd be happier with 3/4) of residents on a given block. However, as a philosophical matter, we claim that the practice should be discouraged wherever possible, on the grounds that it's really bad for those cars who must travel on those paths: It's bad for brakes, shocks, engine (stopping and starting), transmission, gas mileage, emission control, driver/passenger comfort, etc. Many cars can also suffer scraping damage to car bodies and low-lying mechanical parts.

If you must reduce usage or speed, then you can accomplish your objective more safely by installing a cobblestone (or other uneven) surface, with the same notice that you would give to speed bumps. Drivers will avoid the passages if they practically can, but those who must drive them will do so both slowly and evenly.

Question 694.1

What else can Governments do to improve traffic conditions in our communities?

Notes added in Session 286:

a) As previously mentioned, Counties (like L.A.) with big traffic problems should maintain an office which exchanges commuters working similar jobs in each other's locations, so that the same amount of the same work is being done with less overall travel. Workers interested in participating in that pool should be able to register on a corresponding page within the County's website, indicating their origins and current destinations. Longest commutes should get the highest priorities.

b) Consider erecting some relatively-safe hazards on all 'gore points' and lane divisions and other barriers which currently are only marked with solid-white painted lines. The solid-white lines as opposed to dotted is generally intended (with some possible local variation) to indicate that the driver should never be crossing that line except in emergency. The author got ticketed for it twice. However, it still happens as of Session 286, and contributes to the slowdowns and unfairnesses of our current traffic environment. Select a few samples around town, and cover the painted lines (or even the entire 'gore points') with some raised and rough surfaces, or maybe a group of those orange plastic barriers, or maybe a sensor with camera sending a warning photo to the driver's home. Each such instance not only will cut down the offenses in that specific location, but also will serve as a warning that other such locations will need to be similarly treated if the violations continue, so hopefully the violations will also decrease elsewhere, and further treatments will not be needed.

c) If you are not already doing so, then please consider establishing stricter requirements and stiffer fees/penalties for larger passenger vehicles, according to either height or width or length or weight or some combination. For, the current price structure and increased gasoline expense do not seem to be combining satisfactorily to mitigate our current excesses in size. The only folks who should be driving those collision-risky and resource-consumptive vehicles are those who actually need them enough that they are willing to pay extra for the privilege.

d) Post signs at all points of street/highway entry into new jurisdictions, announcing any traffic rules which are different in the new jurisdiction from how they are in the jurisdiction which the driver just came from.

Question 694.2

What else can Drivers do to improve traffic conditions in our communities?

Notes added in Session 286:

a) Don't pass on the right. Most traffic on American roadways enters and exits on the right-hand side, so traffic is generally slowest on that side of the road. The lanes on the left, farther removed from the points of entry and exit, are usually considered the 'fast lanes' for those drivers who are traveling farther and therefore do not need to worry so much about any vehicles which are entering or exiting the highway at any point. It is therefore normal and expected that any drivers who wish to pass us will do so on the faster side, that is, on the left. Trouble is, some sneaky drivers elect (whether from ignorance or malevolence) to pass people on the right. Drivers do not expect people to pass them on the right, and (depending on the geometry of their vehicles) there may be a 'blind spot' over there to make it harder for them to see any oncoming traffic. While of course we try to stay aware at all moments of what is happening around us in all directions, as a practical matter we can't always see everything, especially in our 'blind spots', so we often need to focus our attention on where people are more likely to pass us. Thus, when a vehicle is ready to merge to its right, and especially if it needs to do so suddenly in response to some other hazard, the risk of collision increases when somebody is passing on the right. OK as an exception if the vehicles on your left are either stopped or else traveling slowly enough that they are not a threat to enter your lane. In all other cases, please either accept the 'pace' of the vehicle which is ahead of you and on your left and limit your speed to that pace, or move an additional lane to your right if available and then proceed normally, or else get around that driver and pass her on her left.

b) Stop at the limit line. Some jurisdictions will paint two lines for a crosswalk, and then a partial third line on the side of the street where drivers will be approaching. That partial third line is known as the 'limit line', and all vehicles are requested or required to stop completely behind that line before crossing the intersection. This is done as a matter of safety, to provide pedestrians with an extra cushion of space, so that if a driver goes over a little bit then there still is sufficient room. Trouble is, many drivers 'fudge' when no pedestrians are immediately visible, and either don't stop at all or else stop with some portion of their vehicle having already crossed over the 'limit line'. Some of those drivers apparently are in that habit, because we observe the same happening when pedestrians actually are present. Therefore recommending that all drivers who have not already done so should train themselves to stop completely behind every limit line, whether any pedestrians are in view or not. Make it a game, where you win only if you follow all the rules.

c) Leave 'big open spaces'. We still are seeing some drivers drive too closely to the vehicles in front of them, and sometimes even accelerate when the car in front is clearly braking. Not only does this tactic increase the risk of collisions, but it can also freak out any passengers whom you may be carrying, as well as the drivers in front of you. We have heard of the 'two-second rule' and the 'three-second rule' for assessing whether you are too close to the car in front, but as of Session 286 we advise a 'five-second rule' for increased safety and peace. Also applies laterally, don't drive directly alongside any vehicle in a neighboring lane, or merge when any car is approaching from two lanes over. Always leave plenty of 'big open space' everywhere, and then traffic accidents won't ever happen.

d) Please signal when you change lanes. As we referenced in Answer 694.1e, it causes problems when people change lanes without signaling. For one thing, nearby drivers don't always know whether you are actually intending the change or whether you are simply falling asleep. For another thing, if you are intending the change then that means that you are an inconsiderate jerk who clearly doesn't care about the feelings of your fellow drivers. If you are that dangerous and inconsiderate now, then you may be even more dangerous and inconsiderate as we continue down the road together, and we will experience tremendous amounts of debilitating stress wondering what horrifying stunt you're going to pull next. Besides, it's not as though you are completely entitled to your new lane, so a signal is your way of asking permission to cut in front of other drivers, and saying 'thank you' when they agree to let you in.

e) Don't change lanes unless you really need to. One thing that's funny about sitting in traffic jams is watching some of the cars ahead of you jockey for position by changing lanes repeatedly, even though they often achieve little advancement of territory as a result, and sometimes even lose. Trouble is, whether the attempts are successful or not, and whether the drivers signal their lane changes or not, each change of lanes causes other cars to slow further or stop in order to make room for you. Now, you may not care much (or at all) about their feelings or schedule issues, although we would prefer it if everybody cared at least a little bit about everybody else. In any case, though, the repeated lane changes are contributing to the overall slowness of traffic, and it's likely that one of the reasons why you're stuck in traffic now is because somebody else was being a jerk somewhere in front of you. If we all agree as a perpetual compact that we will change lanes only when we need to, and hopefully when we are not causing others to slow down or stop as a result, then we will have a Culture of Cooperation, and our overall traffic problems will go way down.

f) Following our general note in paragraph (c) about leaving 'big open space' everywhere, we should consider staggering our positions when we are stopped at a red light. When there are two or more lanes on your side of the street, some drivers tend to creep all the way up to the limit line, regardless of what other drivers in other lanes are doing. If everybody does that, then the 'limit line' turns into a 'starting line', and then the cars drag out as soon as the green light hits, trying to see who can get position on the other. We don't need that. We don't need a drag race on every red light. We don't need that competition. It's much more important that we all get where we're going with a minimum of risk and stress. When you are the first one approaching a red light, come to your stop a half-length behind the limit line, and allow anyone to proceed all the way up to the limit line who comes along in a neighboring lane after you. That way, all the cars lining up behind the two of you will be clearly staggered, with each one knowing who has 'position' on who else, and there is no cutthroat competition to 'beat' anyone else to the next intersection. Keep windows up while waiting with one or more nearby vehicles at a red light, so that you do not breathe their toxic exhaust fumes, or their toxic tobacco smoke while it is still legally permitted within a given locality.

Question 694.1 (continued)

What else can Governments do to improve traffic conditions in our communities?

e) If you have sensors embedded under the streets at certain intersections, such that the lights for those lanes turn green faster (or only) when a sufficiently-heavy

car is waiting there, then those sensors should not extend past the limit line, because we want to encourage cars to remain in their proper places. Also, they should be extended as much as 1½ car lengths behind the limit line, so that cars which stagger their positions at the intersection in order to avoid anyone being tempted to 'drag' (see Answer 694.2f above) will still be able to trip the light-changing mechanism even when they voluntarily take the second position.

Question 694.2 (continued)

What else can Drivers do to improve traffic conditions in our communities?

g) Don't cross a solid-white line, either between lanes or at a 'gore point'. You may change lanes (after signaling, of course) where the lane dividers are dotted, but solid lines have been placed there by folks who figured out or learned from experience that it is either dangerous or discourteous or both to drive at those spots. If we suspect that they blew it in their line placement, then let's apply through channels to have the lines redone. In the meantime, let's all please observe and obey the lines as they currently exist, if only because other drivers are doing so, and we should all be fair and play by the same rules, but also because it increases the risk of collision whenever anybody does anything unexpected or illegal on the roadway. If we don't stop doing it voluntarily, then local governments may erect hazards to require it.

h) If local ordinances require you to come to a full stop at any posted stop sign, then please do so, whether any cops are around or not, and whether any pedestrians or other drivers are around or not. All the way, all the time. If you allow yourself to get into the habit of 'rolling' through a stop sign, then you can create a hazard when pedestrians or other drivers are around whom you don't happen to be able to see at the moment. It also can freak those other people out, which is not only discourteous to them but disruptive to our entire society. In addition, when multiple cars are approaching an intersection from different directions, it is easier to tell who gets to cross the intersection first by seeing who arrived at the intersection first, and you can tell that more easily if everybody comes to a complete stop when they arrive, such that whoever stops first goes first, but it gets much fuzzier and more dangerous when anyone 'rolls' through without ever completely stopping.

i) If you are turning right out of a parking lot or side street, then please do not commence your turn until all approaching drivers have completely passed you. When you start to 'roll' through while another driver is still approaching, then the other driver doesn't know if you see her or not, so for safety she must apply her brakes, and maybe other cars behind her need to do so as well. Bad scene. You are not gaining that many more microseconds by begin to 'roll' through a turn while other cars are still approaching, and you are easily causing more problems than you're solving, so please just don't do it. Patience, grasshopper.

j) As other folks have been saying for quite a while as of Session 286, please reduce your cellphone usage and other distractions while driving, especially any actions which require either of your hands to be off the steering wheel for more than a quick moment of time. Your main focus should be on your driving, from the moment that you leave until the moment that you arrive. Any communications or other actions which want to happen in the interim must be done with minimal distraction, or else must wait until the car is safely stopped.

Question 693.2

Is our recent American trend in favor of SUV's and other large cars a net-problem or a net-solution?

Large cars are a solution for individuals and families and social groups and businesses needing to carry numerous passengers or large quantities of equipment/merchandise or both. By getting more people or 'stuff' into their cars, they can often save having to use more cars or make multiple trips, so that cuts down on our aggregate traffic volume. However, as of Session 286 we are also seeing a few problems with the trend.

First problem relates to the actual traffic itself, and that is the fact that larger cars increase the risk of collisions, both on the streets and highways and in our parking lots. Our streets and highway lanes and parking spaces were all measured and built on the assumption that the average car using them was going to be much smaller in size than our current average. It is harder to see through and around larger cars, both on the highway and when we are attempting to pull safely out of a parking lot with a large parked car blocking our view of oncoming street traffic. It is also harder to squeeze into and out of spaces in parking lots when extra-large vehicles are parked over their limit lines. Some areas of the country may be able to increase the width of their roads and the size of their parking lots in order to allow for larger vehicles, but many of our denser cities have already allocated as much space for driving and parking as they practically can, so it would make things much easier and safer if the drivers in at least those places went back to driving smaller cars.

Second problem is part Traffic and part Social. We occasionally observe that the driver of an exceptionally-large vehicle apparently feels a level of 'entitlement' to drive extra-fast and extra-unsafely and extra-discourteously. One example is the guy who is so impatient to get to his destination thirty seconds faster that he weaves rapidly through any spaces in the highway that he can either find or create, changing lanes an excessive number of times, and cutting very closely in front of smaller cars without signaling. He apparently feels (with good reason) that all other cars will not wish to risk collision with his larger vehicle, so he leaves it up to them to slow down or stop as needed. Even if a collision does happen, the smaller car will get the brunt or entirety of the damage, so the driver of the large vehicle doesn't care, and he just plows through all resistance like Patton's Third Army. Not only does this driving style increase the risk of collision and cause other traffic to back up and stop in order to make way for the Jerk, but it is also a Social problem, because it exemplifies and highlights the idea that whoever is bigger and stronger and more reckless and less considerate gets whatever he wants, at the expense of everybody who is smaller and nicer. Go have that kind of society somewhere else if you want to, but leave the rest of us who believe in Peace and Courtesy and Egalitarianism to have equal access to our driving lanes, and to get where we're going with a minimum of stress.

Third problem is one of Resource Management, so it has an Economic implication. Larger cars take up more steel and rubber and other resources than smaller cars do, and they also tend to burn gasoline faster. If we really want to be serious about solving all of our country's problems, then one of them has to be the fact that many of our American brethren don't even have homes to live in. When we put fewer resources into extravagances (for, some people who drive these larger cars apparently don't actually need them for any practical purpose, but instead do it only for show and/or to feel wealthy and superior), we are able to devote more resources

where they are needed the most. In this example, trending back to smaller cars might allow us to build more homes and more cars and more appliances that can improve the quality of life for millions of Americans (if not also in the rest of the World), and everything (including gasoline) might be less expensive for everybody.

Fourth problem has Political overtones, and that is the perception which other countries have of us because of our obsession with exceptionally-large cars, and more generally with our perceived overuse of all our economic resources. Some folks may not care too much about what any foreigners think of us, but we claim that they should. If you know anyone like that, then maybe you might consider helping to 'clear him up': When any foreign governments dislike us for what they perceive as our greediness and wastefulness, and for throwing our shoulders and elbows around to get whatever we want, then they are much less likely to trade with us, they are much more likely to want to attack us militarily (for the duration of time that the World still foolishly chooses to allow War), and they will be less inclined to allow us to have any influence over any international policy. When any foreign individuals dislike us for the same reasons, they will boo and hiss whenever we appear in any international athletic competitions, they will capture our embassies and hold our citizens as hostages, and they will commit numerous other acts of terrorism against us and our few remaining international friends.

Some folks have said that they want to "Make America Great Again", but a big hangup about that slogan is that different people mean 'Great' in different ways. For some, it means that America can once again be a leader on the international stage, showing by ongoing example how people can effectively use Democracy and Capitalism to build happy and healthy and sustainable societies. For others, it simply means that we have bigger cars than everyone else.

We claim that we cannot achieve both objectives at the same time. If we want to appear less of a 'Great Satan' to the rest of the World, if we want to reduce (and possibly eliminate) the motivation of other individuals and groups to commit acts of terror against us, and if we want other Nations to respect us and do whatever we suggest and request of them, then we must be good leaders, which means (among other things) being good stewards of our economic resources, using only what we need to maintain a modestly happy and comfortable lifestyle but not living to excess.

In sum, we understand that some Americans actually need larger cars for different reasons, and we expect that the States which register them may (and probably will) want to assess larger registration fees to help offset the extra resources which they take up and the extra stresses which they impose upon other drivers and the higher risks of collision and economic damage. However, for everyone who doesn't really need a larger vehicle, but who either drives one now or aspires to do so, we are politely asking you to reconsider your priorities. We can improve traffic conditions, increase safety and the quality of life for our fellow citizens, and restore America to its former position of moral prominence on the international stage, if we cut back on our SUV's and other large vehicles wherever and whenever we practically can.

Question 160.1

What can/should we do to combat terrorism?

Added in Session 286, from our discussion about how driving SUV's and other XBC's (Xtra-Big Cars) can make other Nations increasingly resentful of America: When

foreigners view America as an 'evil empire', then some individuals and governments might decide to attack us in some manner or other. We try to identify and arrest the terrorists, but we also help ourselves by becoming less of a target for terrorists.

Question 694.2 (continued)

What else can Drivers do to improve traffic conditions in our communities?

k) When you need to change more than one lane at a time, please try not to do so in a single motion. Better to focus on each change, signal it, make sure that the next lane is open, execute your change clearly and definitely, line up in the new lane, and turn off your signal. Then, after a few seconds of making sure that the environment has restabilized following your shift, go through the process again if all the conditions continue to be favorable. Too often we see folks change two or three or four lanes in a single motion, and it can be a huge problem even when they signal, because now the entire highway has to slow down and stop instead of just one lane at a time.

l) If two or more lanes are turning into some other street, then please start your turn in whichever lane you will need to be for turning somewhere else afterward. We often see people turning from the far-left lane, and then merging into the second lane after they complete their turn, and then merging again or turning to the right directly after that. They should have turned from the second lane to start with, so that -- as suggested in the previous paragraph -- they could minimize their merges.

m) When you do need to change lanes, and even when you are signaling, and even if the lane change is actually necessary and productive, please allow existing traffic to go by first if at all possible. They were in that lane first, so they have first dibs on it, and ideally you should enter that lane only when space is available without blocking other drivers. We understand that it must happen sometimes that we need to block others in order to get where we're going, but to the extent that we practically can let's all please try to wait our turns, and not change lanes until it's clear. This applies especially when a large truck is approaching, because with his higher momentum (which increases according to the larger mass that he is carrying) he can't always slow down and stop for you as easily as a regular car can, so either he must plow through you or else he must try to swerve around you, which can cause collisions with other cars, and which can cause the truck to spin out and collapse, blocking traffic for miles, and further decreasing our collective productivity and increasing our collective stress. Wait for your turn, go when it's clear.

n) When you do need to pass someone on the left, pass definitely. Too often we see people passing us or other people slowly on the left, and for that duration of time the risk of collision is still high, because somebody blows a tire, or they run over an object or a slippery spot on the road, somebody loses concentration and veers out of lane, a third driver causes a collision from another side, etc. Part of leaving 'big open space' is to reduce the amount of time that you are nearby a car which you are passing. Don't pass so fast that you freak out the other driver, but pass definitely.

Question 694.3

What else can Pedestrians do to improve traffic conditions in our communities?

Notes added in Session 286:

a) Don't stand on or near the curb while waiting for a green light. If you are too close to the curb while I am turning, then there is a risk that you might slip and fall into the intersection, or accidentally get pushed from behind if the intersection is crowded. Even if you don't actually fall in, your being that close freaks me out as a driver, and so I need to proceed much more slowly than I otherwise would need to. Even if you don't care about other people's feelings, causing any amount of stress to anyone causes stress to the entire society, reduces our production, and generally makes us healthier. Help us out, please, give us a little room away from the curb.

b) Get out of the way of emergency vehicles. Seems trivially obvious, but the author personally observed a pedestrian creeping very slowly through a crosswalk while an emergency vehicle was standing still in the intersection with sirens and lights blaring.

c) Don't linger on the street side of your parked car. Maybe you're getting out of the car, maybe you're getting in, maybe you are retrieving something from the car, or putting something away. Whatever you are doing, though, do it from the passenger side if possible, and if not possible then wait until existing street traffic has gone by, and then proceed with your action quickly before any more cars come.

In sum, just because you have the 'right of way' as a pedestrian, doesn't mean that you also have the 'right to be a jerk'. We still need a measure of cooperation from you so that our entire traffic (cars and walkers and all) can get where we're going with a minimum of risk and fuss. If you don't care about people's feelings, then at least cooperate as a practical matter of keeping your society in smooth operation.

Question 694.1 (continued)

What else can Governments do to improve traffic conditions in our communities?

f) Use amber-alert signs for more specific messages than platitudes such as 'buzzed driving is drunk driving' (which, by the way, is not nearly accurate, as we imagine that anyone who has actually done both can attest). One good candidate is "PLEASE SIGNAL WHEN YOU CHANGE LANES", works on either two or three lines, and sends an important message which apparently has not been getting broadcast enough. Any such sign (including the good ones for buckling up) should not just scare people with "it's the law", especially because that language actually turns some people on to do whatever you're prohibiting (we call it the 'Keep Off The Grass' syndrome), but instead should emphasize that it's "FOR YOUR SAFETY" or otherwise a good idea.

g) Insofar as some jerky drivers continue to change lanes without signaling, please prosecute offenders more frequently than you're currently doing. We still are seeing some violators do so directly in front of law-enforcement personnel who do nothing about it. Even if you don't issue an actual citation (because maybe you are judging that the violation was not serious enough to warrant all that paperwork and a court appearance and everything), the mere fact that you have stopped someone for a warning might 'scare him straight', and if not then the mere inconvenience of getting stopped might encourage the jerk to straighten up if only to avoid repetition.

h) Please don't reduce the number of lanes on any outbound highway until the traffic volume has actually reduced to where it can still proceed at full speed. Some of our biggest traffic slowdowns come from more lanes trying to squeeze into fewer lanes as we approach the outskirts of our urban areas. (One nasty example is where the

I-15 reduces from three lanes to two lanes on the way from Las Vegas back to L.A.) Some particular spots may not allow any more lanes than they already have, but if space allows then please undertake the investment to increase your artery width, so that the blood can flow more freely, and you will be healthier overall.

i) If you are not already doing so, then set up a network of sensors which can capture the speed of each passing vehicle, and a computer program which can calculate the average speed at each sensor point over a given hour or day or year. Plot on a map those spots where the average speed is higher than the posted limit to the greatest degree, so that you can either increase the limit or look for ways to reduce speed or some combination. More importantly, find the spots where the average speed is lower than the posted limit to the greatest degree, so that you can figure ways to improve those average speeds, whether by better signage or fewer carpool lanes or more outbound lanes or something else or some combination.

j) Wherever possible, entry lanes should not point directly into the right-hand lane of highway traffic. Reason is because that requires drivers in both lanes to slow down and 'zipper' with each other in order to squeeze the two lanes of traffic into one, which slows traffic for well before the entry point, and often also for the other nearby lanes. Better where possible for the entry lanes to point to a separate 'collector lane' which runs to the next exit ramp, so that entering drivers have a longer space to find a spot to squeeze in without requiring other drivers to slow down much or at all. Even if they fail, worst that can happen is that they come off on the next exit, but there usually is another entrance nearby, so they can try again with little fuss.

k) If two lanes ever need to combine into one, then please make sure that there is plenty of signage to provide warning. The author remembers one interchange in New Orleans where lanes combined without warning, and it was very freaky.

Subsection III-H-4: Entertainment & Advertising

Subsubsection III-H-4-a: Film

Question 695

Should screenwriters be locked into constructing their scripts on a page-per-minute basis?

Moderator admitted to some bias in Session 287 (March 2019), because years earlier he had tried to push his screenplays in 'shooting script' format, with numerous specifications included as to editing and camera length and set design and other details which typically do not appear in scripts which are still being shopped for production. Everyone who looked at those versions told me that I needed to condense them to one page per minute of projected running time. I played along because I had to, but I didn't like it, because I felt (with additional bias) that my visual treatments of the stories were a big part of the appeal of the scripts, and that we would lose a lot of that appeal if we stripped it down to just bare dialogue and only the briefest summaries of any action sequences.

Made myself a note then that we should think about this whole business some more when we got around to completing this present Project, so here we were. With some years of removal from those experiences, perhaps we could be bit a more objective.

Nobody who was present at Session 287 had either approved a screenplay for production or directed a feature film, so we were on our own.

From the imagined perspective of the people who are tasked with considering these scripts for approval, we could see the utility of expecting each script to contain a number of pages equal to the projected film length in minutes. First reason why is that being handed the script tells you instantly how heavy the production is likely to be. Second reason is that you can get a sense of where the key 'plot points' are occurring in the story as scripted, to compare with where they usually occur in the current standard model. (These include that the first plot point starting the second act usually occurs 25 minutes into the film, and that the 'technical climax' defining the arc of the central character usually occurs at the halfway point.) If the writer includes a lot of detailed descriptions of scenery along with the text and main action, then the readers don't get as good a sense of the flow of the proposed film. Besides, a lot of those scenic details might not make it into the finished film, anyhow. For the readers and all other folks who are considering a screenplay for production, the minute-per-page model generally works better.

Question 696

And, what about the director's need to create his/her vision?

We are all too aware as of Session 287 that many directors consider themselves to be the 'filmmakers', even though other people often do most or all of the writing and producing. They therefore often feel that it is their right, if not their duty, to give their own visual design to the film, and that the writer's influence should be limited to dialogue and main action. This is where we have a bit of a quibble. The directors often speak about their 'vision' of the film, but the fact is that the writers often visualize the film before the director is ever attached to the project. We see camera lengths and angles, blocking for the actors, editing of the individual shots, and sets and costumes and hair and makeup and all the other visual elements of the film. The film is playing in our heads, and we seek to convert that moving mental image into a physical film, so that other folks can enjoy the same experience that we see.

If we had the technical knowledge to convert our mental vision into a piece of film, then we would do it ourselves, but as it is we need a director who has that knowledge and experience to manage the conversion process for us.

However, as we discussed in Answer 695, studios often dismiss from consideration any script containing so much descriptive detail that the totality ends up with more pages than the finished film would have minutes.

And, even if we included the detailed descriptions in a script 'addendum' or in a separate 'shooting script', the studios will often ignore such input, and go instead with whatever visual designs the director and other creative personnel come up with. Again, they typically view the writer's job as being limited to coming up with the dialogue and the main action elements, and then they're often not even allowed on the set, lest they interfere with the director's authority and creative process.

Even if the studios could be persuaded to adopt more of the writer's stated vision, having those extra specifications established in advance could turn off many directors from having anything to do with the project. If they are to be directing at all, then they must direct completely, and keep the writer away from me at all times.

In order for the project to move forward, with a sufficiently talented-or-otherwise-famous director attached for the studio to be willing to bankroll the project, we probably must require the writer to limit her visualization to whatever she can manage to squeeze into one page of script per minute of finished film. Any descriptive element which is so fundamental that it makes that cut probably will make it into the finished film, even with someone other than the writer directing. Any additional descriptions probably are going to get ignored, and so should be left out of the script in the interests of expediency.

Phooey, the Moderator was personally hoping for a change here, but behold we can't get everything that we personally want, so on to the next thing.....

Question 697

Considering the above, should screenwriters have any greater participation in the production process?

The notes which we entered long ago into our 'black book' of preliminary ideas were composed shortly after the author hit some snags in his script-marketing efforts, and naturally reflected his bitterness over those experiences. They include that many films wouldn't exist without a writer creating the script first, that the writer should be allowed to specify as many scenic details as she likes, that the director should either obey all the writer's specifications or else make a case (while the writer is on the set) for why some of them should be changed, and that any directors who don't feel like playing by those rules can go out and write their own damn scripts.

However, upon years of reflection, and after considering the points made in Answers 695 and 696, we regretfully acknowledge as of Session 287 that Hollywood probably isn't ready to make that kind of cultural shift, and maybe never will be. Not only that, but maybe they are actually right. For, it's often tough enough even in our present culture to get a film produced on time and on budget: How much longer would those productions take, and how much more overtime would we need to pay to the cast and crew, if the screenwriter is continually on the set arguing about every single little thing which the director seeks to do?

While we are game to discuss the matter further, yet the system probably is best as it is, and screenwriters must continue to play the game of 'haiku', using just enough pages to tell their stories, no more and no less, communicating as much information as they practically can within those limited spaces, and then staying home.

Writers who are understandably unhappy with this result might consider adding a phrase like 'More details available on request' to any description which would otherwise run more than one page per minute, so that they can consult with you if they ever get stuck, but honestly don't get your hopes up that they're ever going to get so stuck that they would ever consider asking the lowly writer for assistance.

Question 698

Shall we designate the optimum credit sequence for the director, producer, and writer?

This has gone back and forth over the years. In some older films such as *The Scarlet Pimpernel* from 1934, the director's name appeared in the middle of the

credits, while as of Session 287 it usually appears at the end of any opening credits or the beginning of any closing credits. The latter convention has been in place for so long that we probably couldn't change it if we wanted to, and we don't really want to, because on average we would need to concede that the director probably has more influence on the finished product than any other person.

Less certain is the positioning of credits for the producer and writer. One argument has that writers and directors should be adjacent in the credits, as the two main creative individuals behind the film. Other argument has that directors want to have as little to do with writers as possible, and producers need to step between them in order to keep them apart, so they may as well appear between them in the credits.

We guess that we are asking for the spot next to the director, if the producers are willing, on behalf of writers who are already marginalized enough by 'the Industry', but we will not insist, because the producers are often doing more to get our scripts produced than the directors are, so we are very happy to keep the producers happy.

Question 699

What position shall we take on so-called 'possessory credits'?

This is where they say "A Film By" somebody, or "A [Somebody] Film", usually at the beginning of the film, but sometimes at the end. The 'somebody' usually is the director alone, but *All The President's Men* in 1976 shared the possessory credit between director Alan Pakula and co-producer Robert Redford.

One question is whether the writer should be included in that credit, or should have a similar one next to it, for (as noted above) the film usually does not get made unless the writer first creates at least a general plan for what the director will eventually be doing. In addition, whoever is bankrolling the project, and whoever is hiring and coordinating the activities of all the crew members who work on the project at all, could also be considered as 'filmmakers', so maybe the producers should generally be included in the 'possessory credits' as well. But then, that frame could end up getting a little crowded.

We claim as of Session 287 that the solution is not to have such a 'possessory credit' at all, as it is purely redundant, and not completely descriptive: We are already saying elsewhere who directed the film, who wrote it, who produced it, and who did everything else, so we do not need a line that says that the film is 'by' anyone. Any line which does say that the film is 'by' someone -- even if it also includes the writer(s) and/or producer(s) -- ignores the contributions of the dozens/hundreds of other artists and technicians who worked on the project.

Besides, it's an extra line which just gets in the way, and can make it take longer to get into the actual movie. Seems like an extra level of vanity for the director, giving him two credits instead of one, so we think that we would do better without it.

Question 699.7

Shall we make any adjustments to the film rating process?

We prefer a rating system which does not seek to segregate us according to chronological age, because again (as noted several times above) some people may

be ready to see the images at earlier ages than the current standard, while others may not be ready to see them until much later or maybe ever.

We particularly have always gotten confused over the difference between 'PG' and 'PG-13': Which is the more serious? According to the Motion Picture Association of America* [[*https://www.mpa.org/film-ratings/](https://www.mpa.org/film-ratings/)], the rating 'PG' means that "Some Material May Not Be Suitable For Children", and the rating 'PG-13' means that "Some Material May Be Inappropriate for Children Under 13". What ages are the "Children" in the first rating, if they can have a subset of "Children Under 13" in the second rating? What is the difference between "May Not Be Suitable" and "May Be Inappropriate"?

For both these reasons, better to approach it from the angle which we had recently seen on TV as of Session 287, where we don't specify any chronological ages anywhere at all, but we do indicate with big initial letters whether the program contains Violence or Nudity or Sex or some other content which parents may want to filter for their kids, or which other adults may wish to filter for themselves.

We do generally like the recent trend of adding short descriptive phrases to the ratings to warn of specific content, and we especially like the one about 'historical tobacco smoking', which does a nice job of establishing that we really shouldn't be having actors smoke tobacco on film unless it is for historical accuracy, because as a society we really want to get away from that whole evil practice. However, we laugh when something is said to contain 'adult themes' or 'thematic elements', as though those were necessarily bad, so maybe clarify those, and then that should be it.

Subsubsection III-H-4-b: Television

Question 700

Shall we make any adjustments to the rating system for TV shows?

As of Session 287, we generally like the current system as described in Answer 699.7, where we use big initial letters before the program -- and in any paper or electronic program guides -- to warn potential viewers and their parents about any filterable content. Then, different individuals and households can make their own decisions, based on their own feelings and preferences. We don't need any strict cutoffs of access according to chronological age or any other factors decided by external authority, so we appear to be in pretty good shape now.

Question 682 (continued)

Do we want to keep Christmas on December 25?

Amended between Sessions in March 2019: We had concluded in Session 285 that Christmas should be in September, but what day? Again, we don't know the exact date of Jesus' birth, so we have some flexibility. Probably should be in the latter half of the month, more specifically sometime after the Autumnal Equinox, partly to provide some distance from Labor Day [which we rescheduled to May 1 during the Third Pass], but largely to keep our big holiday season confined mostly to the Autumn as we have in the past. Keeping it on the 25th of the month is thus probably best (whether we change the Calendar or not), so that we can at least keep the "ember 25" portion of the date, as an homage to tradition.

Question 701

To what extent should we continue to allow/encourage televised movies to be cut (or 'compressed') for time?

We strongly disfavor the concept as of Session 288 (April 2019). We understand with some reluctance the idea of editing for content, in order for the artists behind the film to have a broader audience for at least an abridged version of their work. However, if there is no need for a particular film to be edited for content, then it also shouldn't be edited for time. If you are going to show the film at all, then you should show the entire work as the artistic team created it, because anything else robs both the artists and their audiences.

We are aware of the old argument that ending each televised program on the hour or half-hour allegedly makes it easier for other people who are finishing a program on some other channel to switch to whatever you have coming up. If you start running a film 10 minutes after the start of the hour, then (so the old argument goes) people concluding some other show ending on the hour will not wait to watch your program, because they will have 10 minutes of nothing to do or watch. Meanwhile, those whose previous shows don't end until the half-hour also will not watch your program, because they will have missed the first 20 minutes of it.

We find that this argument dates from a bygone age, when there were only three major TV networks and a small handful of local channels, and when we didn't have the technology available to record a program and watch it later. As it is now, there are numerous stations available which can provide you with 10 minutes of amusement if you need it before your cool movie comes on, while those who for any reason join the film in progress can record it for later viewing in its entirety. Neither of these is any longer a valid reason to compress any televised feature films for time.

Besides, when people remain with a previous show until it concludes at 10 minutes after the hour, they are more likely to 'stay tuned' until the next program comes on the same channel, if there are fewer alternative shows starting at that same time, so at least to some extent it would be in the network's interest to conclude each show at or near its natural time, without any significant compression.

Question 703

Is it acceptable for broadcasters to stick auditory announcements over film credits?

The request from Answer 701 to run films in their original length includes running all credit sequences as originally presented, and not zipping through them so fast that no 'reasonable person' can read anything at all, and also not covering up any supplemental footage which may have originally accompanied the credits.

We generally can understand and tolerate a narrow banner of advertisement to run concurrently with the closing credits, on condition that the credits are otherwise presented normally, and that no auditory announcements cover any music or other sound which may have accompanied the original credits, lest we unduly disrupt the viewer experience or deny the film's creative artists their just acknowledgements.

Question 702

Is it generally better to have a few long commercial breaks, or several shorter ones?

It can be left up to individual TV and Radio broadcasters, and may need to vary for different types of programs, different types of sponsoring products, different times of day, different days of the week, or other factors. Generally, though, we recommend as of Session 288 for more breaks of shorter duration, so that viewers/listeners will be less inclined to flip channels during commercial breaks. One exception might be if you are running a 'period' film such as *The Ten Commandments*, when the frequent switches in timeframe can be disruptive and disturbing to the viewer. In most cases, though, as a viewer/listener I will feel better about sitting through the commercial break, and possibly even observing the ads which you are running during it, if I know that the interruption will be brief and that I will soon get back to my actual program.

Question 704

What revisions, if any, shall we make to the system by which viewership is measured?

We take issue as of Session 288 with the so-called 'science' behind the absurdly-small sample sizes which they have been using to project total viewership. Not only do we generally object to the small sample size, but we specifically object to their premise that all white men between ages 50-55 will always watch the same thing as their sample datapoints, that all black women between 35-39 will always watch the same thing as their samples, etc. We are all individuals, and we all have our own viewing habits and preferences, which may not be (and probably are not) tied to any particular combination of demographic attributes which you can dream up.

What we generally prefer is a technology and process which will capture the history of millions of willing viewers, not just a couple of thousand. We understand that marketing analysts like to know not only how many people generally are watching a particular program, but also who they all are, so that their bosses can plan their commercial outreaches accordingly. However, we are hoping that there is (or someday will be) a technology which allows them to do that without sacrificing the underlying total volume of assorted Human Beings who are actually watching.

We also dislike their reliance on viewers filling out log sheets, because the logs are cumbersome to prepare and upload, because the viewers in many cases will only approximate at best (including by ignoring any momentary channel-surfing which may happen during commercials), and because some viewers for whatever reason may decide that they want to be dishonest (such as by pretending that they watched a certain show which they like while they actually were out dancing). Better if a device permitted by the viewer would track every moment that the viewer is tuned in to each channel, so that networks can gauge not only who generally is watching their programs, but how the viewership goes up and down over the course of the program's duration. (For, your sponsors don't really care who's watching the programs, they care who's watching the commercials.) That information might help them to select different programming, different schedules of commercial interruption (see Answer 702), different actual commercials, etc.

Question 704.2

Any suggestions to offer for cable coverage?

Suggested in Session 288 that subscribers should not be required to pay high prices for hundreds of channels which they never watch. They should be required to pay for only those channels which they are willing to have on their active program menus. Then, the channels which they have actually purchased will be highlighted on the televised program guides, to indicate that they are available for viewing. All other channels which are available for purchase can still be shown on the televised program guide, so that subscribers not paying for them can know what they're missing, but they should be grayed out to show that they currently are not available.

Also suggested that no cable company should have exclusive control over any geographic area of any size, as they frequently have had for many years as of Session 288. This violates the principles of free-market economics which we explored in Part II, and allows the companies to charge whatever prices they like, and to provide service only on their terms. The suggestion offered in the preceding paragraph is not likely to happen in real life as long as any cable company is allowed to enjoy a monopoly over any city or neighborhood. According to Part II, no company in any industry should have more than one-third of the available market share, or else it must face some amount of regulation by the applicable government as a 'public utility', which can include either price controls or diverting excess revenues to public purposes. We therefore recommend that each household should have access to at least three competing cable companies.

Subsubsection III-H-4-c: Radio

Question 705

Should radio commercials have all that legal crap?

No, as of Session 288 we say dump all the legal crap, especially when they run it at faster speeds and/or higher pitches which the average 'reasonable person' cannot understand for a single moment, let alone retain until she can once do anything about it, so we would ask the higher courts to consider whether it really constitutes adequate disclosure under those conditions. In any case, if the product cannot legally be advertised on the radio without all that legal crap, then find another medium. The legal crap which you are seeking to gloss over by running it extra-fast and/or extra-high is just scaring me away from buying whatever product or service you are trying to sell, so it's not doing any of us any good.

Question 706

What limits, if any, shall we place on what statements may be included in radio commercials?

As of Session 288, we have heard numerous radio commercials make announcements such as 'with a price so low that we are not allowed to advertise it on the radio'. Why should that be the case? Any factual statement about your own product/service (including the price) should be allowed, but don't make any opinion-oriented statement about any competitor's brand.

Question 707

How come radio stations that are primarily for playing music interrupt their programs with traffic reports or weather predictions or other news updates, particularly in markets where there are one or more stations which specialize in such coverage?

We have sometimes objected to this practice, because it takes our focus away from whatever mood we are trying to engineer by listening to the music in the first place. However, as of Session 288 we see the utility of allowing -- if not requiring -- each radio station to make some periodic announcements of current conditions in order to show that one or more actual people are there running an actual broadcast, instead of the whole thing being managed by computer. Generally should be left up to individual stations, who might consider polling their viewers for their preferences.

Subsection III-H-5: Free Press

Question 708

What limits, if any, should we place on 'freedom of the press'?

Any person or corporation should be allowed to operate a printing press or electronic platform to report on news or provide opinions on current events. To be able to do so is one of the key elements which we adopted in Answer 38 for American society going forward, because it is a key manner in which the people can wield their natural authority over any governments which they allow to exist, especially when the electoral process is suspected of undue governmental or plutocratic manipulation.

If a given society elects to require its press outlets to be licensed as a condition of official approbation, then each such outlet could lose its license to operate as an approved news/opinion provider if it is shown to have enough violations for asserting supposedly-factual statements which they knew or should have known were false.

What if the publisher in question is promoting an agenda of discrimination, hatred, violence, or some other bad thing? This is a tricky area, because we generally don't want to suppress opinions which differ from those of the prevailing governments, because sometimes those alternative opinions are the net-better ones, and because governments have a built-in conflict of interest when it comes to considering which alternative publications should be allowed and which should not. Besides, if others are allowed to promote their 'bad' agendas, then at least the rest of us all know that those 'bad' mentalities are still out there, and that they are still trying to attract disciples, in which case our barring them from publishing legally will just drive them underground, and will not solve the core problem. Best for us all to know what 'bad' philosophies are still out there in our 'real world', so that we can debate them out in the open, and hopefully persuade the 'bad' people to adopt our 'good' agenda.

Question 644.2

Any recommendation to offer on placement of First Base with respect to the batter's running lane?

Added between Sessions in April 2019: Entirety of First Base currently lies on the inside of the baseline, but the rules require the batter to remain in the marked lane

outside the baseline, in order not to interfere with the actions of the fielders who are trying to throw the batter out. At some point, the batter must leave the outside running lane in order to touch the base which is lying inside the baseline, but any such action can theoretically be considered as at least the possibility of interference.

The solution is fairly simple, and does not require any extensive redesigning of the standard baseball infield. All that we need is to extend the width of First Base such that it completely covers the running lane. That way, the batter can focus on touching the portion of the base which is inside the running lane, without any chance of interfering with the portion of the base which is being covered by the defender.

Question 694.2 (continued)

What else can Drivers do to improve traffic conditions in our communities?

o) Be extra-slow and extra-careful when it's raining.

Question 643.4

Should different sports continue to have All-Star games?

Added retroactively between Sessions in April 2019.

We think that this is a fun and fine institution which should be continued indefinitely, although we have heard complaints from some athletes that such participation unduly increases the risk of injury. That may be true, but we imagine that you became a professional athlete in the first place because you were eager to show off your athletic skills to people, and that participating in an All-Star Game is as big of an individual showcase as you may ever encounter, whereas your league championships are generally more about overall team performance.

Fans sit through the rest of the regular season often wondering, "Wouldn't it be cool if we could have at least one game each year featuring the league's best players at all positions, the best versus the best?" Well, we do that, and we would like to continue doing that. Any athlete who is too afraid of injury to participate maybe should be finding some other line of work.

We will later add a separate Question and Answer to show that Baseballers should wear their own team uniforms because it looks so spectacular for former adversaries to come together occasionally for common purpose, just like soldiers from different armies coming together in a coalition force, but Football and Basketball are so dependent on detecting your own teammates momentarily that they should keep special all-star uniforms. We like that Football has allowed All-Star players to use their usual team helmets, so that we still get a sense of previous enemies coming together as temporary friends, while allowing the jerseys to be uniform so that you are always passing to the right receivers.

Question 643.5

What is the best way to select the players appearing in your sport's All-Star Game?

Added between Sessions in April 2019:

Having established in the previous Answer that we want to continue to have All-Star games, there is that other ongoing debate of how the players should be selected. Some people feel that they should be selected by the coaches, because they are most familiar with everybody's specific athletic skills. Others feel that selected sportswriters should be making the selections, similar to certain panels which select inductees to a given sport's Hall of Fame. We have also heard the idea floated that selection should be performed on a 'peer review' basis by the players themselves.

All those ideas have varying levels of merit. However, the reason that we are arranging to have an All-Star Game in the first place is to provide the fans with a once-per-year experience of seeing the most spectacular players play together, whether that comes from athletic prowess or simply a snazzy style. The fans are our customers, they are the reason why we are having the game at all, so they should be the ones to decide which players shall appear in each year's showcase game.

That leaves the matter of how the fan balloting should happen. In the 'dark days' before the Internet, we were allowed to mail in paper ballots, with the only limitations being the amount of time which we were willing to invest into ballot preparation, and the costs of any postage. More recently, Major League Baseball has experimented with online balloting, but with a funny rule that each voter could submit up to 35 ballots. We have tried to learn why they selected that number, and so far have not discovered it.

In any case, we feel that it is misleading to allow voters to cast large numbers of ballots (whether by paper or electronically or both), because it gives the false impression that more people are participating in the process than actually are. Also, when some voters are allowed to 'stuff the ballot box', it means that voters who cast only one ballot each (whether from honesty or time shortage or both) are unfairly underrepresented. Conversely, if all voters are casting their full 35 ballots each, then the overall result will probably be very close (if not identical) to what it would have been with only 1 ballot per voters, so the rule does not seem to be accomplishing very much. Standard expectation should be one ballot per voter.

The same technology which currently caps each voter at 35 ballots can also cap voters at 1 ballot each, so the change would not require us to invent anything new.

Subsection III-H-6: Genetic Engineering

Question 709

What limits -- if any -- shall we place on Genetic Engineering?

We feel as of Session 289 (April 2019) that it should be used to cure diseases, and to make foods either more plentiful and/or more nutritious for our consumption, but not for bizarre experiments to create 'monsters' as in the H.G. Wells novel (filmed multiple times) of *The Island of Dr. Moreau*.

We are not hung up on "tampering with God's creation", partly because not all of our readers are convinced (or ever will be) that any 'god' was to any extent responsible for our creation at all, and partly because any divine involvement in our creation must (according to the overwhelming evidence in several scientific disciplines) have included some component of Evolution, in which we may still be in an intermediary stage, so it may not have been "God's plan" that we look and act as we currently do.

What we are concerned about is interfering with our ecological balance to such an extent that our actions create unintended consequences (as suggested in numerous films containing the word *Jurassic*), which could end up being harmful to Humanity, or some other species, or maybe even the entire Earth.

We do not trust -- and will not authorize -- any technology which comes from a 'secret laboratory', and will assume on face that it was created by a 'mad scientist' (probably played by Bela Lugosi) with suspicious motives and limited scientific or environmental controls. We therefore recommend that nobody ever go that route, for you will be wasting both your time and ours.

Rather, if you truly seek to benefit Humanity or the Earth with some form of genetic engineering, then you will have no problem with applying for proper licensing through established channels (at the national level at least, and at some point possibly global), nor with having the applicable agencies supervise your experiments to protect the safety of both the general public and any living experimental subjects. By applying for licensing promptly, you will have a priority claim on any patent rights which may eventually attend your inventions, whereas your claims would be dubious if you performed any of your work in secret without proper supervision.

Subsection III-H-7: Fashion

Question 710

Shall we continue to pressure males to have short hair, and females to have longer hair?

No, we claim that such artificial distinctions are holdovers from a time (depicted in the 1969 film *Easy Rider*, the 1979 film *Hair*, and elsewhere) when gender roles -- including as to appearance -- were much more rigidly defined. It creates no harm to anyone else if a given male keeps his hair long, or if a given female keeps her hair short, or if a given non-binary individual handles his/her hair however he/she wants.

When you 'conservative' folks finally stop waging wars against one another, and when you have provided food and clean water and shelter and medical care to all the citizens of the World, we can then have a renewed conversation about hair length. Until then, please kindly allow individuals to groom themselves in any manner which does not injure or threaten others, and focus on our more urgent global priorities.

Question 710.3

What about outfits worn by schoolchildren?

We understand some of our older citizens pleasantly recalling the days when they could conveniently expect that all boys would wear 'male' outfits to school, that all girls (now that they have been allowed into school at all) would wear 'female' outfits, and when there were no third options to consider. However, as of Session 289, the recent increases in transvestism and transgenderism have shown us (among other things) that such rigid categorizations and stereotypes are not really all that necessary in our society, and that they may be doing more harm than good, especially to the young person who has trouble feeling accepted because he/she doesn't fit neatly into either of the two primary paradigms.

Therefore, rather than deny a child a formal education because he/she doesn't like to dress as you might prefer, or to single him/her out for ridicule or reprisal just for dressing differently, the net-beneficial course may (and often will) be to adopt some reasonable amount of flexibility in how the various schoolchildren dress.

However, that does not mean that the schoolchildren can wear whatever they want. It still is reasonable to expect a fairly close adhesion to a school uniform if uniforms are generally required. Where uniforms are not required, we still ask and expect that each student will wear something which is both presentable in polite society, and not disruptive (including by any political reference) to the other kids who are trying to study and learn. Just as athletes wear uniforms during both practices and official games, and as military personnel and first responders wear uniforms while on duty, and as businesspeople and politicians wear tasteful suits to official meetings, and as others of us wear especially-elegant outfits for formal occasions, among other examples, we agree to tone down our individual expressions during certain limited time periods when we come together as a team for some common purpose, to help ourselves and our colleagues to remain focused on whatever it is we're trying to do.

In sum, then, please be tasteful and non-disruptive when dressing for school, and we will endeavor to allow you a reasonable amount of latitude for individual expression, including by variation from the previous standard model of gender distinctions.

Question 710.5

Shall we take any position about models being pressured to starve themselves?

Yes, we strongly discourage it. First, the ultra-thin image which we still saw in some fashion catalogs as of Session 289 is not as universally appealing as some publishers may think. Second, even if it were, it makes little sense to keep marketing toward an ideal which many women couldn't realistically attain even if they wanted to. Makes far more sense to market to women of all shapes and sizes, and to glorify the beauty to be found throughout the entire multi-spectrum of body types.

Even if all that were not the case, though, there are plenty of models who are naturally slender and therefore do not need to undertake any harmful diets or other unusual practices, so we do not need anyone to try to achieve such a size/shape via any unhealthy methods, and we would rather not have it. We could recommend some method of ensuring that any girl applying for work as a model is living a normal and healthy lifestyle, but hopefully that will no longer be necessary: If we merely encourage all fashion catalogs and artistic publications to include a healthy array of diverse body types, then hopefully no aspiring model will ever feel the need to starve herself -- or do any other self-destructive thing -- in order to get work.

Subsection III-H-8: Restaurant Protocols

Question 711

Why do we ask that napkins be placed in the lap while dining?

Seems obvious to some as of Session 289, but apparently is not to others. There are two main purposes: One is functional, by keeping food scraps off the diner's clothing. Other is courteous, so that your fellow diners do not need to see your

balled-up greasy napkins while they are trying to have an elegant experience with you, just as we ask you to please keep your mouth closed while chewing, so that we do not need to see or hear any disgusting stuff.

Question 712

Could restaurant workers wait to clear stuff from my table until after I have left?

Sorry, not really. It probably is more efficient for them to clear stuff off in stages, so that they can rotate their time among their several tables, rather than work on a single table all at once while the other tables remain unattended. Besides, it's a hint that you may be staying too long, and denying other people access to your table, and/or requiring the waiter to check with you every few minutes even though you're not buying anything new. No change recommended as of Session 289.

Subsection III-H-9: Around the House

Question 712.7

What about this trend that we recently read, about millennials tending to eschew the 'top sheet' on a bed?

According to the article "Why Millennials Aren't Using Top Sheets on Beds", published on 30-Aug-2018*[*<https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/why-millennials-aren-apos-t-185000102.html>], some younger people have apparently been getting away from the classic model of reposing under a flat 'top sheet' covered by some number of fabric-based blankets. Instead, they "slip between the scandalous combination of a fitted sheet and a comforter-filled duvet."*[*As a reminder from Answer 661, the closing period may reside inside the quotation mark this time because it is part of the expression being quoted.]

Apparently, the top sheet tends to get kicked into a "dispirited wad toward the lower third of the bed", but the sleeper still gets the comfort of a linen-type cover with the duvet. The duvet cover is as easily washable as the top sheet (so the article attests, seems like a bit more work from our angle), so it is just as sanitary to use the duvet without any top sheet at all.

The fear here as of Session 289 is that some manufacturers will eventually begin (as the article goes on to describe) to put out bedding sets which do not include a top sheet, which would then need to be purchased separately, if it would still be available at all. This would be a problem for us who still prefer the classic model. We hope that everyone's differing desires can still be accommodated in the open market on an ongoing basis. Rather than simply let it go at that, though, we offer a point for everyone's consideration which the article does not mention.

It seems to be a premise of the article that any top sheet -- and maybe some/all of any added blankets -- must be fitted around the mattress (possibly with "hospital corners"), which of course requires some added time, and which may be contributing to the problem which the kids are experiencing of the top sheet tending to get kicked down during the night. We do not accept that premise.

Rather, at least for some of us, it seems both easier and more functional to lay the top sheet and any blankets on top of the mattress without tucking anything in. Cuts

much time from the morning bed-making process. Better still, when you do crawl into bed at night, you have the option of flipping your feet in such a way that the covers tuck under and around your feet, so that you're bundled up nice and snugly as in a sleeping bag, but at any time you can stick your feet out whenever they need a breath of cool air. Seems like the net-fastest and net-easiest route.

Even if you still prefer a comforter-filled duvet to a combination of fabric-based blankets, you still might consider trying it in conjunction with a top sheet which is not tucked around the mattress, and seeing how that works for you. Some of us really like the top sheets, and we are not eager to lose them.

Question 713

Which way should the toilet-paper roll be oriented?

Told you that we covered Everything.

According to the article "Confirmed: This Is How You Should Hang Your Toilet Paper", published on 4-Apr-2019*[*<https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/confirmed-hang-toilet-paper-203546225.html>], the original 1891 patent (illustrations are included in the article) for our common system of dispensing toilet paper expected (if not required) that the paper roll over the top away from the wall, as allegedly preferred at that time by 70% of the population.

Stated reasons for the preference include easier access and reduced germ exposure by not needing to move your hand all the way to the wall. We also cite as of Session 289 that it's easier on the knuckles over time if you do not need to impact the back of your hand against a wall one or more times each day.

The article goes on to assert that "The vehement 30 percent in the "under" camp counter that their position gives a tidier appearance and makes paper less prone to pet attacks".[*As a counter-example relating to Answer 661, the closing period here must reside outside the quotation mark, because it is not part of the expression being quoted.] For the latter, we suggest closing the bathroom door, or otherwise denying pet access to the toilet area. For the former, 'tidier' simply equates to whichever your personal preference is, so it is not really 'tidier' either way.

Rolling away from the wall seems to be the general preference already, and there are multiple reasons to prefer it, whereas we have not heard or read of any valid reasons to prefer the alternative, so everyone is asked and advised to switch your personal preference to the rolling-away-from-the-wall approach as applicable.

Question 160.1 (continued)

What can/should we do to combat terrorism?

Added in Session 289: Also on the subject of Terrorism, an attendee had suggested in October 1997 that we make it illegal for the President or anyone else to negotiate with terrorists, so that he/she would not be the 'bad guy', and so that it would not be possible for a terrorist act to work. The suggestion may not be effective, though, because some terrorists may not care about negotiation, but simply hope to intimidate citizens and governments with their actions, sometimes even at the cost of their own lives. Meanwhile, denying negotiation makes dialogue difficult, and we

need open and peaceful communication if we are to identify the root causes of the Terrorism against us, for only then will we ever truly solve the problem.

Subsubsection III-H-4-d: Advertising - Other

Question 707.5

How do we feel about unsolicited sales calls on our telephones?

While of course we could not immediately be certain as of Session 289 (maybe later), we yet felt pretty confident that we speak for pretty much the entirety of America (with the exception of the Advertising sector) in asserting that 'robocalls' stink. We are especially miffed at the ones which speak in Chinese or some other language which we don't all have yet. What makes those folks think that any of us would have the slightest interest in whatever they're trying to sell? Don't they know that we know that many of those calls are scams of some kind anyhow?

Well, apparently they still have been getting enough responses to make them believe that the effort is still net-worthy. And, while nobody to the Moderator's direct awareness had ever been happy to receive any of these calls, we yet allow for the possibility that someone out there may actually have prized the experience, in which case we wouldn't presume to seek to deny them the pleasure.

However, the rest of us should have a choice. When we receive a call from an undesired source trying to sell some crap that we don't want (or otherwise trying to scam us), even if we let it ring until it stops, we must at some point take the time to check what the call was, determine that it was from an undesired source, and delete the call and any voice message from our phone archive. We may also want to take the time to block that individual number, but the tactic appears to have little practical use, because they simply gobble up more numbers to call from. Because it prevents us from doing what we otherwise would be physically and legally able to do, even if only for a few moments, that still qualifies as 'injury' under our definition from Answer 13. And, while it may not be a 'natural' right (because critters get injured in Nature all the time), yet most of us are agreeing as a 'civil' right that citizens should not be injured against their will.

That being the case, we claim that we should have the option to set our phones to block automatically without any distracting notification all calls coming from anyone except those on our contact lists. However, while some devices or accounts may currently allow this option, not all do, so we strongly urge it for universal application.

Whenever you wish to add a contact to your approved list, it would be very easy to switch off the block-all option for a moment, ask the new contact to call you, set up the new contact, and then reset the block-all option.

Why don't all telephone manufacturers and carriers allow this option now? Is it because they simply are not aware yet of how much it would elevate the quality of our collective existence in this Universe? Or, is it because they are taking kickbacks from the Advertising sector to keep those options off of everyone's devices so that they can keep conducting their evil business? We don't wish to assume malicious intent for anyone, and we must imagine that the technology would easily be within their reach at this advanced stage, so we are defaulting that they simply haven't yet thought of it. If that is indeed the case, then we hope that they take their cue from

this document, and proceed apace to give us what we desire and are paying for. Any manufacturer or carrier which does not allow this option going forward, even now with the knowledge that this is something that most of us want, may then be considered and treated as malicious jerks, to be abandoned in favor of companies which are more sensitive and responsive to their customers' needs.

Question 481.3

If people may donate spare kidneys and other non-essential organs during their lifetime, then why may they not sell them?

Added in Session 289: This topic was treated in the fifth season of "L.A. Law". New associate Tommy connects new partner Grace with a kidney broker in order to save her friend's life, but the transaction is technically illegal, so senior partner Leland blows up (not 'literally', in accordance with Answer 654). Question which they never really resolved is, if this was the only way to save Grace's friend's life, and nobody else was directly harmed in the process, then why was it illegal?

Presumption is because it created a danger for the individual kidney seller, in that any eventual malfunction with her remaining kidney would be bad. But then, any malfunction in any of our other singular organs (heart, stomach, liver, pancreas) would also be bad. We do what we practically can to maintain wellness, and we seek medical care in case of any problem, hopefully before it becomes too severe to treat.

How much different is it, then, to gamble on a single kidney than it is to gamble on a single heart or stomach or liver or pancreas? That's a medical question, of course, and nobody at Session 289 was sufficiently qualified to answer it, so ordinarily we would be content to defer to the medical community: If they could cite for us some compelling medical reason why allowing ourselves only one kidney is significantly worse than having one each of most of our other organs, then presumably we could go along with their professional judgment, and allow the current laws to stand.

However, it is hard to do so in this particular instance, because we know from history that people donate their 'extra' kidneys to relatives and other qualifying recipients in order to save their lives, and this apparently is allowed under the law.

In each case, the donor is placing her life at the same level of long-term risk. In one case, though, she is realizing a financial benefit in addition to the satisfaction of saving somebody else's life, and suddenly that's illegal? Why? Who is being harmed or threatened who would not have been under a straight non-monetary donation?

The recipient? If they have that much money to spend, then they probably will be all too happy to part with some of it in exchange for not dying immediately. The recipient's insurance company? That's a maybe, but then the policy could limit the insurer's liability to whatever is found to be the 'usual and customary' rate for such transactions, and premiums could be adjusted accordingly. If it turns out that no organs are currently available at the standard rate, then the recipient would need to go through the brokerage process to locate someone who is willing to sell at a higher rate, in which case the recipient would be responsible for any overage beyond the policy proceeds, unless they have purchased excess liability coverage in advance.

In any case, everybody in the transaction gets what they want most. The organ recipient gets his/her life restored. The insurance company pays a limited claim, but

is able to charge higher premiums to offset and remain profitable. The seller realizes a substantial financial benefit which they might never derive from other sources. With that large financial benefit, the seller can purchase her own organ-replacement coverage, and become eligible for somebody else's kidney if ever necessary.

We certainly are not recommending this for the general public, of course, but neither are we presently convinced that either selling a kidney or brokering such a sale should be illegal, especially if no other options are practically available for saving the life of an individual who is willing to pay (either directly and/or with insurance) for the privilege of not dying immediately. Receptive to being convinced otherwise.

Question 694.2 (continued)

What else can Drivers do to improve traffic conditions in our communities?

p) If you have a large and/or complicated take-out order, please do the rest of us a favor, and walk into the establishment to place it in person. The 'drive-thru' lane was set up specifically as an 'express' lane for those of us who want to get in and out quickly, and who therefore are able to do so. Anyone who is sitting in the drive-thru lane when they know that they have a large and/or complicated order is abusing the privilege in our opinion. The cutoff amount for an order being considered too 'large' for drive-thru will need to change over time, until our currency reaches a stable level, as suggested in Answer 368, so for the present we shall need to rely on the 'honor system': If you know that you have a relatively large and/or relatively complicated order, please just do us the courtesy of staying out of the drive-thru.

q) If you need to merge within a highway of three or more lanes, you should make sure that no traffic is oncoming not only in your destination lane, but also in the lane on the other side. One reason is because an oncoming driver from two lanes over may also be seeking to merge into your destination lane, and maybe is not planning to signal (having not yet read this document), so you still could be merging directly into a collision. Even if the other driver is planning to remain on the other side of your destination lane, your suddenly merging over in his direction could freak him out, even if you are signaling your merge as requested, because for all that he knows you might not have read this document and therefore may be intending to merge two lanes over at once. It all comes down to leaving Big Open Space.

In sum, we all must share this narrow road, so it is in all our interests to tone down our normal aggressive tendencies, and to cooperate such that we all get where we're going with a minimum of risk and stress. That means leaving big open spaces everywhere, not ever driving in an unexpected place or manner, and communicating with all nearby drivers so that we all know what we're all doing at all times.

Question 437.5 (continued)

Do we have any product suggestions to be advanced by American industry?

Added in Session 289:

Spreadsheets

We like that modern spreadsheet packages allow us to post a 'comment' next to any cell of our choosing, but some funny things have still been happening with some of

those comments in certain spreadsheet programs. Specifically, sometimes the comment ends up scrunching to zero height, and sometimes it expands to be dozens or even hundreds of rows high. Also, sometimes the comment ends up getting relocated dozens or hundreds of rows/columns away. In all such cases, manual intervention is required which annoys us and wastes our precious time.

In an ideal world (which is what we are asking for with this document), each new comment would start a designated short distance from the corner of the applicable cell. It would start with a very small width and height, but expand horizontally with increased typing until the user hits the 'Return' key, at which time it would expand vertically. It could also be resized and repositioned manually as currently allowed. Once the comment is completed, it should retain that same width and height and position until it is deliberately changed, no matter what ever happens with inserting or deleting rows, inserting or deleting columns, resizing rows or columns, copying or moving ranges, or any other structural actions.

Accounting Software

In addition to allowing a date to be entered for each transaction, it would be helpful for some individuals and firms if there were also an optional field to record the time (probably as HHMM in a 24-hour format, Army-style) which may be shown on the receipt, and then if the user could sort all transactions within a given report by date first and time second in order to get everything into chronological order.

As it currently stands with certain programs, the user who wishes to record transaction time must enter it at the beginning of the Memo field, and then must either enter them all in chrono order the first time (very rare that we have all the receipts available to do that up front) or else copy certain transactions and delete the originals in order to create the appearance of chrono order (which can be risky and can temporarily mess up your bank reconciliations). Easier with a Time field.

Automobile Controls

Some cars have controls for the radio or A/C which are flush together with even height, and therefore cannot be operated without eye contact, which takes the driver's attention away from the road, which is bad. All dash controls should be identifiable and operable by touch only.

Some cars have signal levers which release when you want them to stick, and stick when you want them to release. Requires the driver to look back at the signal to see whether it is still operating after the merge has been completed, which takes the driver's attention away from the road, which is bad. Each lever should have one setting in each direction where it can be held manually for as long as desired but discontinued immediately upon release, and a further second setting where it will lock in place until it is manually pulled or until a full right-angle turn has been completed.

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This concludes the First Pass findings from the 289 in-person meetings conducted on Monday evenings between 1997 and 2019. Following points were added later from a combination of SIG correspondence, private conversations with Mensa members, personal reflection, and formal analysis during the Second and Third Passes:

Question 437.5 (continued)

Do we have any product suggestions to be advanced by American industry?

Added in April 2019:

Beer

Some beermakers (both in the US and elsewhere) seem to be harboring the false belief that the location of your breweries doesn't matter. It does matter. The taste of Newcastle completely changed when they recently moved their brewing operation from England to Holland, to some people's delight and other people's chagrin. Even if you use the same recipe and techniques and equipment, differences in flavor may yet occur from the different water that you are using, the different soil where your ingredients are grown, the different climatic conditions (temperature, pressure, humidity, etc.) surrounding your new plant, and other factors. If you simply think that switching to a cheaper location will reduce expenses without also reducing revenue, then you may possibly turn out to be mistaken. Location matters, so please consider very carefully whether you want to risk alienating your original customer base -- and destroying your business as a result -- by fundamentally changing the product to which they have been expressing their loyalty all this time.

For all products generally, please be more careful in considering whether you really want to change the design of your packaging, as occurred with Stouffer's and Bud Light shortly before April 2019. You might suspect that 'newness' will improve your sales, and if you have no new product ideas then your only opportunity for 'newness' is your packaging, so that might be your fallback if you have nothing else going on. However, you may be creating more problems for your business than you are solving: Changing your packaging may make it harder for customers to locate your products on store shelves, so some of them may suspect that you have gone out of business (or at least discontinued certain product lines), and so they might move on with their lives without you. Those who do still notice your repackaged product on the shelves might abandon you because they suspect that you have changed the actual product in some way, and they liked it before so they don't want anything different. Even if they know from your advertising that it's the same product in different packaging, some of them may see your repackaging as a desperate effort by a company which sees itself as a loser, and so they might abandon you on that basis. If a product and its packaging have been working well for decades (WD-40 is a great example), then we will keep buying the product forever as long as you don't change things. Changing creates a business risk, so choose wisely.

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We formally began our Second Pass in Session 290 (April 2019). During this phase, we reviewed the entire document of what we then called our "Executive Summary" but is now our "General Summary", meaning the numbered index of the most recent versions of our bare Answers. Primary aim of this exercise was to reconsider any suspicious conclusions. We therefore read through the whole document, marking in our 'blue book' (in this case a fourth spiral notebook with blue cover) any position statements which we felt needed an additional look, and then formally reconsidered each one in turn afterward. We also made some cosmetic notes (not detailed here) in anticipation of the Third Pass still to come.

Question 2 (continued)

Should we look only at isolated topics, or should we construct a 'whole agenda' covering everything?

Noted again for the Second Pass in Session 290 our decision to mix up all Questions with the most fundamental first.

Question 13 (continued)

What does it mean to injure someone else?

Noted for the Second Pass in Session 290 that our definition of 'injury' should include 'financially', but that perhaps it is implied in 'legally', so not changing for now.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual need to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

Noted for the Second Pass in Session 290 that we would need to review the 13 reasons originally cited in favor of Citizenship, and to see whether they all actually needed to be invalidated, and whether we could think of any more reasons besides these. Two of the seven reasons to eliminate Citizenship were already marked as needing to be researched further, so we could look again at those, and reconsider the three stated reasons to eliminate Citizenship. Also noted that we would need to review the three reconsiderations from 6/1999, 11/1999-3/2000, and 1-2/2002.

Question 220 (continued)

Shall there be one or more languages with which every resident/citizen of a given nation shall be expected to have some working familiarity?

Asked ourselves for the Second Pass in Session 290 whether we really need for each Nation to have exactly one official language.

Question 34 (continued)

What if we want to have a multilateral treaty, but one or more nations don't want to play?

Noted for the Second Pass in Session 290 that we should make sure that we have specified that each house of the 'international oversight organization' must approve any policy statement by a 2/3 majority, and to check with our 'Swedish doc'.

Question 42 (continued)

What functions should be handled at the Federal level, and what functions should be handled at State or Local levels?

Noted for Second Pass in Session 290 that this should be treated at the end of the process, after considering all substantive questions on which agencies should exist.

Question 43 (continued)

Under what conditions should certain federal land not be assigned to any State, but rather be named a Territory?

Previous note from Session 56 indicated that we would reconsider National Parks for the Second Pass, though we did not see an issue as of Session 290.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

Noted for the Second Pass in Session 290 that this was another premature treatment of which functions should go where, and that we should move this way to the end.

Question 642 (continued)

Shall we make any adjustments to when certain seasons begin or end, in order to make the year more balanced?

Added between Sessions in April 2019: But, if we begin the Baseball regular season in early April as we used to (it has recently begun in late March, which to us seems too early in the year), and end the World Series in late October (to squeeze it in from its current position in early November), then we are still covering seven months for the regular season and postseason combined. Is that too much? It is if we want to keep each major sport at a six-month seasonal cycle. If we cut the regular season to five months in order to allow a full month for the postseason, then that's only 153 calendar days (including the All-Star Break) for 162 games. We could cut the season schedule back to 154 games as it was in the pre-Division era, but then we'd need to redo the team schedule established in A639.3, which might not be horrendous, but which also might be unnecessary. On the other hand, we have heard from various players and managers and analysts that the longer postseason is stressing the endurance limits of numerous players, so maybe we should go back to 154 games after all. We could then allow between 5¼-5½ months to get those in (including a few days for All-Star Break), after which 2-3 weeks should be plenty for postseason.

Question 643.41

When should the All-Star Game of Baseball be played?

Added between Sessions in April 2019: If the regular season for Baseball covers the 5½ months of early April through late September, as decided in Answer 642 as amended, to leave 2-3 weeks for the postseason and still be done by mid-October, then the midway point of the regular season would fall on the cusp between June and July. Would that be a better spot for the All-Star Break than the current mid-July? It always seemed funny that they would place the break in approximately the middle of the season, but not exactly so. Seems to make more sense for teams to take a break at exactly their halfway points, so that they can apply what they've learned in the first half to the second half. Also seems to be better for the fans to have their All-Star breather exactly at the halfway point of the regular season. Why make anyone go more than halfway through the season without a break if you don't

really need to? In addition, moving up the All-Star Break by a week or two could tie it in more directly with the Independence Day holiday, so that both activities would be all the more festive. If no one strenuously objects for any good reason, then that will be our primary recommendation.

Question 644.4

How do we feel about the idea of 'September callups' in Baseball?

Added between Sessions in April 2019: We are opposed to the idea of 'September callups', where they expand the active roster from 25 players [later 26] to 40 during the last few weeks of the regular season, because the minor-league season typically ends earlier, and they want to give some minor-league players a chance to participate at the top level, while giving a rest to the main roster in advance of the postseason. Trouble there is that you are substantively changing the game, which is largely a test of a team's endurance, both through a single game (especially if it goes to long extra innings) and through a season and postseason. Smart managers will find ways to ration their resources to have healthy players available for long games and long seasons, and we make the challenge too easy for them when we provide them with a huge roster in the last month of the season. We should keep the active roster at the same 25-player level throughout the entire regular season and postseason, and we should apply the same rules for inactivating injured or poorly-performing players and replacing them from the minor-league levels.

Question 645.6 (continued)

Can we recommend at this time any improvements in Baseball statistics?

Added between Sessions in April 2019: Third problem is that both the Batting Average and the On-Base Average do not count when a batter reaches on a fielding error. We feel that at least the OBA should count those occurrences, because they are far better than strikeouts, for the batter has successfully put the ball in play between the foul lines, and with enough speed or spin or placement that it turned out to be a non-trivial play for the fielder to make. Basically, any time that you get on base without generating an out should count for the On-Base Average, because that's what the name of the stat implies.

Question 647 (continued)

Shall we continue to allow Boxing?

Added between Sessions in April 2019: Because we concluded that Boxing and MMA and other violence-based contests should not be broadcast on general-access television, it follows that they should not be advertised in any medium which is easily accessible to kids. It would just raise their curiosity, and make things awkward.

Question 108 (continued)

Should the results of any polls or surveys on any elections (including those on initiatives and referenda) be published close to Election Day?

Noted for the Second Pass in Session 291 (April 2019) that we probably should allow polls/surveys, but not within a certain number of weeks/months before the election.

Question 128.5

What specifications (if any) do we care to make as to the impeachment of the U.S. President and/or Vice-President?

Note added for Second Pass in Session 291; packaged as separate Q in Third Pass: It follows from Resolution #5 as adopted in Session 73 that any impeachment or other forced removal of an incumbent President should include the Vice-President, since they were elected together, and presumably subject to the same influences.

Question 126 (continued)

What is the motivation for any particular government agency to follow such principles?

Session 291: We are replacing 'feedback forms' with an online feedback registry.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Noted for the Second Pass in Session 291 that this would be deferred to Appendix D, following reference by a much later Question.

Question 232 (continued)

Are we sure that this [i.e., the creation of physical reference books for Language] is a justifiable use of Federal funds, considering that we are cutting so many other programs and services?

Not sure at all as of the Second Pass in Session 291 that we really need a 'Bureau of Language Services'. We are liable to get laughed at.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Noted for the Second Pass in Session 291 that National Parks should be rolled into 'Interior' or some other agency which covers all Federal lands and maybe Territories.

Question 150 (continued)

Under what circumstances -- if any -- should the U.S. Armed Forces initiate a military attack against another sovereign nation?

Added for the Second Pass in Session 291: Maybe we don't even defend our allies without Global approval. Our idea for the Swedish project is that we are all allies.

Question 160.1 (continued)

What can/should we do to combat terrorism?

Original finding was that it is "absolutely not necessary" to have a separate Department for Homeland Security, but we noted for the Second Pass in Session 291 that this might conflict with the budget model which we adopted later.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

National Forest land should be managed by the same agency which controls National Parks, not necessarily the 'Bureau of Asset Management', especially because they have no asset value if we are never going to sell them.

Question 166 (continued)

What emphasis -- if any -- should be given by any level of government to the preservation of so-called 'endangered species'?

Added for Second Pass in Session 291: We may need more national attention to species preservation than the "Some" which we suggested in Session 101, and especially should condemn Trophy Hunting.

Question 170 (continued)

Is it good to have Agriculture, Transportation, Energy, Labor, and Commerce in separate departments?

Noted for Second Pass in Session 291: As with Question 160.1, our findings from Session 101 also may mismatch with our later budget model.

Question 181 (continued)

What regulatory steps -- if any -- do we need to have in place with respect to import or export of goods?

Bureau of International Trade was noted in Subsubsubsection I-D-1-f-iii as belonging to the Department of Foreign Affairs, but we observed for the Second Pass in Session 291 that Q181 had been assigned in the 'black book' of preliminary ideas to the Commerce Department, along with Agriculture, Transportation, Energy, and Labor.

Question 184 (continued)

What functions or issues should be handled by the Department/Bureau of Transportation?

Noted in Session 291 to check later Sections on which jurisdictions issue regulations as to Seat Belts, Helmets, etc.

Question 258.1 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the State agencies listed in Answer 135?

Added for Second Pass in Session 291: Do we need State Commerce Department and Consumer Affairs Bureau to spot-check gas pumps if the Federal Bureau of Measurement Standards is doing it?

Question 258.4 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the County agencies listed in Answer 135?

Added for Second Pass in Session 291: Coroner's Bureau arranges for processing of dead bodies, but does not necessarily perform it. They can delegate some portion of the workload to private industry, as long as no problems result.

Question 258.7 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the City agencies listed in Answer 135?

Noted for Second Pass in Session 291 that we were having second thoughts about the panel's earlier decision to dump push-buttons for pedestrians at traffic signals.

Also suggested for the Second Pass that Motorcycles should not be allowed to proceed through a red light after having come to a complete stop.

Question 261.1 (continued)

What number of delegates should we have in each house of the National legislature?

Added for Second Pass in Session 291: Do we want to modify the per-Area house to follow State boundaries, or stick with strict latitude and longitude?

Question 45.1

What about Puerto Rico?

Noted for Second Pass in Session 291 that the previous Questions on Territories did not seem to have included whether Puerto Rico should be made a State. We therefore added this Question retroactively, with positive prejudice.

Question 275.5 (continued)

If the rules of the Legislature are such that a given piece of legislation must be approved by more than one house, then what should/shall happen if a bill gets amended by the second house into a form which is different from how it got approved in the first house?

Noted for Second Pass in Session 291 that we were preferring a later vision where each House handles only certain types of business, such that any bills passed by a given House would not need to be sent to the other Houses, though they can veto.

Question 314 (continued)

Is it appropriate for a statute of limitations to apply to certain types of crimes, such that no individual may be arrested and/or convicted after a certain number of years have passed following the alleged crime?

Added during Session 292 (April 2019) for the Second Pass: Raising any accusation after expiration of an applicable 'statute of limitations' may under certain conditions be deemed by the court as constituting 'slander', because it is equivalent to making a claim which cannot be reliably established in a court of law, in which case the accuser may be criminally and/or civilly liable, so we suggest that you choose wisely.

Question 418 (continued)

Of these basic types, which is the fairest method of taxation, or is it appropriate for more than one type to be levied at once by a single jurisdiction?

Noted for Second Pass in Session 292: Statement in what was then called our 'Executive Summary' indicated that we were discontinuing the Estate Tax. But, this turned out to be an element of our revised revenue model, so needed to look at that.

Question 527 (continued)

Suppose that a newly-pregnant woman decides that she wishes to have the baby, but the father disagrees: Who gets to decide?

Noted for Second Pass in Session 292: Why should the father provide the majority of financial support for children in the modern environment? Oh yeah, because the mom is doing all the work of pregnancy and childbirth.

Question 610 (continued)

Shall there continue to be such a thing as 'indecent exposure', either in person or over photographic media?

Noted for Second Pass in Session 292: Make sure that we are prohibiting any unsolicited e-transmission of pictures or videos showing nudity and/or sex.

Question 629 (continued)

For those personal-behavior laws which we find no longer to apply in our more-advanced society, shall we actively recommend that they be repealed at whatever levels they currently exist?

Noted for Second Pass in Session 292: Suggestion of a 'sunset committee' conflicted with provision from § I-E that all laws should automatically expire at a certain point.

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Session 292, conducted on 29 April 2019, was the last of our SIG meetings listed in the L.A. Mensa calendar, after more than 20 years. From this point, we conducted all our business on a correspondence basis, but we continued to use our traditional Monday time slots to advance the Second and Third Passes, as described hereunder:

Question 645.6 (continued)

Can we recommend at this time any improvements in Baseball statistics?

Added between Sessions in May 2019: Fourth problem is that runners are not getting credit for all their stolen bases, because of a concept called 'defensive indifference', which sometimes happens when there are two outs in the ninth inning and defensive team is well ahead. They apparently are more concerned with getting the batter out than with the runner possibly scoring. Two big flaws here: The defense really should not be 'indifferent' in the first place, because even if the run doesn't matter then the out certainly does; if there is an opportunity to get the final out by a runner trying to advance, then they really ought to be all over it. Even if they are 'indifferent', though, then the runner should still get credit for the stolen base, for there are plenty of other times when runners steal bases because the defense does not seem to be paying close attention to them; the runner is still helping the offensive team by advancing, and so should get all the applicable statistical credit for his successful efforts.

Question 644.3

Should we either encourage or discourage batters from breaking their bats or throwing any other manner of tantrums when they strike out?

Added between Sessions in May 2019: If you are determined to have struck out, then please don't throw a tantrum at the plate or in the dugout, and especially don't slam your bat or break it over your knee. For one thing, doing so helps the opposing team's morale, because they know that they have 'gotten' to you. It also hurts the morale of your own teammates, who now must stay away from you for a time instead of being able to interact with you as team members should. Finally, it wasn't the bat's fault that you struck out, and taking your frustrations out on the equipment shows gross disrespect for the craftspeople who built it. Anyone who does break a bat probably should be removed from the present game, and probably suspended for at least one game, during which time he should be encouraged/required to take a tour of a factory where baseball bats are made, in hope of acquiring a greater appreciation of the work which went into them.

Question 645.6 (continued)

Can we recommend at this time any improvements in Baseball statistics?

Added between Sessions in May 2019: Fifth problem is that pitchers sometimes get official credit for wins when they accomplished very little. A pitcher can record just a single out, while giving up any number of earned runs in the process, and still get credit for the win if his team regains the lead before the next pitcher comes in. It sometimes even happens that a relief pitcher can blow a save in the top of the ninth inning, and still get credit for a win if the team comes back in the bottom of the ninth. Credit for a win should go to the pitcher who made the greatest contribution to the team's success. In most cases (if needed, we will let the gurus come up with specific exceptions, as they love to do), the win should go to whoever pitched the most innings, for he probably would not have been allowed to remain in the game that long if he truly sucked in his manager's eyes, and his relative longevity must have made a large contribution to his team's success. If there is a tie for most

innings pitched, then it can be broken by number of earned runs allowed, number of total runs allowed, fewest number of batters faced, and/or some combination of other factors.

Question 263.3 (continued)

Any problems with introduction of legislation, and other business prior to committee referral?

Added between Sessions in May 2019: No leader of any house should have unilateral authority to block the introduction of any bill or other motion, as we recently observed happen with both McConnell of the Senate and Pelosi of the H.R. Certain motions which may be considered as 'special orders' (such as the Motion To Impeach some government official) may automatically take precedence over all the business items currently pending on the regular calendar, provided that they are supported for introduction (not necessarily supported in substance) by a certain minimum number/percentage of delegates, as duly determined by the Rules Committee of that house.

Question 709 (continued)

What limits -- if any -- shall we place on Genetic Engineering?

Added between Sessions in May 2019: Our limited support of genetic engineering includes the appropriate use of 'stem cells' to help generate replacements for injured body parts, or to provide some other direct medical benefit to an ill/injured patient. Anyone still harboring any hangup on such technology really should question which values are actually the more important, the preservation of innocent human life, or what they read in some book written thousands of years ago in another language.

Also added between Sessions in May 2019: However, we are not huge fans of using genetic engineering to create clones of any humans. As dramatized in the film *Multiplicity*, such actions can have unintended consequences, especially in the case of multi-generation cloning. We might change our position someday if it can ever be demonstrated to us robustly that the potential benefits significantly outweigh the potential pitfalls, but for now we are erring on the side of safety.

Question 589.1

What facts and/or skills and/or values will we want to teach in each of the subjects in each of the disciplines at the secondary level?

Added between Sessions in May 2019: Secondary school should include at least one elective in the Language track for languages outside of those in common use within one's own community, and particularly should include American Sign Language (ASL) wherever qualified instructors are available.

Question 180 (continued)

What functions or issues should be managed by the Bureau of Water & Power?

Added between Sessions in May 2019: In particular, the national Water & Power Bureau should monitor water-delivery systems throughout the nation, including all

pipelines, and step in to fix problems wherever local authorities appear to be unable and/or unwilling to do so directly, as with the situation which was plaguing the community in Flint MI for five years as of 2019.

Question 128.5 (continued)

What specifications (if any) do we care to make as to the impeachment of the U.S. President and/or Vice-President?

Added between Sessions in May 2019, pursuant to Resolution #5 as adopted in Session 73: Notwithstanding what some recent Presidents and their mouthpieces have publicly asserted, we claim that neither the President nor any other government official is 'above the law', or should be treated as such. If you want to have a totalitarian government, in spite of our earlier findings on basic government structure, as well as on the type of society that we want to have in America, then go on and do it somewhere else. However, for a large and diverse nation like America, which was founded and developed on the principle of governmental power deriving from the consent of the governed, it is critically important that we maintain certain limits on the power of the Presidency, and that we enforce those limits by any means necessary. This means that the President should be subject to Investigation, Impeachment, Indictment, Incarceration, and any other 'I-word', for any matter relating either to his exercise of Presidential authority or to anything else. To those who argue that subjecting the President to criminal prosecution may undermine the authority of the office, we politely counter that we create far worse undermining of our entire Democracy if we fail to do so when the need arises.

Question 645.3 (continued)

What else can we do to maintain/improve fan interest in Baseball?

Added between Sessions in May 2019: Eighth, TV networks which do not already do so might consider scheduling their coverage of different teams (especially on the Sunday 'late game' set aside for unconflicted viewing by the entire Nation) in proportion to the number of games which each team won during the preceding regular season. Knowing that this is the practice may provide an additional motivation for teams to keep trying to win even if they have already clinched all their home-field advantages or been mathematically eliminated from playoff contention.

Question 658.3 (continued)

What other words/expressions in our vocabulary do we feel should be either modified or at least clarified?

Kudos - added between Sessions in May 2019

Because this word ends in 's', many people think that it is a plural, in the same class as 'thanks' or 'cheers' or 'congratulations'. They therefore think that it is acceptable to form the singular of 'kudo', as when one person offers a single statement of acclaim to another. However, the English word 'kudos' actually comes directly from the Greek word meaning 'glory' or 'fame', and it is a singular construction, in the same class as 'pathos' or 'cosmos'. There therefore is no such thing as a 'kudo'.

Don't believe us? Here to back us up is the exact language from the Usage Panel for the 1981 hardbound *American Heritage Dictionary*:

Kudos is construed as singular in the choice of a verb: *Kudos is due him*. The singular term *kudo*, which is not acceptable in standard usage, is the invention of those who misconstrue *kudos* as exclusively plural.

Question 645.3 (continued)

What else can we do to maintain/improve fan interest in Baseball?

Added between Sessions in May 2019: Ninth, we are okay with some teams wearing colored jerseys and/or leggings in order to improve interest among their local fans, but part of the viewing experience is being able to tell clearly which team is visiting, so that it is easier for fans to tell whom to root for, and we have not always been able to tell that clearly. Insofar as it is not already being done, we should make sure that each visiting team should wear either a gray jersey or gray leggings or both, and no white garment. Home teams may do what they will.

Question 671.1

Is it appropriate to circumcise male children during infancy?

Added between Sessions in May 2019: We had recently heard of the websites circinfo.org/jews_against_circumcision and beyondthebris-dot-com as trying to reverse the age-old practice among the Jewish community. [Considered later.]

Question 375 (continued)

Once we decide how we are allocating credit, shall some portion of it (or all of it) be distributed in the form of physical currency?

Added between Sessions in May 2019: Until we completely phase out physical currency, we are recommending to dump Andrew Jackson from the \$20 bill. Even though he distinguished himself as a military commander during the War of 1812, and later as President, we have learned more in recent years about his mistreatment of local populations, so as with Columbus we really should be backing off of our historical veneration of him. We didn't learn until after we reached this decision that a movement had already been underway to replace Jackson with abolitionist leader Harriet Tubman, and that the rollout for the new bill was being delayed by the Treasury Department for questionable reasons; we certainly concur now that Tubman would be a fine replacement for Jackson.

Question 13.5

What about animal rights?

Added sometime much later than the original order, but before May 2019: The same natural rights which apply to humans also apply to all non-humans who possess the three requisite ingredients of Sense of Self, Will, and Sense of Victimization. (Otherwise, all these natural rights would have had to come into existence suddenly upon the appearance of humans at 11:59 on the geological clock, and this seems counter-intuitive.) In other words, non-human animals have rights, too.

It may be possible for some species to possess collectively most (and probably all) of the same natural rights and natural restrictions that apply to individuals, because Nature commits both beneficial and harmful acts to entire species (such as requiring parents to die as soon as they give birth, for the good of the species) as well as to individuals, and also because species can interact with other species just as we all interact with other individuals. However, in order for any species to have natural rights, that species must possess the same requirements (Sense of Self, Freedom of Will, and a universal Sense of Victimization when the rights are violated) as any individual would need, and our observation is that all terrestrial species fail to satisfy all three conditions, with the possible exception of modern humans. Other species may be said to have collective consciousnesses which drive both their common perceptions and their common reactions (based on the behaviors which we observe in certain flocks and schools and colonies and other large animal groups), but we don't see quite enough group awareness on the part of other species to conclude that any of them would feel a collective sense of victimization when any of their alleged natural rights are allegedly threatened, either by Nature or by some other species, although of course such an ability could evolve in some species later.

Human beings may be able to do that now, with their advanced intelligence and electronic social media, but against whom would we ever assert a violation of natural rights, and to whom would we offer such an appeal? We may or may not universally feel that an epidemic disease or oncoming asteroid or other foreseeable natural disaster as being an 'unfair' act on Nature's part *per se*, but we still would be moved to attempt to counteract such effects out of simple self-preservation. However, some time in the future, we might conceivably have some cause of action against an alien species, which case would then need to be referred to an intragalactic body such as the previously-fictional United Federation of Planets.

Added between Sessions in May 2019: For this reason, we join with the 40+ nations which have gone on record as opposing the display of trained animals (especially the Big Cats) in circuses or other public exhibitions, because we are now more collectively sensitive than we were to the Sense of Victimization which many (if not all) animals must feel as a result of their prolonged captivity, and of their needing to perform various demeaning 'tricks' in order to please their human masters. We also are heavily against trophy hunting, as described elsewhere in this document.

Question 574.6 (continued)

Any other suggestions on testing protocols?

Added between Sessions in May 2019: We are suggesting to emphasize 'open book' testing over 'closed book' testing. Memorization is really not all that important when certain facts and formulas can be looked up, and most people will tend to look things up in 'real life' more than they will rely on memories of their school years, so better to develop that skill -- and practice it in the testing process -- than to see how many dates or vocabulary words or other details can be committed to short-term memory.

Question 645.3 (continued)

What else can we do to maintain/improve fan interest in Baseball?

Added between Sessions in May 2019: Tenth, some teams don't display any fireworks except on certain days of the week or holidays, whereas other teams

display fireworks after each home run. It might help fan interest in the game if those teams who are willing/able to display any fireworks at all should do so after the home team wins, and only on those occasions. Doing it for every home run makes the fans look forward to the home runs, and not care so much about the game otherwise. Doing it only on Fridays or only on Independence Day makes the experience more about the calendar than about the game. It's all about the game. Focus on the game. Celebrate the game.

Question 645.6 (continued)

Can we recommend at this time any improvements in Baseball statistics?

Added between Sessions in May 2019: Sixth problem is how they determine which pitcher is charged with a statistical loss. Following is how the rule has been:

Rule 9.17(d): "A losing pitcher is a pitcher who is responsible for the run that gives the winning team a lead that the winning team does not relinquish."

In other words, it is the pitcher who gave up the last go-ahead run in the game.

This seems incongruous to us, and it seems to make the tag of 'losing pitcher' overly dependent upon not only how runs your offense scores, but also when in the game they score them. A pitcher can give up 8 runs, but if his team also gets 8 runs, and if the relief pitcher gives up only 1 run, then the reliever is charged with the loss.

Seems to us that the 'losing pitcher' is the one who caused (or allowed) the most damage. Damage in a game is counted officially only by Runs Scored, so the losing pitcher should be the one who yielded the most Runs.

It should not be 'Earned Runs', because a Run which was assisted with a Fielding Error still could have been prevented if the pitcher had either struck the guy out or precipitated an easier fielding play. However, if there is a tie for most Runs Allowed, then it can be broked by Earned Runs.

If there still is a tie, then there is an argument that we should go to some additional series of categories, such as Hits Allowed or Total Bases Allowed. Trouble there is that all of those categories which you could ever dream up can still be tied.

But, the one category which cannot be tied is the sequence in which you appeared in the game. For this reason, we suggest that the final tiebreaker (probably after Earned Runs, although we could be persuaded to accept one or more additional intermediate categories, if it can be demonstrated robustly that they are not too arcane) for 'losing pitcher' should be the one among the tied candidates who appeared the latest in the game. Reason why, even though the Runs Allowed have equal numerical weight, yet it could be argued that the Runs allowed later in the game were more meaningful for the game result, because they came at a time when the pitcher's team had less opportunity to overcome the deficit.

We see the counterargument against this approach, in that it makes starting pitchers more susceptible to statistical losses. For example, suppose that the starting pitcher goes 8 2/3 innings, and allows only two Runs. Most people consider that a pretty good game, but behold his team scored only two Runs on offense. Stopper comes in during the bottom of the 9th inning, and gives up a solo homer to end the game.

In this example, the relief pitcher would currently be charged with the loss, because he gave up the last go-ahead run. But, we would be recommending that the starter be charged with the loss, because he gave up more Runs than anyone else.

Again, we see the other argument: In terms of ERA (Earned-Run Average per 9 innings), the starter did much better, and the reliever did much more poorly. However, if the starting pitcher had been even better, or if his team had supported him better with more Runs Scored, then the situation of the final homer would never have arisen in the first place.

In sum: Don't want to be a losing pitcher? Don't allow any Runs.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual need to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

During our Second Pass in Session 293 (May 2019), and our fifth formal consideration of Question 21, we finally overturned our previous conclusions, and restored the element of citizenship to our model. Our reasoning was as follows:

Too many times it had come up in SIG questions originally placed later in our Outline (especially those regarding Flags and the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem) and various informal discussions that Citizens have (or should have) certain rights and responsibilities which other Residents don't (or shouldn't) have.

Even in an increasingly-global society, it is clear that most people still want and expect there to be distinct Nations with broad powers of sovereignty. As long as we have that attribute, the various Nations will naturally be in a level of ongoing competition with one another, at least economically, if not also in terms of political influence on the global stage, even after we finally rid the World of all war.

It follows that each Nation will have some kind of 'national interest' which it will want to protect, and that it will want to be satisfied that all its current Residents are either working actively to advance the national interest, or at least not actively opposing it.

It further follows that Nations may want to maintain a permanent class of Residents which they might consider to be 'Citizens', who have somehow demonstrably committed to support that Nation's interest above any others in case of any conflict or competition. In exchange for that commitment of 'allegiance' to the host Nation, the Nation may (and probably will) want to extend certain privileges to its Citizens, including in some cases the right to vote.

Residents who may have principal allegiances to other Nations, or who otherwise have not fulfilled whatever requirements a given Nation may have for 'Citizenship' may not be entitled to all the civic benefits which Citizens have, and may require more active surveillance during their residencies to make sure that they are not operating against the host Nation's interests in any way.

Different nations may establish different requirements for Citizenship, and accord different rights and/or responsibilities to its Citizens. They may also establish

multiple levels or 'castes' of Citizenship, where higher levels or 'castes' may entail additional requirements and/or be eligible for additional privileges.

We don't like the idea of 'dual citizenship', because the whole idea of the institution is to establish for the record which Nation has your primary allegiance in case of any conflict or competition with any other Nations. However, we imagine that there may be some circumstances under which someone might be a 'primary' citizen of one Nation, and a 'secondary' citizen of another. In theory, one could also be a 'tertiary' citizen of some third Nation, a 'quaternary' citizen of some fourth Nation, etc., but as a practical matter such designations can very quickly become very cumbersome to administer, so we don't recommend any more than two national affiliations for any one individual, and we are not overly fond of even that many.

Because citizenship is a status to be achieved, usually in consideration of some combination of privileges, it must be possible (at least in theory) to have not yet satisfied whatever qualifications a given Nation may have established for any of its Citizen classes. Maybe one can be considered a 'pre-Citizen' (whatever that means) at birth, but that would need to be for each Nation to decide. In any case, it also follows that one can be a Citizen of no Nation at all, either by choice or by lack of opportunity.

At least for America, if not generally for all Nations, full Citizenship should require a certain minimal knowledge of the Nation's laws and customs and civic institutions, so that those folks can understand what 'national interests' they are trying to advance or protect. Once you complete that certain minimal amount of education, you can be eligible to receive a 'Citizen ID' card which can possibly replace your Social Security card, for just in case that program ever gets dropped or renamed. You can flash that card whenever you are registering to vote (unless voter registration happens automatically upon issuance of the card), obtaining a work permit, applying for a job, enlisting in military service, or undertaking any other adult function where minimal education is both necessary and sufficient.

Americans have come to expect their children to enjoy at least some degree of Citizenship status from birth (if not earlier), even though they have not yet satisfied all the applicable educational requirements. However, we still want to motivate all our permanent Residents to obtain at least the basic level of education, so children who are not yet full Citizens probably should be treated as 'pre-Citizens' or 'associate Citizens'. Their parents presumably are Citizens, and assume responsibility for their children's actions until the children become adult Citizens on their own.

Also at least for America, if not for the whole World, we think that it's dumb to base one's initial Citizenship status upon one's place of birth. That approach creates a motivation for mothers to travel across a national border (sometimes at great risk to themselves or their children), simply in order to satisfy a technicality, and then return home immediately after they give birth. If the mother wants the child to be a Citizen or 'pre-Citizen' of some particular other Nation, then she should redomicile herself to that Nation, so that she can bring up the child within the other Nation's borders, and so that the child can be immersed in that new culture. If the mother is somehow unable or unwilling to redomicile to another Nation permanently, then her child must remain a Citizen or 'pre-Citizen' of the original Nation until some additional conditions are satisfied.

Therefore, while different Nations may specify different conditions for their different classes or 'castes' of Citizens, we suggest a default rule that any newborn child is assumed to be a Citizen or 'associate Citizen' of the same Nation of which her mother was a Citizen at the time of birth, regardless of the place of birth.

Once we reached this new finding in Session 293, we began to review the reasons why we originally considered dumping the institution of Citizenship. To recap, the Question was first addressed in April 1998, and took 10 months and 14 meetings to finish. We had identified 13 possible reasons for using Citizenship, but all were supposedly invalid for various reasons. We had also identified 7 possible reasons to eliminate Citizenship, of which 2 were deemed invalid, 3 were deemed valid, and the other 2 were not considered.

We now liked our current reasons for having the institution, whether they were previously reflected in the 13 original reasons or not.

First of the three stated reasons to eliminate (*viz.*, that eliminating would make international travel easier) now looked suspicious, because with our more recent terrorist experience (remember, we initially treated the Question prior to 11-Sep-2001) we may not want people traveling as freely across national borders as they do among the States, as hedonistically tantalizing as that prospect may at first appear.

Second of the three stated reasons to eliminate (*viz.*, that the institution arbitrarily locks out non-Citizens from the privileges accorded to Citizens) was definitely suspect, because it is not arbitrary to deny certain resources and services to non-Citizens, as long as the standards are applied fairly and consistently.

Third reason to eliminate (*viz.*, that elimination would encourage people to migrate to the more popular Nations) was also suspect, because people can still migrate to more popular Nations even while we still have Citizenship, as we have frequently observed in the 'real life'.

We had deferred two of the seven possible reasons to eliminate. One of those deferred reasons referenced the extensive procedures and paperwork associated with Citizenship, but we seem to be into that, at least in America, and in other Nations also. We might indulge in paperwork even without Citizenship, simply to know where people are living and (to some extent) what they're doing, but it seems to be more necessary (or at least more desirable) in our modern conflictive environment to have everyone's Citizenship status clearly established for the record.

The other deferred reason referenced the expense of border guards, passport/visa officials, etc. However, it seems that we need these expenses in our current adversarial environment, and numerous people would be fearful to drop them at any point, lest some nasty person take advantage of our relaxed defenses and tracking.

We found nothing in the original paragraphs of what we then called the 'General Summary' (including the three previous reconsiderations) to change our new position, but as of Session 288 all the discussions were not recorded in the General Summary as we later engineered, so noted that we could consider the topic further in the Third Pass, as we completed the previous transcript on a per-Question basis.

[We observed in the first part of the Third Pass that we still needed to address Questions 22-24 on basis of restoration of Citizenship to our model. Done later.]

Question 597 (continued)

Do we wish to question any of the freedoms granted to Americans by the Bill of Rights?

Noted between Sessions in May 2019: In addition to our original discussion from Session 270 on the role of the 'militia' as referenced in the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, Paragraphs 15 and 16 of Section 8 of Article I also mention the institution of the 'militia', and provide added clarification of the gun-control issue.

Specifically, Paragraph 15 provides that "The Congress shall have Power ... To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions". This tells us a number of things right here. It tells us that the Militia may not act independently, but rather only upon direction of the Congress. One might counterargue that giving Congress the power to call forth the Militia does not necessarily preclude other entities (including local officials or the U.S. President) from having and invoking the same power. However, a closer read of the phrase tells us that this argument does not actually apply. For, it is not that the Congress has the power to call forth the Militia, but rather to "provide for calling forth the Militia". This means (at least to our group, which admittedly does not include any experts in Constitutional Law, but we do have something of a grammar background) that they may set all the rules under which the Militia may be invoked. In other words, local officials and U.S. Presidents get to invoke the Militia only if Congress says that you can.

It also tells us that the Militia may be used both as a line of foreign defense and as a means of internally preserving Law and Order.

Paragraph 16 establishes that "The Congress shall have Power ... To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress". In other words, they are saying that Congress gets to exercise some direct control over the Militia, but that some amount of delegation to the States is also in order, provided that State officials continually follow "the discipline prescribed by Congress". Again, the Congress is in ultimate charge of the Militia, no matter how some may prefer it otherwise.

We have no objection in our group to keeping these provisions in place as they are, although we wouldn't mind if the language were clarified for the lesser-educated.

Question 352 (continued)

Given that life termination may not be inflicted for any one crime, no matter how heinous, due to the possibility of error, what number of years shall we set as a minimum, beyond which an accumulation of sentence minima shall constitute a waiver of the criminal's right to live, permitting the active termination of his life?

Added from SIG correspondence in May 2019: Idea was suggested that the sentences which add up to one's 'earliest release age' for purposes of possible capital punishment should include only those convictions which involved the death of other people, for no sentence should ever be worse than the crime which it seeks to

redress. We see this as a possible way to go, but we currently are leaning away from it. For, our model provides that no one crime can be punished by more than 20 years in prison, and that only a combination of several sentences (we currently have that the convict's current age plus the sum of the remaining terms must exceed 200 years) can be enough to trigger the death penalty. Thus, even if some or all of the constituent sentences were for non-capital crimes, it is not that the penalty is worse than any one of them, but rather that the penalty is equal to or (probably) lesser than the aggregate impact of all the crimes combined.

Question 549 (continued)

When a unilateral divorce happens to a couple with one or more children, who normally should get custody, or should it be shared?

Added in May 2019 from SIG correspondence: Child being placed for custody should have a voice as to where she prefers to live, and she should be represented by free public counsel who can focus on protecting the needs of the child.

Question 551 (continued)

What should the parent without custody have in the way of visitation rights?

Added in May 2019 from SIG correspondence: As with the earlier Question on custody, the child's preferences should be heard by the judge as part of the decision process, and in any case of any potential conflict the child should be represented by free public counsel who can focus on protecting her needs and rights.

Question 580.1

Should young people who have not yet completed our formal education programs be ignored by older and better-educated adults?

Added in May 2019 from post-meeting SIG correspondence: It was a common saying for a long time that 'children should be seen and not heard', and the input of even some young adults has often been dismissed because they have not yet acquired this diploma or that degree.

We feel that this is a dangerous trend on multiple levels. First, we know of some people who were able to self-educate on certain lessons well before that material was ever presented in their formal classes, so it is by no means impossible that a particular child may know something before we have gotten around to formally teaching it to her. Second, the fresh input of a young and energetic mind may sometimes actually be superior to the programmed responses of jaded adults. Third, we have observed over many years that numerous depressions and drug addictions and suicides have occurred amongst young people largely because they perceived (whether accurately or not) that they were being ignored and not respected.

It figures that those in the 'Establishment' will frequently tend to ignore and dismiss the input of anyone who has not duly completed all of their various indoctrination programs, because they generally don't like to field any challenges to their authority or the general *status quo* at all, and they specifically don't want to waste their time continually on explaining their positions to kids who are scheduled to get all those lessons later on in their educational careers. However, we should not allow their

implacable reticence to squelch the voices of young folks who care enough about our world to raise them.

To the contrary, a society is able to grow only if it changes some things on at least an occasional basis. When that happens, is it going to come from someone who has already been in politics for 30 years, has made a long living out of supporting the current regime, and might risk pensions or other benefits if the system ever changes in any way? Hardly. It will come from people who know the latest technologies and social trends, and who have nothing to lose by taking a fresh look at how we're currently doing things, and pointing out how we might be able to do things better, before we have a chance to program them all according to all the old ways.

By speaking out with their ideas and preferences, those young people are helping to shape the world which they want to live in, and in which they eventually will want to raise their own kids, so they have a vested interest in saying what they believe, and we would be doing a disservice to our society if we ignore them merely as a result of either chronological age or amount of formal education.

Question 258.4 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the County agencies listed in Answer 135?

Environmental Services - Waste Management

Added in May 2019 from SIG correspondence: It has come to our attention that some localities do not have enough free public toilets available for all their homeless populations. Our model expects there to be enough 'orientation centers' operating in large-population areas to house and otherwise assist our homeless, and of course these would include adequate toilet facilities. Until those are all completed, though, and until we can relocate all our homeless persons to those facilities, they still may be wandering around our streets and parks, and generally 'making a mess of things' because of a toilet shortage. We therefore recommend that each County with a sizable homeless population would do itself a big fat favor by arranging for adequate toilet facilities in its urban areas. Keeping those toilets clean, and monitoring them as needed to make sure that they don't get monopolized, can provide jobs at a modest-but-decent wage to those who are either unable or unwilling to perform any other kind of work. Pay toilets probably should be de-emphasized in future, because other elements of our model suggest phasing out physical cash completely, and because rigging toilets with debit-card capability might cost considerably more than the buck which we might charge to offset regular maintenance costs.

Question 437.5 (continued)

Do we have any product suggestions to be advanced by American industry?

Cellphones/Celltowers

Added in May 2019 from post-meeting SIG correspondence: One of our panelists raised a concern that cellphones and celltowers may be emitting more harmful radiation than we were previously led to believe. Insofar as this may be the case, we request that further studies be performed in this area, and the results made public with due dispatch, so that we can all assess further whether we need to make any additional changes in our technological lifestyles and/or infrastructures.

Question 283.8

What role (if any) should invocations have in our modern legislative environment?

Added in May 2019, following a couple of recent incidents involving legislative invocations turning into long sermons espousing selected political viewpoints, under a thin guise of prayer to a deity.

We get the original idea of conducting a group prayer at the beginning of each legislative session, as dramatized in the 1939 film *Mr. Smith Goes To Washington*. It is a moment of ceremony which helps everyone (including gallery visitors) to get into the right mood for the work to be done, and reminds everyone that they are dealing with important issues which must be handled carefully. The practice was much more relevant back in those days, when legislative chambers almost entirely comprised delegates of a single generation of a single gender of a single race, and when the range of religions represented was much narrower.

These days, however, with increasing recognition of the increasing diversity within American society, especially including with increased Congressional representation of the Muslim community, it is becoming less and less appropriate to conduct any group prayer before or during any legislative session, as though all the delegates affiliated themselves with the same religious tradition.

Besides, political messages and demographic diversity aside, even if you believe in the Deity to whom these folks are praying, and even if you believe that this Deity is actively listening to some or all of those prayers, it still doesn't make logical sense for the legislators to pray that they do the right thing. It is up to them to figure out what the right thing is, and it is up to them to do that right thing once they figure it out. It is not up to any god or angel or other transcendental entity to do that job. It is the job of the legislators who were duly selected by their constituencies to do that work and make those decisions. If they screw up at any point, then it's their own fault, not the fault of any transcendental entity, and the legislators don't get to weasel out of their responsibilities by noting that hey we prayed before that session so it's not our fault. Do your own job, or let someone else have it. If you need to pray before participating in a legislative session, then do it on your own.

All that being said, we still had not been planning to introduce this point in our SIG's agenda, because we deemed it a relatively small matter not worthy of our attention. So they take a few minutes for a ceremonial prayer, so what? What's the harm? Well, now we know it: It happened twice (that we know about) during the first few months of 2019 that the individual selected to render the invocation (could be a member of the legislature (as in PA Assembly), could be a guest (like Omar Suleiman)) seized the opportunity to make a protracted plea (ostensibly to the deity, but really for the attention of the other attendees) that the legislature should follow this policy or that one. Even if it is appropriate to have a group prayer at all, it certainly is inappropriate to turn it into a divisive and controversial message.

For all these factors combined, seems net-best to discontinue immediately the practice of conducting group prayers or invocations before or during any legislative session at any level of government, so that is now our group's position.

Question 314 (continued)

Is it appropriate for a statute of limitations to apply to certain types of crimes, such that no individual may be arrested and/or convicted after a certain number of years have passed following the alleged crime?

Following notes added in May 2019 from SIG correspondence, to discuss more fully our finding from Session 182: It generally should not be held against someone (either criminally or just socially) if he committed a bad act a long time ago, but has lived a cleaner life in recent years. That's why driving infractions drop off one's record after a certain amount of time. A lot of us make mistakes when we're still growing and learning, but many of us eventually 'clean up our act', and can still serve as useful and trustworthy members of our society. Others will keep doing the same bad acts over and over again (Weinstein? Cosby? Spacey?) until they die or get caught, and those should be the ones who get our principal prosecutorial attention.

We are also hearing more about attempts to eliminate statutes of limitations. People seem to be overcompensating for the fact that many bad acts went unreported for many years, and their latent feelings of vindictiveness seem to motivate them to ignore all legal protections which we previously held in our society. While it is also a tricky point which may warrant further meditation, our group's current feeling is that this is a dangerous trend, which we hope will dissipate soon, and rependulate to a happy legal medium. Whole reason for having statutes of limitations is that evidence (including personal testimony) degrades in reliability over time, and that it would be improper to convict or penalize someone on the basis of an unreliable prosecution. Some people still raise these accusations from long-ago periods, however, even when there is no realistic chance of criminal prosecution, simply to destroy another person's life. We find this all to be a big problem, and we already have a lot of words in our document about it, and we may add more. Bad acts should be reported and prosecuted promptly, or else the privilege is waived, and it should be considered slander to raise any accusation which cannot be reliably proven in a court of law.

However, this conservative/libertarian position is likely to alienate some of our potential audience, who again seem to be highly focused these days on calling out anyone who ever committed any level or variety of sin in his entire life, so we are anticipating some conflict there. Hoping that we establish enough credibility in some other 'safer' positions of ours (no war, no bullying, no income tax, no daylight saving, etc.) that people will yet consider our more controversial stances actively.

Question 437.5 (continued)

Do we have any product suggestions to be advanced by American industry?

Public Telephones - added from SIG correspondence in May 2019

Totally understand and agree that we don't need nearly as many pay telephones as we did in the 'Superman' era, because so many more people now carry mobile communication devices on a virtually-umbilical basis. However, we still should have a few machines around as spares, especially in crowded places such as shopping malls and airports and train stations, in case people run out of battery power or they're in a 'dead zone' or their carrier gets clogged or they have some other technical problem preventing their mobile devices from operating normally. We also should still have at least one at every post office, so that there is usually one within

possible walking distance of any urban spot, not only for mobile users who currently have mobile problems, but also for individuals who for any reason (including sensitivity to cellphone radiation, as mentioned above, or maybe they just don't use phones often enough to make a monthly plan economically worthwhile) do not carry any mobile devices at all. By all means do charge a reasonable amount for usage, to at least partly offset the cost of maintaining the equipment and carrying the calls, but please don't make the rates so high as to negate the convenience of keeping those units available as a public benefit.

Question 220 (continued)

Shall there be one or more languages with which every resident/citizen of a given nation shall be expected to have some working familiarity?

As to the general principle established in Session 30 that each nation should have one and only one 'official language', we reconsidered that decision as part of the Second Pass in Session 294 (May 2019), as described in the following paragraphs:

We don't now see why we should require each nation to have exactly one official language. It may be more convenient for us visitors, but we don't have to live there, and it should be up to the people who live there to decide what official language(s) they may wish to have.

We may get to override national sovereignty with our global 'eminent domain' when it comes to issues which directly affect areas of the world outside one's own national borders, and maybe which involve some kind of heavy-duty human-rights violation. In any case, we perceive that the selection of one or more official languages has low enough of an impact outside a nation's borders that it probably does not fall within the scope of whatever 'eminent domain' we may have at the global level.

In short, it's not any of our business.

We originally treated this matter as part of Question 21, specifically at the end of Session 30 on 5-Oct-1998. Notes indicate that the concept of one national language came from an earlier version of our model, so a premature entry in our 'black book' of preliminary ideas may have skewed the decision.

One reason given in the original discussion was that we don't want to have to print everything in multiple languages, except in airports. However, we now don't see this to be a particularly big deal, as long as private companies are not required to present advertising or nutritional information or anything else in multiple languages, but are allowed to do so in any combination of languages in different areas of the community according to demographic prevalence.

Second review of the Question in the normal sequence happened in Session 120 on 24-May-2004, but one attendee rightly objected to the fuzzy phrasing of the Question (which did not mention the expression 'official language', but instead only referenced "one or more languages [with which] every American shall be expected to have some working familiarity"), so we shall need to clean that up.

In that session, we read the notes from the 'black book', so we read them again in Session 294. All the points make sense to recommend that each nation select only one language for government documents, traffic signs, emergency management,

nutrition labels, etc., because things would otherwise be cumbersome and expensive, and sometimes even dangerous. However, that still would be a recommendation, and not a call for global compulsion, but it still appears to make sense for America.

During the reconsideration of the above findings as part of the Second Pass, we confirmed that we are still recommending that American English be the one and only official language for America, partly because we already have so much written in that language -- including our Constitution and other legal documents -- that it would be ridiculously upsetting to switch to any other official language now, and also because we are way too diverse to select any one language as a second official language. However, each other nation may make its own choice.

Question 277.2 (continued)

Is there any other business which should require other than a simple majority?

Preceding finding reconsidered as part of Second Pass in Session 294: Original decision from Session 144 was that any legislative decision can be reversed by a simple majority after 24 months, after we have seen whether it works and have had a chance to assess any problems. Before 24 months, we don't want to be changing back and forth after each election, but a 2/3 majority is sufficient to show that we have new information and/or a particularly big shift in community sentiment. This concept seemed sound in retrospect. We had merely wished to cross-reference with what we decided much later for the houses of the 'Earth Congress' as proposed to the Global Challenges Foundation in 2017. Subsection II-E-4 of that document established that "any previous house action ... may be reversed by a 2/3 majority of the entire assembly", so we're good. No change.

Question 43 (continued)

Under what conditions should certain federal land not be assigned to any State, but rather be named a Territory?

We had decided in Session 43 that such areas would include national parks, federal buildings and grounds, the central government district, and any area unable to manage itself as a State. We modified this finding for the Second Pass in Session 294, concluding instead that a separate Territory must be large enough that people who work there actually live there, and that there actually is a substantial permanent residential population, as distinct from military bases, where many personnel reside only temporarily if at all. Few (if any) people live at national parks or within federal office buildings, so it makes little sense to manage such areas as Territories, and provide them with the same level of government services as actual States manage for themselves, and as the Fed needs to provide to larger Territories such as Puerto Rico (until it becomes a State) and (as currently named) the District of Columbia.

Question 109 (continued)

What sort of time frame would be considered most appropriate to prohibit the publication of poll/survey results?

We had found in Session 60 in favor of having no election-related polls to be published prior to Election Day at all. However, we reconsidered this finding as part of our Second Pass during Session 294, as reflected in the following paragraphs:

Poll policy was first addressed in Session 60 on 18-Dec-2000, when we addressed 24 Questions in one night, so maybe we didn't give the matter the treatment level that it deserved. However, the original note from that session appears still to make sense, that we "don't want polls published too close to Election Day" [emphasis added], not specifying a timeframe, but probably not needing to do so, because that might change over time from experience and with evolving media conditions.

General Summary was inaccurate when it said that "no polls or surveys pertaining to an election should be published during -- or at any time prior to -- Election Day".

We do now still want some moratorium on polls/surveys during some period prior to Election Day, so that people have enough uncertainty about the outcome that they will have motivation to go out and vote in order to help influence it. But, can we get away with enacting and enforcing (somehow) a complete ban on all polls/surveys after the candidates have been determined? Even if we can, do we want to?

Surveys can be useful for incumbent politicians, to give them a better idea of whether they should maintain current policies and practices, or whether they should change something somewhere. However, in an ideal world (which is what we're trying to create here, isn't it?), polls as to candidates for an election should not be relevant, because we want each voter to make up her own mind based on her own feelings and readings and research, and not to simply follow or oppose what other people want. On the other hand, this modern American culture appears to be very poll-driven, and might not accept a complete ban on election-related polls from the date that the candidates are decided. Even if they would, on what basis would we decide upon some singularity of time which should be poll-free? Should it be two weeks? Three weeks? Six months? How would we decide, and why?

Question was further re-examined in Session 295 (May 2019), as follows:

The timeframe before Election Day for moratorium on any polls/surveys relating to candidates may need to change over time, according to evolving technology, changing political climate, shifting public reliances on polls/surveys generally, and other factors. We therefore don't need to decide a hard timeframe at this point.

For the present, we feel that it should be at least two weeks, as the minimum amount of time which might be needed for a trailing opponent to take the lead, or for a leading candidate to tank. However, we can very easily be persuaded to accept a longer moratorium, if we think that the public will tolerate it, even as far back as the final determination of which candidates will appear on the final ballot.

Prior to that determination, though, polls/surveys can be useful in helping to determine (however that process might happen) who should be ending up on the final ballot, so they should be accepted for a public benefit.

Question 232 (continued)

Are we sure that this [i.e., the creation of physical reference books for Language] is a justifiable use of Federal funds, considering that we are cutting so many other programs and services?

In our Second Pass review during Session 295, we found that we had already changed our mind about having a 'Bureau of Language Services', as discussed in

Answer 650, which was an element of Section III-F on Language. We re-read those notes at this time, and we found that they turned out to be pretty damn good.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Following additional changes were effected for the Second Pass during Session 295:

'National Parks' was originally placed in the Department of Domestic Affairs, because we no longer had an Interior Department. Domestic Affairs included (but was not limited to) Agriculture, National Parks, and Territorial Administration as bureaus. 'Language Resources' was another bureau, but had been removed four months before the Second Pass. There were 12 other bureaus in total, including National Parks. We considered for the Second Pass during Session 290 that this may be a lot, and it moved us to reconsider the entire Federal structure.

Domestic Affairs included a bureau of 'Business & Securities', but we found that to be a better fit under Finance, so moved at this time.

Copyrights/Patents is also largely a financial function, so moved to Finance.

We generalized 'National Parks' to 'National Lands', to include Forests and other properties. Changed again to 'National Parks & Forests', because of being more descriptive and less kooky-sounding. [Changed back in Third Pass.]

'Environmental & Consumer Protection' was in 'Health & Safety' instead of 'Domestic Affairs'. Could we have that agency there while Agriculture and National Parks & Forests and Domestic Trade and Business/Securities exist in different departments?

Come to think of it, we never were big fans of the 'Department of Domestic Affairs', partly because the name is so all-encompassing, and also because so many other operations in other departments are also 'Domestic Affairs'. We figured that it was now time to break up this department, including by restoring a Department of Interior to manage all our physical lands. We therefore placed National Parks & Forests as a bureau within Interior.

On the other hand, one reason why we had 'Domestic Affairs' was for some place to put our Arts bureau, which didn't fit well in other departments which we then had.

We then figured that maybe we could extrapolate 'Health & Safety' to be 'Public Services', which then could include Arts.

'Environmental & Consumer Protection' was then broken up. Consumer Protection was moved to Public Services, and Environmental Protection was now in Interior.

Census & Statistics now in Public Services. Domestic Trade moved to Finance. Public Information and Social Services moved to Public Services. However, now fuzzy to have 'Social Services' as part of 'Public Services', since the names are so similar, so we changed the bureau name to 'Economic Relief', which is also less

euphemistic. But then, it overlapped poorly with 'Disaster Relief', so we needed something else, and settled on 'Economic Aid'.

In case it was not previously mentioned with sufficient clarity (or at all), 'Asset Management' should not include National Parks & Forests, because they are not Assets, in that they have no market value because they are not for sale.

Changed the 'Infrastructure Maintenance' bureau under Administrative Services, so that nobody thinks that it involves any facilities outside of our Federal offices. Decided to call it 'Facilities Management'. At this point, we were pretty happy!!

Question 171.5 (continued)

What should our timber policy be?

Position was modified in the Second Pass (May 2019), as a result of our reevaluation of Question 135: Forest land can still be sold or leased to private commercial organizations under the stated conditions, but we would need to make sure that we maintain a certain number of National Forests which are permanently protected from commercial access. The lands which are available for sale or leasing can be managed by the Bureau of Asset Management within the Department of Finance, or alternatively by the Bureau of Agriculture (since it involves harvesting) within the Department of the Interior. Latter recommendation seemed better, so that both the National Forests and all other federally-owned forest land could be managed by the same agency with a common strategy and command. We later tweaked the model further, and established a Bureau of National Parks & Forests within the Interior Department. We observed in the Third Pass that this structure belies the point made in Session 102 about National Forests and National Parks being materially different in scope, but that was before our model restored the Interior Department, which would cover all land within our borders, however any portion of it may be owned or purposed. Agriculture should be more about what we eat, so okay for the Parks & Forests to be managed by a separate Interior bureau.

Question 42.1 (continued)

What if a wilderness area crosses a State boundary?

We changed our position during the Second Pass, as a result of our reevaluation of Question 135: It is (or, at least, can be) meaningful for a State boundary to pass through a Federal wilderness area. The responsibilities of administration can be split on a case-by-case basis between the State which would normally conduct them within each such region and the Fed which normally conducts such functions for its own lands. Similarly, the legal restrictions applying within that region can be either those designated by the State or those designated by the Fed or (most likely) some kind of hybrid.

Question 150 (continued)

Under what circumstances -- if any -- should the U.S. Armed Forces initiate a military attack against another sovereign nation?

We confirmed and clarified our findings from Session 96 when we reconsidered Question 150 as part of the Second Pass during Session 295, as follows: We will not

attack other nations who did not attack us, unless as part of an i.o.o.-sanctioned operation. For, it is not for us to decide which nation was in the wrong, nor to decide what responsive action (if any) is called for. That should be a decision for the global governance, which presumably can assess the situation more objectively and more removed from the desire of certain national politicians to impress their citizens with demonstrations of military force, whether justified or not.

Question 160.1 (continued)

What can/should we do to combat terrorism?

Original discussion on the subject of Terrorism happened in Session 98, and asserted that the Intelligence bureau could identify any terrorist threats, then notify the Air Force to knock them out, but we saw in Session 295 that this causes two problems:

First, our intelligence is not always so reliable (recalling the whole 'Weapons of Mass Destruction' (WMD) debacle), so we really should be seeking advice and permission from the global governance before initiating any military strikes against another nation. They can review the evidence more objectively, like a judge who issues an arrest warrant after the police have made a convincing criminal case to her.

Second problem with the original discussion is that some sources of terrorist threats may exist within our own borders, in which case it may not always be prudent to have the Air Force knock out those targets. Would be better in many cases to have ground forces taking control of the situation, in order to minimize civilian losses and other collateral damage.

However, we should not maintain a separate Branch of uniformed personnel to be 'on call' in all areas in case of any internal threat. To the contrary, that's part of what the National Guard has always been for, so the Bureau of Homeland Security could under certain conditions activate state National Guard units and other local militias when needed. Such mobilizations may need to require permissions from the leadership of the Defense Department, and possible higher authority as well, because (as in the case of *Dr. Strangelove*) we don't want lower-echelon officials making decisions which can cause widespread damage to the world around us.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Further notes added for the Second Pass during Session 295:

It seemed to be only in the Session 77 notes from November 2001 that 'Asset Administration' (later 'Asset Management') would include Gold Reserves, Federal Lands, Tax Foreclosures, etc., on the suggestion from a certain non-author panelist. However, by Session 295 we had concluded that Federal Lands are not really Assets, in that they are not for sale and therefore can have no market value. Within this context, it makes far more sense to treat National Parks & Forests under our restored Department of Interior, both for their own beauty and for their contribution to our ongoing environmental health.

We therefore found at this time that we needed to modify the second paragraph of Subsubsection I-D-1-c in what we then called our 'General Summary' but is now our Final Report. Paragraph also included a reference to timber resources needing 20-50 years for renewal, so that conversation must have happened at some previous time. Paragraph also suggested that some Forest land can be sold or leased to private commercial orgs, and we now guess that this can still happen, but then that would belie the premise of National Forests not being for sale and thus having no asset value. We therefore should distinguish in our writing between Federally-owned forests which maybe can be sold or leased for timber harvesting under certain conditions (to be managed by the Agriculture Bureau, since it involves harvesting) and 'National Forests' to be maintained perpetually without timber harvesting.

Either way, though, because we are talking about management of actual land within our American borders, the management should be happening within the restored Department of Interior.

Question 166 (continued)

What emphasis -- if any -- should be given by any level of government to the preservation of so-called 'endangered species'?

Our position reached in Session 101 was modified for the Second Pass during Session 295. We did not perceive this issue at that previous time as being as much of a problem as it later appeared to become, especially with all the more recent 'trophy hunting' of various defenseless animals. Also, we had more recently resolved to legislate and enforce this matter at the global level, under the Environment Committee/Council of the House of Territories, because such issues transcend national borders, so it's not really within the purview of national governments, except to assist the global governance with local enforcement, including by allowing/facilitating apprehension of known violators. In our case, we probably would rely on the U.S. Marshal's office, so that we don't need to bug our military branches or National Guard.

Question 42 (continued)

What functions should be handled at the Federal level, and what functions should be handled at State or Local levels?

While packaging the results from Session 295, we noticed our original finding on the 'Bureau of Indian Affairs', and changed it on the spot.

We had decided in Session 90 that we should not relegate Native Americans to 'reservations' or otherwise treat them separately. We changed our position for the Second Pass, on grounds that we trampled their territories and provided some tracts of land as partial compensation, that they continue to deserve a level of protection and autonomy on those 'reservations', that they did not ask to be part of a "free and fully-integrated society" with their European conquerors, and that they are Nations with whom we should maintain cordial diplomatic relations. We therefore decided to restore this agency to our revised structure, but also decided that it should be changed from the racist and dehumanizing 'Bureau of Indian Affairs', to the more respectful 'Bureau of Indigenous Relations'. It should not be part of Foreign Affairs, since those peoples reside on what is generally recognized to be American soil, so we

found that it fits best with the Interior Department which we had recently restored to our Federal structure.

Question 170 (continued)

Is it good to have Agriculture, Transportation, Energy, Labor, and Commerce in separate departments?

Revisited during Session 296 (May 2019) for the Second Pass:

Original vision was that Agriculture and Transportation and Energy and Labor and Trade all should be in a Commerce Department, since they all have commercial applications. However, that was before we restored a Department of the Interior in the Second Pass, so we now prefer for Agriculture and Transportation to be there. Then, the agency in charge of Commerce could focus more on actual financial issues.

We currently had Transportation as a separate Department (to include Highways), Domestic Trade under Finance, and International Trade under Foreign Affairs.

In all our shuffling of agencies over time, at some point we inadvertently dropped any agency relating to Energy, after we previously had it in Domestic Affairs, now broken up. Our 'black book' entry for Question 178 asserts that Energy is a quantity to be produced and sold and consumed like any other, but we now feel that it is distinct enough to be placed in with Science. We want scientific experts managing Energy production and distribution, more than we need folks with simple financial background, so we now added it as a Bureau within the Science Department.

Question 178 (continued)

Does there need to be any Federal agency concerned with energy?

Established while revisiting Question 170 for the Second Pass in Session 296 that there should be an Energy agency after all, and we now have it as a Bureau within the Science Department.

Question 170 (continued)

Is it good to have Agriculture, Transportation, Energy, Labor, and Commerce in separate departments?

Labor had dropped off our radar completely in the First Pass, except for statistical analysis, which was rolled into Census & Statistics within the Department of Public Services. If we now put it back under Finance, then folks might perceive us as considering our labor force to be a mere component of our economic cycle.

We have Occupational Safety as an agency within Public Services, so some might ask whether we need anything for Labor beyond that. But, what if we have a general strike someday? Who will speak for the government? That possibility (which probably needs to be rolled out into a formal Question) assumes/suggests a nationalized business environment, where government can dictate wages and other working conditions beyond occupational safety, and so maybe we wish instead to place this burden on the business owners who created the problem.

On the other hand, we can't allow the billionaire capitalists to set all their own policies, and thus exploit the working classes, who may or may not have sufficient protection from their respective unions. Besides, even if new statistics suggest some change to the overtime cutoff or some other factor relating to Labor, then will our Census & Statistics agency step forward and demand/enforce the change? Doubtful. It should be the Finance Department which solicits and utilizes the data as needed.

In order to mitigate the perception of reducing labor to a mindless economic component, the bureau name within Finance should be 'Labor Relations', giving more respect to Labor as a community with whom favorable relations are important, but also establishing parameters to prevent Labor from getting everything that they want. Even if the Bureau has little to do in real life, it's a good look to have it on the board, for otherwise people will look at the model and prejudge it incomplete.

Question 258.4 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the County agencies listed in Answer 135?

We reviewed our decision from Session 131 for the Second Pass during Session 296, finding that State consumer-protection agencies may spot-check gas pumps and other instruments which dictate how much people pay for various commodities, even though the Fed also had this item on its plate, because the Fed might not get to everything on a sufficiently-timely basis, whereas local folks may be able to inspect more frequently, focusing on the instruments used by local customers. If they find an irregularity, then they can suspend the business from operating within their State, and they can refer their supplemental finding to the Fed for national investigation.

Question 258.7 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the City agencies listed in Answer 135?

We overrode our Session 134 finding about Traffic Light buttons for the Second Pass during Session 296, on the grounds that button programming can actually allow pedestrians to cross more quickly than they might be able to if a button were not there to tell the system that a pedestrian is now waiting to cross the street. Besides, we did not originally consider visually-impaired pedestrians who rely on button mechanisms which announce in words when it is the pedestrian's turn to cross.

We also overruled our Session 133 conclusion about Traffic Light Sensors for the Second Pass during Session 296, finding instead that motorcycles should not be allowed to cross a red light under any circumstances. Motorcycles are harder to see than regular cars, and an impact can cause even more damage, so if anything they should be subject to stiffer penalty for violation. If a particular community feels from experience that motorcycle crossing can safely happen more frequently than currently allowed, then they can change the red light to a flashing yellow or something, to allow all traffic to attempt to cross after yielding to other traffic, but please consider any such change very carefully.

Question 261.1 (continued)

What number of delegates should we have in each house of the National legislature?

We reconsidered our model for the Second Pass during Session 296.

We saw no reason to challenge our original calculation of 240 delegates for the per-Area house, and 600 for the per-Population house. However, we are now preferring that districts in the per-Area house follow existing State and County lines, rather than latitudes and longitudes, partly because it follows the same model as the I.O.O. structure which we enhanced for the Swedish competition in 2017, and partly because we don't want to face the possibility that a given line of latitude or longitude runs through someone's city or someone's house.

We can keep the latitude/longitude model available as a secondary recommendation, but doing it by County should be much more acceptable to everyone, so that's now our primary. We needed now only update the details.

Previous notes for Question 261.1 were recorded in Session 135 on 25-Sep-2006 and Session 136 on 27-Nov-2006. To refresh our recollection, Session 135 notes for Question 261 established that the Moderator was not the one who had suggested the 3-house model for the American legislature; that came from a certain other panelist who was attending her first meeting! We had found her reasoning very powerful, that large areas like Alaska which are rich in natural resources are woefully underrepresented in Congress, allowing more urban interests to rape those areas to our collective long-term detriment.

We were having trouble during Session 296 locating anything in those notes about the 240 delegates or the 2°x2° districts which had by that time been added to what we were then calling our 'general summary', so they must have been added later. However, we didn't see a "(261.1)" note for reconsideration or augmentation anywhere in the 'blue book' from before when we started Section I-F. Noted that we would clean it all up for the Third Pass, but for now we relegated the 2°x2° to be our secondary recommendation, if not completely dumping it. [By the end of the Third Pass, after having transcribed all the remaining notes from the original meetings, we found that these elements had been introduced in Session 144, but that we had not properly annotated our 'blue book' with the corresponding Question number.]

This was odd: The 1993 atlas which we had evidently used as an earlier reference source (and which apparently had been lost by the time of Session 296) showed 3,787,425 square miles for the U.S., but a 1997 version showed only 3,536,342! Matter was settled by our *World Almanac* from 2007: The 3.5 figure represented only Land area, whereas the 3.7 figure included Water. We could include Water for needing to be observed and protected, but we could also exclude it on grounds that no humans live there. Tell you what, we'll compromise, and meet close to the middle at 3.6 million square miles, leaning toward the non-Water measurement, but really to assign to a round number for a target area per District, so with a delegate count of 240 each District would cover about 15,000 square miles.

World Almanac showed a large variation in County sizes, most between 500-1000 square miles, but some below 200, while San Bernardino County in California was over 20,000 square miles and Coconino County in Arizona was over 18,000. We therefore figured that each State should decide whether to break up those Counties or make other Districts smaller.

There are numerous ways in which we could arrange each State's allocation of per-area Districts for compactness and conformity with our target size, so we did not need to take the time to construct any one model here for all the States.

Instead, we felt that we could allow each State to come up with its own distribution of Counties into Federal districts, on the condition that each arrangement is subject to Federal approval, to ensure that each district is compact and approximates the target area. They may break up Counties if desired, in order to follow rivers and mountain ranges and other topographic features. If they do so, then the borders must be clear and simple, and the reasoning must be persuasive to the Fed, which should always consider that any topographic feature major enough to shape a Congressional district probably would also have been major enough to influence the original County boundaries.

Under this approach, who in the Federal government should be reviewing State districting plans for approval? Executive Branch should be focused on Administration, and should not have any authority over Legislative structure. We could assign the function to the Legislative Branch, but we don't want to bother either of the two other Houses for business relating to the structure of the third House, and it would be difficult for the third House to approve any State plan before it has fully formed and all its delegates have been selected. Best therefore to require Federal approval from the Judicial Branch.

Question 45.1 (continued)

What about Puerto Rico?

Addressed more thoroughly for the Second Pass in Session 296:

The other Territories of Guam (212sqmi), American Samoa (76), the U.S. Virgin Islands (133), and the Northern Marianas (179) all have very small land areas. However, Puerto Rico (3435) is larger than either Delaware (1954) or Rhode Island (1045), so its size should not be considered a factor in denying Statehood status.

According to tables appearing in our 2007 edition of the *World Almanac*, Puerto Rico's 2005 population of 3.9 million was larger than that of each of 24 States, so its population level also should not be considered an impediment to Statehood.

Discussion of Puerto Rico's history appears on p.587 of the *World Almanac*. It was ceded to the U.S. following the Spanish-American War of 1898. In 1952, the people voted in favor of Commonwealth status, but there had been many pleas for Statehood over the more recent years.

We understand why we might want to have small island-type Territories in remote areas of the World, so that we can maintain air and naval bases to facilitate our Trade and Defense. This is not the same situation as we have with Puerto Rico, which (being geographically closer to the 48 contiguous States than either Alaska or Hawaii) is not so remote as to make a huge difference in our shipping and defense strategies, but which is large and populous enough to make a significant contribution to our national economy if properly developed and managed.

We were most concerned when Hurricanes Irma and Maria hit Puerto Rico in 2017, and government assistance was allegedly delayed because of an alleged perception within the Administration that Puerto Rico was closer to being a foreign nation than an American possession. Moreover, it has been argued that one reason why Puerto Rico was hit so hard was because it had received inadequate Federal investment in

preceding years, possibly due (at least in part) to its same perception as a 'stepchild' of the United States, meriting less ongoing attention than any actual State.

Continuing the current condition makes little sense to us. Either it should be allowed to become its own separate Nation (if it wishes to, and if the I.O.O. can once be convinced (particularly the Recognition Committee of the House of Nations) that the candidate Nation is both financially and politically independent of all other Nations), or else it should be welcomed into the American family as a full-fledged State.

We understand that 50 is a nice round number for our count of American States, and that we have lived with it fairly happily for over 60 years, longer than any previous period of not adding new States to the Union. If increasing to 51 will be that much of a hardship, then perhaps we can convince two States (perhaps the Dakotas?) to merge together. In any case, we should not allow our sentimental attachment to the number 50 to allow widespread damage to life and health and property to a large and populous region currently in American custody.

Question 40 (continued)

Any reason to change State boundaries as currently defined?

Following our resolution in Session 296 to allow the admission of Puerto Rico as a State, we considered that maybe the Dakotas could be combined with little impact, and if for some reason we wanted to keep 50 States. [Added in Third Pass: Why were they separated in the first place? Researched later, as shown below.]

Question 275.5 (continued)

If the rules of the Legislature are such that a given piece of legislation must be approved by more than one house, then what should/shall happen if a bill gets amended by the second house into a form which is different from how it got approved in the first house?

We added an element to our model for the Second Pass in Session 296. It may not be a necessary element, in that the rest of the model will still work to a greater or lesser extent if we enact everything other than this element, but we yet feel stronger that most/all pieces of legislation should require the approval of only one house, so that business can get done much faster, and we can work down those embarrassing Congressional backlogs.

In order to prevent abuse of power, we should follow the I.O.O. model that any house action is subject to veto by some combination of the other houses.

More specifically, in order to make veto tough enough to be non-trivial and therefore less susceptible to shifting political trends, and also easy enough to be achievable when it needs to happen, our current primary recommendation is to allow veto if each other house agrees by a 3/5 majority, or if any one house (including while we still have the current 2-house model) vetoes by a 2/3 majority.

Confirmed in Session 296 that this adjustment does not necessitate any change in the Presidential participation in this process. Office still may be in a position to assert that a given piece of legislation is too unworkable or too expensive or too net-

bad in some other way, but the Legislature should still be able to override the veto if the collective sentiment is strong enough.

Question 278 (continued)

Do we agree in general that it is constructive for the President (or Chief Executive of a lower jurisdiction) to be able to veto any passed bill which she feels is not constructive, subject to a 2/3 override?

Amended in May 2019 from our reevaluation of Question 275.5 in the Second Pass: Chief Executive may also be in a position to assert from an administrative standpoint that a given piece of legislation is too unworkable or too expensive or too net-bad in some other way, but the Legislature should still be able to override a Presidential veto if their collective sentiment is strong enough.

Question 418 (continued)

Of these basic types, which is the fairest method of taxation, or is it appropriate for more than one type to be levied at once by a single jurisdiction?

Our previous finding against the Estate Tax was modified for the Second Pass during Session 296, on the basis of the analysis which we performed deeper into this Section. Specifically, we were seeing that Estate/Gift Tax accounted for \$453.8 billion in 2016, and we were not eager to drop that revenue source at this time, and probably not at any time, so we are now deferring to the subsequent analysis.

Question 610 (continued)

Shall there continue to be such a thing as 'indecent exposure', either in person or over photographic media?

Amended for Second Pass during Session 296: Yes, we do agree that we need to prohibit unsolicited electronic transmission of prurient materials, even in a semi-hedonistic society, not so much because they are prurient, but because the action constitutes 'sexual harassment', placing the recipient in fear for her life and safety. It falls under our definition of 'threatening injury', so it is a 'bad act' on its face.

Question 629 (continued)

For those personal-behavior laws which we find no longer to apply in our more-advanced society, shall we actively recommend that they be repealed at whatever levels they currently exist?

We reconsidered this finding for our Second Pass in Session 296, because of an earlier conclusion that laws should automatically expire after a certain period. Our revised finding is that we can harmonize the two concepts. Laws can still expire after a certain number of years, but the 'sunset committee' should be reevaluating them before they actually expire, and recommending to the full assembly which laws should be allowed to expire and which should be renewed.

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This concluded our formal Second Pass review of all the substantive conclusions previously reached by our group. Remaining amendments were added for the Third Pass or from some combination of SIG correspondence and personal reflection:

Question 258.4 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the County agencies listed in Answer 135?

Environmental Services - Waste Management - Recycling

Added in May 2019: We often see perfectly-good furniture and other valuable goods being discarded with ordinary garbage, so we clearly need to do a better job with recycling of our current products so that we do not need to waste the time and energy and physical resources to create additional versions of the same thing. Notwithstanding the public-service message circulated by the Los Angeles Dodgers organization in 2018, we think that it would be a good thing if more homes would place more unwanted-but-still-usable products on their curb for pickup* [*They claimed that it makes the neighborhood look "trashy", but we claim that it's a good look, showing that the community cares about recycling.], but it should be done the day before the regular garbage is collected, and a coordinated effort should be undertaken by local governments and/or private enterprises to collect these products on the scheduled dates for redistribution, so that residents do not need to bother making pickup appointments with anyone. Same could be done with unwanted clothes and electronics and other products which people are too busy or lazy to take to any remote reclamation center, so that those products can more quickly get into the hands of people who can actually use them.

Question 482 (continued)

Shall customers of restaurants and certain other establishments be expected or required to tip in most/all instances?

Added in May 2019: A certain prominent sandwich-making chain recently began to add a tip option on their debit-card readers, after many happy years of not asking overtly for tips. Businesses are urged to choose wisely (with negative prejudice) when considering this option, because it can drive away long-time regular customers who were happy with the previous paradigm, so maybe you end up losing more gross income than you're gaining. Again, just charge whatever you need to cover all your operating expenses, including a decent and reasonable wage to all your workers, plus an appropriate profit margin, and don't demean yourselves or annoy your customers by begging for more than your declared price.

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We began our formal Third Pass during Session 297 in June 2019. This is where we transcribed all relevant notes from the original blue notebooks to the former General Summary, now the Final Report which you are now reading. Session 297 involved only a repackaging of notes from Session 1 (which was rather all over the place, in that we were just getting started), and we expected to pick up the pace as the discussions and notes became more structured later.

Session 298 (June 2019) again recapitulated notes from only one session, but again the early meetings were very primitive in structure, and involved a lot of back-and-

forth on the earliest Questions. Things were again expected to be much easier once we reached to where we settled on a more linear track. From that point, we no longer catalogued any of our findings in any notebook during any dated Sessions, and instead entered them directly into the present report, during any days of the week when we had time to work on the Third Pass, as shown hereunder:

Question 283.4 (continued)

Who gets to say that this is "National XYZ Week" or "National XYZ Month", and who doesn't?

Added in June 2019: What we probably will need to address as a larger Question is whether the recent proliferation of National XYZ Weeks is actually a net-good idea. We understand that people want to raise and focus awareness on particular issues, but now we have many more National XYZ Weeks than we have actual weeks in the calendar, so the Weeks are now overlapping, with 2-3 occurring within each calendar week. It makes it harder to focus if we are needing to split our attention, but the bigger problem seems to be that many politicians are waiting until National XYZ Week before they propose a bill to fix this problem or that one, whether it be infrastructure or something else. Go ahead and have them if you really want, but maybe narrow the number of causes which get National Weeks, maybe convert some to National Days (and then limit the count to 365). Main thing, though, if you have a cause to promote, please don't wait until National XYZ Week (or Day or Month or whatever) in order to promote it, because the delay can exacerbate the existing problems, and also because it makes the issue look less urgent if we were able to wait for it as long as we did. Don't allow your legislative calendar to be dictated by outsiders who might decide randomly and arbitrarily that the first week of April or the third week of August might be a good National XYZ Week. Rather, you legislators determine for yourselves which issues require your highest-priority attention, and set your calendars accordingly.

Question 643.2 (continued)

*To what extent shall we either allow/encourage or prohibit/discourage the use of 'performance-enhancing drugs' (PED's) in professional or amateur Sports?
12-jun-2019*

Ideated in June 2019 (while under herbal remediation from dental surgery) that we don't need to PED-check all home runs, but just those which exceed a certain length, starting at 450ft but can adjust up or down with experience.

Question 180 (continued)

What functions or issues should be managed by the Bureau of Water & Power?

Added in June 2019, eventually to be rolled into one or more Questions relating to electric vehicles, ahead of our introduction of Federal department structures: Also, this bureau of the Interior Department should assume the mission (as we can make funds available by cutting unneeded expenses elsewhere) to retrofit all residential garages in the nation with electric-car chargers. For, otherwise, this whole transition which people want us to make to electric cars will simply not be practical. We can't have people waiting at public charging stations for hours when they have other places to go and other things to do. If we have any such public stations at all, to eventually phase out our current gas stations (especially on long highways), then at

best they should be trading out fully-charged batteries for our empty ones, which they would refill on their own time after we leave. Main solution, though, is for everyone to be able to recharge their vehicles while they relax at home, including residents of apartment buildings. That will be a large project which will need to take a number of years, but it will be needed for a long-term solution, so that we do not need to depend on OPEC as much as we allegedly did during the so-called 'energy crisis' of the 1970's (strange times, for those of you who weren't there), and so that we can make much less of a biochemical 'footprint' on this precious planet of ours.

Question 668.1

What else can/should we do to ease racial tensions?

Added in June 2019: Unfortunately, we are continuing to see instances on video of Caucasian police officers abusing or threatening to abuse non-Caucasian suspects who had actually done little or no wrong, and who in some cases were already under restraint and therefore were not constituting an immediate threat to officer safety. Of course, each situation is different, and what an officer perceives during an actual incident may be different from what the rest of us subsequently see on video. Nevertheless, whether there actually were any improprieties or not, it's a bad look for white officers to be appearing to beat up on unarmed black civilians half their size. Maybe some of those white officers were 'acting out' some latent racial prejudices, or maybe not, but either way it's a bad look, which does little to ease race relations or instill trust in our police forces.

What we therefore are suggesting as an additional interim step is for cities to try to increase the assignments of police officers to neighborhoods which they more closely resemble. That is, have more black officers working in black neighborhoods, Hispanic officers working in Hispanic neighborhoods, etc. We realize (all too well) that this is contrary to our final goal as expressed in Answer 664, and hopefully someday we can all progress as a society until we achieve a stage where racial identity won't matter for police work or anything else. For the present, though, racial tensions are still too high, and physical abuses inflicted by white police officers still are (or at least appear to be) too frequent and severe, so on a temporary basis we need to do a better job of reducing the likelihood that a white police officer will ever have occasion to beat up on a black suspect.

Question 300

Should judges be elected, appointed, or some of each?

We noted while considering what eventually became Question 124.73 that we would consider during Question 300 how Judges should be recalled, if the Executives who appointed them are no longer in office. Strangely, we skipped over this key and round-numbered and frequently-anticipated Question in the First Pass.

Added in June 2019: Makes sense for a jurisdiction's Chief Executive to nominate a candidate for appointment to any senior position in the Executive Branch, because then we will know at least that the two will be able to work together effectively, and then the Legislature can consider whether there might be any other factors which should impede the nomination. However, we now see it as against the public interest for the Chief Executive to nominate appointments to the Supreme Court and other senior positions within the Judicial Branch. We have seen too many times how

a President who barely wins a majority of the popular vote (sometimes even less than that!) gets to make (or at least threaten) a politically-controversial Justice who (whatever we end up doing with our terms for judicial office) will probably last longer than the President who made the nomination. Not only does this practice encourage favoritism and bootlicking and political strongarming, but it also encourages extremism and divisiveness over fair legal judgment, because a controversial President in a polarized environment will be motivated to take every opportunity to 'push the needle' as far as he can in his preferred direction, so that things will stay at least approximately that way after he has vacated his office.

Better to have senior judicial appointments coming from the Legislature, without involving the President's office at all. What should the President have anything to do with judicial appointments, when he may not have a legal background, and often represents the views of only an extreme segment of the population? By contrast, the members of the Legislature collectively have knowledge of a far greater range of local judges who might be worthy of advancement within the Federal system, while having a broader range from which to choose will allow a sampling of political feeling which is more representative of what is actually happening among the voters of the day, as opposed to a solitary individual.

More specifically, judicial appointments should happen within the House of Representatives at the national level, and by the largest population-based assembly at the State level. Idea here is that a broader array of representatives means a broader sampling of good candidates. Whenever a vacancy occurs, members of the House/Assembly are invited (but not required) to propose candidates from their districts. Okay for a single delegate to nominate multiple candidates, in order to avoid upsetting anyone by appearing to play favorites. Allow for Committee hearings or other discovery on the various candidates to take place as desired, and possibly eliminate certain candidates known to have serious deficiencies. Final ballot will be voted by the approval-with-abstention-option (AWAO) [or "YesNoAbstain"] method, and so can include any number of candidates. Each legislator votes in favor of any candidates whom she definitely would approve, votes against any candidates whom she definitely would disapprove, and abstains from any more neutral candidate as desired. Highest margin of [approvals minus disapprovals] is selected.

Sorry, Prez's, we know that you loved having that power to fill up the Supreme Court in your personal way, but you've collectively abused the privilege. We've had too many divisive personalities on that panel, and too many instances of narrowly-decided judicial findings, which really should not be happening in an ideal legal world, where interpretations of the law are much more trivially obvious. Your way isn't working, so we need to change things up. Meanwhile, they need you back at the Executive Branch, to focus on providing services and trimming expenses.

Question 570 (continued)

What is the best annual schedule for education?

Amended in June 2019: To be clear, our finding that the standard school year should exclude Summer means that we advocate for getting rid of 'summer school'. Even kids who are behind target progression rates in certain subjects can usually do with a rest period in their studies, but have the option of learning at home if they are willing to put in the extra time. Meanwhile, our physical facilities (especially our air-conditioning units) can definitely use a rest period during our hotter months.

Question 361a (continued)

Generally, who owns or can own The Land?

We considered in June 2019 that we may need to amend our conclusion from Session 200. We concluded at that time that the Earth belongs to all the beings which currently live upon it, because we all contribute to the ecosystem in various ways, and therefore are all stakeholders in it. As solid as that reasoning is, however, we are now thinking that maybe we should go with the more fundamental position that the Earth belongs to no one at all. Similar to how we might agree as a species that no nation 'owns' Antarctica or The Moon or Mars or certain other chunks of land, we may yet make the same observation about all the habitable areas of the Earth.

Such a position might bring us more in line with the traditional philosophy of our indigenous American hosts, and might result in a greater human respect for the Earth, and a decrease in how much we rape it for every scrap of crap we can get.

Question 373 (continued)

Given that many goods (particularly food items) are consumed shortly after production, and also given that a large part of the economy comprises human services which cost nothing other than time to provide, shall the total credit amount be a fixed figure, or shall it fluctuate with population, or shall it fluctuate with the total amount of material wealth currently in existence, or shall some other means be used to determine it?

Added in June 2019: As a change to our previous position, yes we can issue 'passing GO'-type dividends to workers (i.e., "universal basic income"), even in a no-inflation environment, if and only if we are in a growth phase in our economy at the time, such that we are in a position to issue more Dollars to go with our more goods, and keep the purchasing power of our base currency unit stable. We could issue the dividend to banks and let it 'trickle down', but better to give it directly to workers as a bonus for the higher production which they generated during the previous year.

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It was at this point that we read the 84-page "UN75" report sent via the Global Challenges Foundation (sponsors of the 'Swedish project'). It contained a lot of specific points about climate change, female empowerment, cybersecurity, etc., but nothing about restructuring. There were some suggestions on adding various advisory councils, but nothing about splitting into multiple binding assemblies.

They never did seem to get it: A one-house UN with no enforcement authority cannot cope with all the challenges facing our World today. It needs restructuring.

Question 68 (continued)

Which agencies of the State should have control over the line-drawing process?

Added sometime in June 2019: Notwithstanding the 5-4 decision recently reached by the U.S. Supreme Court, we find that the national Judiciary Branch must step in if a given State is in clear violation of established anti-gerrymandering rules.

Question 368 (continued)

How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

Added sometime in June 2019, following extensive Twitter discussion about increasing the federal minimum wage: While we certainly do not require it, yet we can go ahead and have a minimum wage in our new model environment, even though it does constitute an artificial parameter potentially skewing the free market. This may be one of those areas where completely-unregulated Capitalism might be bad, if the competition for work is ever so severe that employers might get away with paying slave wages, creating an unhealthy economy by maintaining a permanent poverty class. We need all people contributing to society somehow if they possibly can, and those who cannot earn a full living by capital investment alone must perform some amount of work in order to 'earn their keep'. In order to provide those individuals with an incentive to work, we must promise them a higher standard of living than they probably could accomplish by begging or stealing alone. If we are able to achieve our ideal paradigm of a dollar being sufficient to pay for a day's food, then we probably could/should Henry Ford's iconic five-dollar-per-day model as our target living wage. It was a revolutionary step at the time, and arguably energized the American industrial economy at least as much as Ford's also-iconic assembly line. If we are able to do that, then one dollar per day could go to food, one dollar could go to lodging, one dollar could go to other personal items which a beggar or stealer might not be able to enjoy, one dollar could go to furniture and cars and other capital assets, and the remaining dollar could go to savings. That's a living wage, and that's what a lot of our current politicians and activists seem to be clamoring for.

As an alternative, if it turns out to be too economically traumatic to transition to that definition from our current environment, then we can select some other definition of N-dollars-per-day being sufficient to cover the day's food, and then multiply all other factors by N in order to achieve the same proportions. However, we hope that we will be able to retain the singularity of one Dollar feeding one person for one day. That way, when you decide that you are willing to pay 50 Dollars for a single restaurant meal, you will be easily aware that you are spending enough to feed 50 individuals for an entire day, and therefore that maybe you want to be a little more charitable in your expenditures. If any further level of calculation becomes necessary, then we will lose a good portion of our audience, so best to keep it as simple as we practically can.

We therefore rest with our previous ideal definition that a Dollar should be able to feed one person on a minimally-decent level for one day, again so that it will be mathematically easy for ordinary people to apply that standard when considering how much they should consider paying for this product or that service. So, let's do whatever we need to do economically in order to make that happen.

Question 686.7 (continued)

Should carpool lanes exist? If so, then should users be required to have two or more licensed drivers in the car, or is it sufficient to have two or more random individuals? If the former, then should there be an exemption for babies?

Added sometime in June 2019: While the equation is not exactly the same, we yet can apply the same general principle to toll lanes as to carpool lanes, in that they

also encouraging unnecessary and dangerous merging, and arguably do more harm than good, notwithstanding whatever they might generate in gross revenue.

Question 710.9

Any special protocols for banquet rooms?

Noted while attending the "Mr. Mensa" program at the Phoenix convention in July 2019 that we apparently need to discourage people from leaning chairs against table to save them, because the rear legs stick out into narrow aisles for a safety hazard.

Question 16.9

How shall we define 'government' for the purpose of this discussion?

Added this Question during the Third Pass (July 2019), based on discussion conducted in Session 14. We define 'government' for our purpose here as 'one or more people who make decisions for the rest of a given community'. Some folks might complain that this definition does not allow for the possibility of a Landru-like computer making everyone's decisions, but we noted during the Third Pass that we don't want to allow for this possibility, both because even upright programmers often make mistakes, and because some programmers might have nefarious purposes.

Question 643.6

Under what conditions (if any) should ties/draws be allowed in All-Star Games?

Added during the Third Pass (July 2019): One of the numerous reasons why we have All-Star Games is to get a better feel -- both within a given season and over time -- as to which League or Conference or Region is better than which other. Those of us who are on the more competitive side abhor draws generally, and especially during an All-Star Game, and even more especially in the case of Baseball with its unclogged and open-ended structure. Conversely, a tie gives us important information also, namely that the two teams appear to be approximately equal in net-strength, and it is also true that we don't want to endanger player health unduly in any contest which does not affect any team's official season standings.

If we immediately and automatically cease play at the end of regulation, regardless of player health or team preference, then it may leave a nasty sense of unresolution with both the teams and the fans, who might easily want to try at least a little bit more to achieve a decisive result. If we force teams to play until they achieve a decisive result, then player health might be unduly endangered, and the contest may eventually get boring for the fans, who at some point might acknowledge that okay the teams this year are approximately equivalent, and now we know it, and let's move on. If we play until the Commissioner says that it's okay to declare a draw, then -- as has happened in the past -- that might upset the fans, who again might want the teams to at least make some further effort before resorting to a draw.

Our solution is to repose this decision with the managers of the two participating teams. They both want to win, but they also are both mindful of player health, and they are in a much better position to assess how much longer their teams can keep playing without incurring undue risk, so best to let them balance all the factors.

Specifically, if the game is tied at the end of regulation, or at the end of each extra inning or other overtime period, then either manager shall have the option to offer a draw to the other manager, and the other manager shall have the option to either accept or reject the offer. The offering manager should deliver the offer to the home-plate umpire or other senior field official, who shall convey the offer to the opposing manager. The receiving manager may accept/reject the offer immediately, or may consult with the opposing manager in the presence of the senior official.

Question 314 (continued)

Is it appropriate for a statute of limitations to apply to certain types of crimes, such that no individual may be arrested and/or convicted after a certain number of years have passed following the alleged crime?

Added in July 2019: On the other hand (notwithstanding the note added in April), the prevailing sentiment arising from the Epstein case, and the stated willingness of the New York courts to entertain civil lawsuits for certain acts allegedly committed over a period of time going back 25 years, impelled us to reconsider our position. We do still generally like the idea that justice should be swift* [*The 6th Amendment of the Constitution requires "a speedy and public trial" for "all criminal prosecutions". Does this extend to civil lawsuits on 'bad acts' which otherwise would be treated as criminal prosecutions? The 7th Amendment refers to "Suits at common law", suggesting that the Framers were making a clear distinction between criminal and civil prosecutions, in which case the "speedy and public trial" provision might not apply to civil cases, meaning that they could be prosecuted any number of years after the alleged 'bad acts' had allegedly taken place. However, the 7th Amendment goes on to refer to "the value in controversy" (which sets a minimum dollar value suggesting that maybe our ultimate currency goal should be to get back to where the Constitutional distinctions are relevant again, so should add that point to that discussion for further consideration), so they appear to be referring specifically to cases where there is a fixed monetary amount at issue, and not merely an estimated dollar value associated with 'pain and suffering', in which case we could argue that any 'bad act' which would ordinarily be treated as a criminal prosecution should have the "speedy and public trial" provisions applied to it, implying that we should continue to observe a strict 'statute of limitations.', and we do continue to acknowledge that the reliability of evidence (both physical and testimonial) tends to degrade over time, and we still don't want a world where people can decide after 25 years that they still have a problem with something that somebody else allegedly did and therefore will seek a belated monetary retribution for it (for then everybody would be suing everybody else for everything, it would be unmanageable and ridiculous, and would take our judicial resources away from the current crimes which need more immediate attentions), but we still can conceive of some exceptional circumstances where a prosecution (maybe just civil, maybe just criminal, maybe both) could still properly be advanced even after the customary 'statute of limitations'. For, just as we are arguing against a fixed chronological cutoff for sex or other adult privileges, on the grounds that one does not magically morph from a child to an adult on any one single day, we must also acknowledge that the evidence in a potential court case does not magically drop from 'totally reliable' to 'totally unreliable' on any one single day. It's all a sliding scale, and in order to obtain true justice we all must overcome our emotional attachment to the convenience of fixed time constraints for everything, and instead take the time to evaluate the relative merits of every different case. More specifically, we may still hold in suspicion the voices of one or two individuals who come out of the woodwork to allege that somebody had done something bad to them 25 years earlier, because even if the allegations are true (which is by no means a lock!) then the culprit has clearly mended his ways in the interim, so any punishment [so this Q will come after reasons for punishment] would be superfluous and therefore excessive. Conversely, if numerous alleged victims are

coming forward in later years to accuse an individual of repeated bad actions allegedly occurring over a long period of time, then that might be more tenable, not only because knowing that it was a long pattern might understandably motivate someone to come forward who had previously suspected that the previous action was merely an isolated moment of poor judgment, but also because the presence of a long pattern suggests that the individual in question has not mended his ways, and therefore should be punished and probably removed from the opportunity to commit the same bad act any further. Let it therefore be a matter of judicial evaluation, to allow criminal prosecution beyond the customary statute of limitations, on condition that numerous witnesses are providing compelling evidence and credible reasons for not having come forward earlier, and also on condition that the case is separately tried before at least one appellate judge, in order to make sure that the defendant's moral and Constitutional rights are upheld. That's a very big change for us.

Question 644.3

Should the draw rule suggested for All-Star Games also apply during regular season?

Added in July 2019, in context of regular baseball games, and rolled into its own Question during Third Pass: Leaning in that direction, especially if it means not needing to resort to auto-runners on base at beginning of inning: ESPN commentator Jessica Mendoza suggested on the air during the 12-inning game between the Dodgers and the Red Sox on 14-Jul-2019 that after a certain point teams should start each extra inning with a certain number of runners already on base (she suggested first and second), in order to achieve a faster resolution. We politely disagree with this concept. As previously noted, baseball is largely a game of endurance, which is why it has historically been untimed, why the standard rules have long required full extra innings to be played until resolution if at all practical, and why there are so many games scheduled in the regular season. Careful managers will conserve their resources whenever it appears that they may be going into extra innings, while risk-taking managers will expend resources on one-atbat matchups in hope of avoiding extra innings, and part of the game is seeing which approach works net-better on each particular occasion, as well as overall. Jessica claimed that "no one" wants to see all those extra innings, but that simply is not true, or else the stands would be completely empty at the end of our longer games. Even to the extent that some fans do tune out after a certain point, they still will eventually want to know the outcome of the game, and especially how each team elected to manage its resources for the long haul. (At what point, for example, did they need to start using pitchers as position players, or position players as pitchers?) We totally lose that element of strategy if managers know in advance that they do not ever need to face the possibility of an 18-inning game, so less managerial skill is involved, and the game is far less interesting. In addition, the fact of never needing to go beyond a certain number of regular innings means that pitchers can be rotated more frequently, which -- as previously noted -- disrupts and lengthens the pace of play, making the pre-extra innings more boring as well. As noted above, the managers may agree to a draw if the teams appear evenly matched on any given occasion. When they do not so agree, any on-air analyst -- however qualified in all other respects -- who doesn't have the patience to sit through a longer-than-usual baseball game under classic conditions should consider covering other sports, or performing other kinds of work. We imagine that there are many others who would be highly eager to take her place.

Question 32.4 (continued)

How should the I.O.O. be funded?

Panel had considered back in Session 22 that a nation which is short of funding could always (or usually) get other nations to lend them money in order to 'stay in the game'. However, our feeling in the Third Pass was that we generally should avoid long-term debts (especially between nations) to the extent that we practically can.

Question 340.1

To the extent that we are continuing to incarcerate anyone at all, should prisons be owned and operated by private for-profit entities?

Added during the Third Pass in July 2019, based partly on recent news stories about overcrowding and poor conditions in many prisons, and partly on note from Session 31, indicating that a problem was already observed with the Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) as far back as October 1998. It is now not seen by our group as a *per se* problem, but certainly should be subject to limitation after bad experiences.

Question 313 (continued)

Is it appropriate for an individual to be arrested whenever any police officer thinks it appropriate, or should probable cause be established first?

Added in July 2019: We saw footage on Twitter of a Dallas police officer restraining a mentally-ill suspect by kneeling on his back and twisting his head in a particularly uncomfortable manner. Suspect was recorded as warning "You're gonna kill me". Another officer was recorded as injecting something into the suspect's left shoulder. As an ambulance carted the suspect away, one of the officers was recorded as smiling and joking "I hope we didn't kill him." Suspect died. Dallas DA dismissed charges against the officers. We don't know the circumstances which led to the detention, but if any suspect dies in your custody, it must at least raise the possibility of 'police brutality', and the question of what happens (or should happen) if police brutality occurs within your jurisdiction, and if you fail to do anything about it. We propose two recourses: First, as much as we like the idea of allowing local authorities to manage their jurisdictions without interference from above, at some point we must be able to exercise the dreaded 'eminent domain' to allow authorities from higher levels of government to step in and overrule local officials who allow such alleged abuses to go unpunished, by entering the jurisdictions and arresting the suspect officers themselves. Second, in order to motivate local DA's and Internal Affairs departments to address such situations effectively and expeditiously, the State and possibly the Fed should be allowed to impose substantial 'fines' upon the applicable Cities and/or Counties, on top of the payments which they normally make to the higher levels in order to remain normally autonomous.

Question 359 (continued)

What are the basic methods by which these goals can be achieved?

Added in August 2019: Our ring model can include that governments can be placed on the left-right axis according to proportion of social-benefit v military-industrial spending, and on the up-down axis according to total inflation-adjusted government

spending per capita, so readers can place governments on the graph themselves. In general, top-left quadrant is for Communism, top-right is for Fascism, bottom-right is for Capitalism, and bottom-left is for Libertarianism.

Question 169 (continued)

What functions and issues shall be handled by the Department of Science?

Added in August 2019: Whatever other importance other species may have in our current ecosystem, it seems to be widely accepted that Bees are particularly seminal, in that they assist with the pollination of Flowers, which in turn help maintain the rest of the Vegetable Kingdom, which of course is critical to our supplies of Food and Oxygen. We have heard it asserted that the Bee population has been declining in recent years. We have also heard that Bees often die near celltowers. We have also heard that Bees have remarkable adaptive powers, and can survive nearly any evolutionary obstacle. We cannot independently confirm any of these assertions. However, inasmuch as any/some of them may possibly be true, this would be another good project for the Department of Science to undertake, along with all other harmful effects which may possibly result from our cellphones and celltowers.

Question 645.3 (continued)

What else can we do to maintain/improve fan interest in Baseball?

Added in August 2019: Eleventh, wherever practical, locate your higher-level minor-league teams in the largest markets which do not have major-league or other high-level minor-league teams, so that higher numbers of people can enjoy higher levels of competitive play. Specifically, the current AA and A+ teams at Birmingham, Corpus Christi, Jacksonville, and Portland should perhaps be promoted to AAA; and perhaps Bakersfield, Tucson, and Wichita should have new minor-league teams added at the AAA level; and perhaps Buffalo (close to Rochester), Gwinnett (close to Atlanta), Lehigh Valley (close to Philadelphia), Reno (close to Sacramento), Scranton/Wilkes-Barre (close to New York), Syracuse (also close to Rochester), and Tacoma (close to Seattle) should be politely demoted from the AAA level.

Question 25 (continued)

Under what conditions (if any) could an individual, group, or geographic segment of any size elect to secede from the national government having current jurisdiction over it?

When we reviewed this topic during the Third Pass (August 2019), we found that the condition offered in Session 38 would not always be morally sufficient. If a parent jurisdiction invests the time and effort and funding to create buildings and roads and other municipal resources within a given settlement, and especially if the parent incurs great risk that the project will be a failure and the investment a total loss, then it might not always be appropriate for the settlement to basically take those resources and run. If they always get to do that, then what motivation does the parent ever have to create the colony in the first place? Without the motivation of promised return on a risky investment, we will not have development, and our species will eventually begin to suffer as our current infrastructures continue to age and deteriorate. On the other hand, at some point the investment of effort and capital by the locals may collectively outweigh that of the parent group, who at some

point (maybe the same point) may be considered as having enjoyed 'enough' of a return on their investment, such that it might be okay for the colonies to declare (or at least request) independence from the parent. If the colony wishes independence prior to the parent group having been sufficiently compensated for their investment, then the colony ought to pay the parent enough to offset the shortage, probably in installment payments over some period of time to be negotiated, along with any other terms on which the parties may agree.

Question 442.9 (continued)

What is the maximum number (if any) of hours of labor that we should be expecting from workers per day?

Added in August 2019: We generally should not be expecting people to work more than eight hours per day on average, since people spend 1/3 of their time sleeping, and should not need to spend more of their waking time working than enjoying life, for then life would be a net-negative experience. We want things to be net-positive for all us living creatures, so we should get to enjoy life for at least as much time as we spend working to preserve and enhance it. It's okay to have periodic and/or occasional days off from work if the economy allows, and/or to have an average workday of less than eight hours, so that people can spend more time enjoying life, but eight hours per day should be the maximum average. According to Twitter (for whatever that may be worth), this 1/3-1/3-1/3 breakdown among sleep and work and play was reflected on Chicago's first Labor Day banner in 1885. Whether the report is accurate or not, the concept makes sense to us.

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It was at this time that we began constructing the non-Mensa website for displaying the highlights of our Agenda as completed through the end of the Second Pass, and as amended afterward, including any details ever coming up in Twitter discussions.

Question 482 (continued)

Shall customers of restaurants and certain other establishments be expected or required to tip in most/all instances?

Added in August 2019: Third main reason why people should not ask for tips, the act of asking for an unadvertised price increase -- or even quietly expecting one -- might be considered an act of coercion. Even though it is a relatively minor act in terms of dollars, yet it can be relatively significant in terms of our personal feelings. For, when people ask you for a tip, or quietly expect one, you have two choices: You can either stiff them and feel like a jerk for being stingy, or pay them and feel like a jerk for allowing other people to take advantage of you. By presenting us with a choice in which both alternatives are bad, you are doing a bad thing to us, and the bad feelings can persist even though the amounts involved are relatively small, especially when our own resources are limited. To put it another way, the act of asking for a tip is similar to asking someone whether they have committed a crime, which by now we have identified as being a bad thing to do, because it places people in situation where all alternatives (lie to cover up an actual crime, decline answering and thus arouse suspicion, or truthfully declare no crime this time but thus effectively give up your right to remain silent in the future) are bad. In a civilized society where we want to work together to increase our common benefit, we should

generally (if not always) want to avoid placing our fellow citizens into positions of awkwardness or embarrassment, so best overall option is to require at least a minimally-decent living wage from all employers for all work performed, then the workers should not expect any additional income (lest they be disappointed when it doesn't happen), and then customers won't need to worry about subsidizing other people's income beyond paying the printed price for all goods and services.

Question 662.1 (continued)

Is it better to use "op. cit." and "Ibid." as standard footnote abbreviations, or some more modern notation?

Added in August 2019: Upon further consideration, we find that we probably will get along better without these expressions, for we can convey our footnote meanings succinctly without giving our secondary-school students anything more to learn. Specifically, to refer to an author previously cited, without repeating all the bibliographical details, you could use the classic "Asimov, *op.cit.*" in the footnote, but it would be even easier to use "Asimov, see p.37", which conveys the same meaning, and even gives additional info as to where the first citation occurred, just in case any reader wishes to refresh on the bibliographical details without necessitating an actual bibliography. Even better, when you refer to the same work multiple times on the same page, you could use the classic "*Ibid.*" in a separate footnote for every citation after the first, but even easier and more space-efficient to use the same superscript number throughout the page to refer to the one relevant footnote.

Question 32.3 (continued)

Should the I.O.O. get involved in a nation's alleged violation of human rights?

Modified our Answer during Third Pass (August 2019), in that the helicopter airlifting you off the embassy grounds might not have the room or the power to carry your piano, so there may need to be practical limits on what you can take along.

Question 32.4 (continued)

How should the I.O.O. be funded?

Observed in the Third Pass (August 2019) that we apparently never did settle this matter, so resolved it at this time, viz.: (1) Delegations provide salaries and travel costs for their delegates, or else they forfeit a seat at the table. (2) Ideal if all delegations could fund administrative overhead equally, or forfeit a seat at the table, but some delegations may not be able to afford it, and we don't want richer delegations approving higher administrative budgets just to 'price out' the poorer delegations; therefore resolving to assess according to total tax revenue, even though it means a permanent agency tasked with finding these figures (which may need to be split for delegations which include portions of nations), but it is fairer and also provides nations with incentive to mitigate their own tax assessments. (3) Nations contribute military personnel and equipment and funding on voluntary basis, when authorized by the I.O.O. in response to any unsavory situation anywhere in the world; if nations which have the capacity to contribute refuse to do so, then they risk the unsavory situation remaining and possibly growing; conversely, agreeing to participate gives you a chance to play with your shiny tanks and missiles. (4) Larger expenditures such as poverty offsets and infrastructure investments and evacuation

facilities should be funded by only those delegations who vote in favor of including those costs in their house budgets, probably also in proportion to total tax revenue, but can consider alternatives.

Question 38 (continued)

What sort of nation do we want to have in America?

Added in August 2019: It may eventually need to be rolled out elsewhere as a separate Question, or maybe it is happy here, but somewhere we need to have a general discussion about 'liberal' versus 'conservative'. The latter expression has recently come to mean 'whatever we believe' in some people's minds, whereas 'liberal' or especially 'socialist' has come to mean 'what everybody else believes'. The so-called 'conservative' movement has recently been identified with white nationalism, dictatorial government, a heavily-armed citizenry, and a large and active military traveling around the World to impose the 'American Way' on all smaller nations by force. However, these values are not necessarily consistent with true 'conservatism'.

The classic 'conservative' model stems from the perception/reality that our ancestors figured out how our nation should be, they spent their own money to build it up, they applied their manual labor to create our physical buildings and infrastructures, and they fought to defend our land against invasion; our current generation has kept faith with their vision and their sacrifices, and worked hard to 'conserve' the society which they worked hard to create; then, the younger 'liberal' generation comes along who was not around to participate in the intellectual and financial and physical and military investments into our nation, and they want to change or perhaps destroy all our institutions in order to place their own mark upon society without having done all the work which we did to create it. It is an understandable philosophy. No one who has placed that much effort into anything wants to feel as though their creations are only temporary, and we would all like to be respected and admired in perpetuity for what we and our ancestors did to improve our nation and our human society while we were here, so it is quite natural that we would want to defend our creation from all the arsonists who seek to burn it all down.

Conversely, the 'liberals' are going hey, just because you older folks built up our society in a certain way, and even though you fought to defend the society against invaders, doesn't necessarily mean that all things should remain that same way forever, and we should always be looking for ways that we can improve ourselves and our political, economic, and social institutions.

This is an inevitable struggle in any upwardly-mobile society, where the competing forces playing tug-of-war help to define (at least approximately) a balance point for how much we generally should be conserving our previous ways of doing things, and how much we should be open to further improvement. It is hoped, however, that some voters and leaders (especially within America) will be enlightened enough to take a more pragmatic approach, to realize that it does not need to be all one way or all the other, to understand that we should not be conserving for the mere sake of conserving nor changing for the mere sake of change, and to distinguish on an ongoing basis between those specific elements which should be left as they are and those which should be modified. That is what this present Agenda seeks to do. As for the other 'values' which certain self-proclaimed 'conservatives' have recently come to espouse, we consider those separately in the course of this document.

Question 258.7 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the City agencies listed in Answer 135?

Added sometime in August 2019: Zoning provisions should not be retroactive, you don't get to pull someone's corn out of his frontyard just because you decided after he planted it that you don't like how it looks. Any applicable ordinances should be made clear to all prospective home buyers, and should not be so numerous or complicated as to allow them to tune out all the noise.

Question 310 (continued)

What happens if a particular act violates laws on multiple governmental levels?

Added in August 2019: We understand that the subordinate who claims 'Nuremberg rights' when disobeying a direct order must (and should) answer to a court-martial, but we claim that any verdict of guilt should be eligible for appeal to international civilian court (possibly with one or more intermediate levels), which can apply broader standards of human morality than might be allowable under the strict rules of military discipline, and can exonerate and protect the defendant as applicable.

Question 318.5

Can we still have a trial of fact even if the accused is deceased?

Added sometime in August 2019, in response to the Epstein case: Many bemoaned the fact that the accused's alleged victims would never have their 'day in court' in a criminal proceeding after Epstein was found dead in his prison cell. We claim that this is an absurd and ridiculous reality. If it is really that important for alleged victims to state their accusations in open criminal court against anyone who is deceased, then they should have that legal option, for whatever good it may do. True that the accused would not be present to defend himself and face his accusers and confront any other evidence introduced against him [so we need to make sure that this Question (if not already duplicative) comes after wherever we establish that any living defendant in a normal trial has (or should have) the right to legal counsel], but attorneys appointed by the accused's estate could still perform that function, to make sure that the trial is valid, and that valid findings of fact are reached.

Question 375 (continued)

Once we decide how we are allocating credit, shall some portion of it (or all of it) be distributed in the form of physical currency?

Added in August 2019: The 'advertised rate' should include any sales tax, instead of giving a base rate and then stating 'plus tax', because big part of both practices is so that customers are not deceived and don't need to perform any complicated math.

Question 441 (continued)

Is the conclusion, then, that the minimum wage should be lowered?

Added in August 2019: We recently reconceived for A368 the notion of a \$5-per-day minimum wage as promulgated by Henry Ford, on the condition that the economy

allows \$1 per day to go to food, \$1 for lodging, \$1 for clothing and other personal possessions, \$1 for transportation and other public services, and \$1 for retirement.

Question 589 (continued)

What facts and/or skills and/or values will we want to teach in each of the subjects in each of the disciplines at the primary level, and how much time do we expect the teaching to take under ordinary conditions?

Civics - History - American

Added sometime in August 2019: While numerous white Texas residents were reported on Twitter as protesting the so-called 'invasion' of immigrants from Mexico and Guatemala and points south, it was pointed out that the Mexicans occupied Texas before white Americans 'invaded' and effectively took it over. Again, we should not be seeking to prevent other people from doing what we ourselves have done, because we don't philosophically get to condone behavior in ourselves which we are seeking to prohibit in others. The protestors in Texas appeared to have forgotten that the Americans 'invaded' the Mexicans before the recent remigration, or maybe some of them never knew it at all. This is another good example of why we should learn about our own history, before we seek to judge the actions of others.

Question 44 (continued)

What rights -- if any -- should a Territory have?

Noted in the Third Pass (September 2019) that we had eventually decided against Revenue Sharing, requiring only a periodic lease payment to be made by States to the Fed, for which payment Territories would not be liable.

Question 45 (continued)

Should an exception be made for the District of Columbia?

Noted in the Third Pass (September 2019) that we were recommending in favor of changing the name of this Territory, as had been suggested while treating Question 678.3 during Session 284, for it honors a jerk who not only discovered our continent by accident, but also brutally subjugated the indigenous populations here.

Question 458.9

To what extent (if any) should we enact/continue trade embargoes against nations with whom we have any political differences?

Added in September 2019 from a Twitter post by @RepBarbaraLee that we should not continue the "isolation to Cuba that [had] failed for more than five decades."

In case it has not been made completely clear from the foregoing text, we hold that we generally should tolerate the political and economic systems of other nations insofar as they are different from ours, and also their attempts to peacefully persuade other nations to consider adopting those systems, provided that their systems are not built upon violence or repression or any other violation of our Basic

Social Rules and Role of Government, and provided that those nations do not attempt to impose their systems upon other nations by force or other coercion.

For, different people may prefer different ways of living, which is why we have multiple sovereign nations in the first place, as established in Section I-A. Further, different systems might work better for different geographies and demographics, so it should not at all be expected by anyone that either Capitalism or Communism or any other "-ism" should be considered as the One True Way for all nations forever.

As such, it makes little sense to sacrifice Trade with a given nation simply because their political or economic system is different from yours. The exchange of goods helps to improve the quality of life of your people as well as theirs, so your intolerance not only is illogical but also sacrifices the interests of your own people. What kind of great economic system is that?

Now, it is a clearly different matter if the other nation has hundreds of nuclear missiles parked 90 miles from your homeland, pointed aggressively in your direction. You don't want that nation getting any stronger, lest they continue and escalate their aggression, so you might justly be willing to sacrifice some of their products in order to keep them from getting some of yours.

That all said, we can see that a trade embargo with Cuba may have made sense back in the early 1960's, when it was widely reported that they were threatening America with nuclear missiles provided by the Soviet Union. Once that threat dissipated, however, it possibly should have been possible to normalize relations, and resume our previous trade and tourism, although we get it that some wounds heal slowly. However, insofar as we have managed to relax restrictions with Cuba in recent years, it now makes little sense to become trade-hostile with them all over again, especially not when we're trying to improve American economic health.

In sum, let us have no more international violence, or threats thereof, and let us have no more politically-motivated trade embargoes with other nations.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

Noted in Third Pass, that local education districts still need some oversight for basically the same reason, so that local maniacs can't go crazy.

Question 55 (continued)

How shall we define 'political party' for the purpose of this discussion?

As we examined the matter in the Third Pass (September 2019), seemed logical that a party must be a formal organization of some kind, which one must formally join in some way. One does not become a Dodger simply by wanting or claiming to be one.

Question then becomes (and might always have been) under what conditions could such a formal organization be defined as a 'political party'. The incomplete notes from Session 47 do appear to indicate a minimum condition that the label of the

organization must include the phrase 'political party', although in the Third Pass we are modifying that it need include only the word 'party'.

It also occurs to us in the Third Pass that the word 'party' probably also is a sufficient condition, at least in terms of the label. For, what organization would dare to call itself a 'party' which actually was not a formal political party?

There may also be some structural and/or operational restrictions imposed by a given society in order for any organization to continue calling itself a 'party', such as where it gets its funding, how it may spend its funds, how and how often it must report its financial activity and position, actions which it may and may not perform, initial filing procedure, etc., all of which are up to each society to decide for itself.

Only universal consideration apart from the label seems to be the main focus of the organization, which clearly is to exert some influence over the political process.

We therefore synthesized all these elements as follows: "A 'political party' is a formal organization which is maintained for the purpose of exerting influence over the political process of a given society, and which may need to satisfy certain conditions established by that society in order to continue its existence."

Question 57 (continued)

Which -- if any -- of these functions do we consider to be healthy and constructive in today's environment?

P11) We observed in the Third Pass (September 2019) that fraud is also possible with non-absentee voting, so this is not really a material consideration.

Question 59 (continued)

If we go to a party-less ballot, how would we deal with the possibility that two or more philosophically similar candidates might split the vote, allowing the election of a third candidate who would not ordinarily obtain a majority?

Observations added in Third Pass (September 2019) that the 2-candidate field is very similar to what we have now, and that this is the polarizing and adversarial problem which we are trying to solve. We also observed in the Third Pass that our AWAO [later "YesNoAbstain"] voting method addresses this Question satisfactorily.

Question 55 (continued)

How shall we define 'political party' for the purpose of this discussion?

We realized a bit later that our new definition could also apply to a Caucus or a Lobby or a Campaign or another organization seeking to exert political influence, so we needed to consider further. Specifically, we figured that Parties are significantly different from those other organizations, in that one can concurrently belong to more than one Caucus or Lobby or Campaign, but may be a member of only one Party at a time. This means (doesn't it?) that Parties seek to divide the population into subsets, based on general political preference. Therefore adding the phrase ", and the members of which may not concurrently belong in any similar organization" to our working definition, although we may eventually need to clean it up further.

Question 68 (continued)

Which agencies of the State should have control over the line-drawing process?

Tweaked in Third Pass (September 2019) for our having created a third House in Congress, but keeping basic premise of adding delegates from all Houses, provided that each district in the area-based House is entirely enclosed within a given State.

Question 558 (continued)

At what level of government should education be supervised?

Added in Third Pass (September 2019) that a preliminary suggestion on this topic had been offered way back in Session 49, to the effect that we should have national standards for Education, and can then allow state and local variations as appropriate, so can consider further. [We did treat this subject later on in the Third Pass.]

Question 70 (continued)

If voters are not required to identify themselves with parties, then should we still have voter registration?

Noted in Third Pass (September 2019) that the idea suggested in Session 49 (of a voter registration card which could be replaced like a credit card if lost or stolen) probably would not help much if you are searching for your card two days before the election, and can't find it, and then you would not be able to vote that time around.

We also objected to the suggestion from Session 50 (of using fingerprints on a screen to prevent duplication), finding it to be a very unsanitary option. We also had been seeing more as of 2019 about facial-recognition technology, and we had been seeing indications through the news and social media that certain agencies of certain governments were either misusing it or thinking about misusing it, and we had developed a pretty bad taste for the whole business, so let's please not do it.

Question 280 (continued)

If allowing a full or partial veto, then what rules should govern such procedure?

Added sometime in September 2019: We expanded this model after deciding earlier this year that items of business should be allocated to different Houses by category. We now allow the option of a Legislative veto in addition to the standard provisions for Presidential veto. Specifically, we suggest that any action may be overridden within 30 days if it is vetoed either by a 3/5 majority of each of the other two Houses, or by a 2/3 majority of any one House. Other approaches are possible.

Question 368.5

How do (or should) we feel about Bitcoin and Libra and other digital currencies?

Added in September 2019: We are receptive to being convinced otherwise, but we currently feel that our system of fluctuating national currencies is too complex and volatile as it is. We want more stability, so we are not big fans of digital currencies.

Question 482 (continued)

Shall customers of restaurants and certain other establishments be expected or required to tip in most/all instances?

Added in September 2019: We understand that it's your money, and that you generally want maximum say as to where it goes, and that you specifically want the option to reward exceptional service when you find it. These are all important factors to consider carefully. Notwithstanding these points, though, we are yet discouraging the granting of tips even when you do receive exceptional service, and whether we eventually remove physical cash from our environment or not. For, if you do it for any, then it is expected by all, and creates disappointment on the part of any untipped workers and enslavement on the part of any tipping customers.

Question 653.5

Any other protocols to recommend as to personal pronouns?

Added sometime in September 2019: We have been seeing more instances in signed e-mail's of individuals expressing how they wish to be referenced in terms of pronouns and pronominal adjectives. While we get that more people these days openly prefer to be identified in some manner other than by their binary biological assignments (do we have that phrasing correct?), and while we will all do what we practically can to remember your preferences and apply them, yet we must find that it is not reasonable to expect us to memorize each preference for the hundreds or thousands of people that each of us knows, so please don't get mad at any of us if we can't remember how you like it.

Question 645.3 (continued)

What else can we do to maintain/improve fan interest in Baseball?

Added in October 2019: Twelfth, consider having a 3-game Division Series (instead of current 5) and 5-game League Series (instead of current 7) as buildup to 7-game World Series. We love Baseball, and we particularly love Postseason Baseball, and we are always sad when Baseball ends each year. However, with the added rounds and longer series, the Postseason can get a little wearisome for fans, in addition to the athletes who are playing in more games per year than ever before, and whose performance may eventually suffer as a result, so maybe it is now time for a trim. Besides, in addition to the streamlining effect and the dramatic buildup of longer series for deeper rounds, it could be argued that the truly-best team in the Majors (which is what each year's playoffs are attempting to determine, correct?) is going to be not only the best at defeating different opponents, but also the best at managing series of all different lengths. Counterargument is that shorter series are allegedly not as reliable for determining the net-better team, but we argue back that you've got a season of over 150 games, which ought to be much more reliable than one or more 7-game series, but yet you are willing to dismiss the winningest team in the regular season in order to award the title to the winner of a relatively-short series. If you are going to randomize the result at all by allowing other teams to challenge the winningest team for the annual title, then you can help derandomize by requiring the champion team to have successfully navigated series of all different lengths.

Question 21 (continued)

Does an individual needs to identify himself/herself as being a 'citizen' of a given nation, or can/should there be such a thing as 'dual citizenship', or may an individual may be a citizen of no nation, or do we need any kind of citizenship at all?

Even if not so much as Session 55, the global environment certainly appeared to be very hostile as of our Third Pass (October 2019), which is a big part of why we eventually changed our group position to include Citizenship after all.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Added in October 2019: Was not needed so much before, but at this stage of our technological development we need an ongoing Bureau of Electronic Defense within the Defense Department. Many hostile governments and terrorist organizations may now find it much easier to wage war upon us through electronic invasion than by either conventional or nuclear attacks. As with other forms of military operation, what we need to do in order to protect ourselves from such attacks will change over time with evolving technologies, and it will be a never-ending mission to keep up with the continually-different ways in which our enemies might choose to attack us, so we need an ongoing office to organize our operations. Also as with other military ops, we must be prepared to deal with any enemies who have already managed to breach our borders, so our new Bureau of Electronic Defense should also be watchful of any domestic hackers who might want to jerk around with our systems for whatever perverted reasons they may happen to have. Most urgent priority for the Bureau are the electronic systems for our military operations, next priority are our election systems, then the systems of other government agencies, then our private banks and other financial institutions, then our other corporations which keep our nation in business, and finally if possible the accounts of all our individual citizens.

Question 72 (continued)

Should there be a citizenship requirement for voting?

We had found the Question not applicable in Session 59, because we then were holding against the institution of Citizenship. However, since we observed in the Third Pass (October 2019) that the element was back in our model, we saw that we must consider this Question afresh. Seemed to us now that being a Citizen of a given nation is a minimum condition for being allowed to vote there.

Question 712.3

What (if anything) can/should done about the fact that we currently throw away so much good food at restaurants?

Added in October 2019: Some of you may not care so much, but some of us experience a much lower quality of life when we see so much good food going to waste at restaurants, and when we imagine what might be happening when an all-

you-can-eat buffet closes at the end of the day. Employees may be able to take some leftovers home, but in some cases local health ordinances will prohibit even that, or at least place conditions upon it, and we do not seek to challenge any of those ordinances, because the Public Health must be a paramount priority. But, is there any good reason why discarded food at restaurants couldn't at least be released for the sustenance of local animals? Hopefully per our previous Answers we will be feeding our poorer humans at the orientation centers enough that they will not need or want to undertake the health risk of eating food discarded by other humans, but our animal cousins may have stronger and more adaptable insides, and possibly could consume those leftovers more safely than we could. Containers can be designed to be filled during the evening and then set out on the ground outside when full (or probably safer to wait until closing and all the customers are gone), low enough to the ground that the cats and other smaller critters can enjoy, and shaped internally to fit different critter faces, but with flared-out wings so that they don't spill, hopefully under a canopy to mitigate rain damage. Mice will consume only at the risk of getting killed by cats, and all local critters will develop a culture of when they should be prowling and how much they should be leaving for others, there hopefully being enough that they don't need to fight over it. Not only does this approach make discarded food less wasteful, and not only does it help the local critters who are an important part of our ecosystem, but having that option available will make it less likely that bears and raccoons and other critters will want to topple our garbage cans on trash night. Win-win-win. [Reconsidered for unsure re mice.]

Question 76 (continued)

With each individual being allowed a full vote, what adjustments -- if any -- do we need to make to the registration procedure in a pluralistic environment?

We were 'generally ok' in Session 59 with the procedure then in effect. As of the Third Pass (October 2019), however, we had heard numerous reports in Twitter and other media about alleged problems with the voter-registration process in certain States and Communities. Some voter rolls were not getting purged fast enough, while others were getting purged prematurely. Allegations had circulated that certain foreign governments are unduly exerting influence over our voter registrations, and that certain racial groups were targeting certain other racial groups for disenfranchisement. We didn't know how many of these allegations were actually true, but to some extent 'perception is reality', and so we generally should be making sure not only that our systems and procedures are secure in real life, but also that the public is vividly aware of that fact, so that we have that much less to worry and stress over.

We have elsewhere in this document that there should be better communication within each County between its Coroner's office and its Records & Elections bureau. We also have it noted in Subsection I-C-4 that we generally should be conducting elections exactly once every two years. That long-but-specific timeframe allows each County to develop schedules and procedures which will ensure that voter rolls are duly purged of all recently-deceased citizens before each election.

As we think further about the problem in the Third Pass, it occurs to us that we could also help things by encouraging/requiring the Records & Elections bureau of each County to publicize on its official website the current voter registration for each Precinct, shortly before the election, but with a long-enough advance that people have time to check the list and initiate any applicable responses. Any citizen who

may be interested can verify that recently-deceased and recently-relocated persons have been duly removed, and that everyone who should be on the list is on the list. Records & Elections should have a standard procedure by which a perceived problem may be formally addressed. If the challenge is that a particular registrant is deceased or has relocated or is otherwise ineligible to appear on the list, or has been listed two or more times, then we can flag for possible removal any attempt to vote using the ineligible profile, because we have established somewhere here that each individual vote is tied to a unique ID number, so we can capture it if we need to. If the challenge is that a particular individual should be on the registration list but is not, then that individual may be allowed to cast a 'provisional ballot', which will be held pending investigation of the challenge. Counties had better get this all correct, because we are currently perceiving a tremendous erosion of public confidence in our Elections agencies, so State and Federal offices should be prepared to investigate any allegations of impropriety, and to discipline as appropriate any applicable local officials who allow such problems to exist, whether knowingly or not.

Question 77 (continued)

Under what circumstances would a voter need to re-register?

Added in the Third Pass (October 2019) that we should include a routine announcement in each televised ballot count of the number of provisional ballots on hand, so that everyone can see whether or not those ballots could decide the outcome of a given election.

Question 81 (continued)

Do we agree with the qualifications for Federal offices as outline in the Constitution, excluding the term limits established in the 22nd Amendment?

Because we changed our position in the Second Pass to restore the institution of Citizenship, we hold as of the Third Pass (October 2019) that one should have some level of Citizenship status in order to be allowed to vote.

Question 84 (continued)

Shall the accumulation by an individual of a certain number of years of experience in a given office be considered a failure to qualify for additional service in that office?

We had projected in Session 60 that campaign costs would be decreasing as a result of the Internet. However, we observed 19 years later in the Third Pass (October 2019) that campaign costs and campaign contributions were both still very high, notwithstanding the Internet and the Social Media, but of course things would be different in our model of limited campaign spending, so it's 'not applicable' after all.

Question 86 (continued)

What about the needs of the people who want to run for office, but don't get their fair chance because of the tendency of incumbents to stay put?

Observed in the Third Pass (October 2019) that the discussion conducted in Session 60 did not really address the Question as phrased, although it may have been useful

for Section II-E. Therefore deferring to the notes in our 'black book' of preliminary ideas for our present Answer, viz.:

"This is a fallacious perception. While it is true that incumbents have more name recognition, they remain there only to the extent that the people want them there (unless impropriety can be determined, which must be dealt with as a separate issue); if the public is reluctant to change to an unproven stranger, then that's their choice, and it should not be mitigated just to give more people a chance to throw their weight around. The needs of the public are more important than any others, and their choices should always be maximized."

Question 92 (continued)

Should campaigns for any public office be funded by any government entity?

We had noted in Session 60 that improved technology would result in lower campaign costs in general, but it was possible as of the Third Pass (October 2019) that the exact opposite had happened. In any case, it was enough for Q92 still to be relevant. Noted in Third Pass that many (if not most, if not all) supporters of Term Limits would allow at least one term of re-election, as a motivation for the incumbent to perform well, in which case the possibility for manipulation would still be there to some extent. What we therefore needed is a spending model which is not so vulnerable to official manipulation, as we apparently did end up creating.

Question 97 (continued)

Can't any rules on campaign finance be circumvented, by setting up dummy organizations, etc.?

This had been marked "done" in Session 60, but we observed in the Third Pass (October 2019) that we hadn't treated this topic as thoroughly as we should have done. For, even with limits in place on aggregate campaign spending, we also stated in this model that we want full disclosure of all campaign contributions, so that voters can decide whether they want to support the causes of those organizations. If we allow campaigns to take contributions from dummy organizations in order to conceal the true motives of the 'fatcats' behind the scenes, then the voter loses the transparency which we seek.

As it is, we are observing in the Third Pass a greater emphasis on revealing the identities of all partners of any organizations contributing to any campaigns, for this very reason. Also noting that our Economic findings eventually included greater transparency of all financial transactions, at least the biggest ones.

Question 99 (continued)

Given the ability to place limitations on how much advertising rich people can do, what about the needs of qualified candidates who don't have any funds, or big fund-raising organizations behind them?

Added in Third Pass (October 2019) that social platforms such as Twitter and Instagram (Facebook was then coming under increased scrutiny and criticism) were helping to spread many people's messages for free, although some large amounts

still were being collected and spent on more expensive outreaches such as television ads and physical campaign rallies.

Question 101 (continued)

Could more information be allowed in election materials?

Noted in Third Pass (October 2019) that our eventual decision to grant ballot access to those candidates receiving the highest counts of petition signatures implies that they already have some name recognition to start with. However, that fact does not negate the virtue of seeing all candidates presented the same way in your voter pamphlet for 'apples-to-apples' comparison, so it's still a Yes even in revised model.

Question 358 (continued)

What are the features of a 'good' or 'healthy' economy?

Adjusted in October 2019 our list of reasons against a wall on the Mexican border: Third reason from the Session 197 was made fourth, fourth reason was made fifth, and fifth reason was made seventh. New third reason is that, insofar as it ends up being effective at all, it would hurt our own economic interests by cutting off the flow of laborers and tourists and businesspeople who could continue to help us in various ways, as immigrants have done since the early 1600's. New sixth reason is that it ignores the much simpler solution to illegal immigration, being to make it all legal [*also suggested by Jeffrey Miron in USA Today on 31-Jul-2018, and probably elsewhere as well]. Eighth, there apparently would be a large negative environmental impact* [Eighth reason originally was a 'possible', was elevated to 'actual' in July 2019, based on Twitter post from @RepRaulGrijalva, who cited report from KOLD News in Tucson.] Ninth, even if you make all immigration legal at designated entry points, the wall still sends a message to outsiders from Mexico and points south that they are not welcome here, and will continue to do so unless/until you build a similar wall with Canada.

Question 300 (continued)

Should judges be elected, appointed, or some of each?

Added sometime in October 2019: As mentioned in Subsection I-E-7, we should not have lifetime tenures for any judges at any level. Specifically, we recommend a 12-year term for incoming members of the U.S. Supreme Court. Tenure of any sitting Justice can be extended in 6-year terms upon 3/5 vote of the U.S. Senate.

Question 353.1

If not sufficiently established in the foregoing, to what extent (if at all) should convicted criminals be disenfranchised from the right to vote, either during and/or after any imprisonment?

Added sometime in October 2019, because when looking for a citation to add to our public outline, following this question arising on Twitter, we found only a generic reference to disenfranchisement in Section I-C, but nothing in Section I-F.

Subject to any more persuasive arguments hidden elsewhere in this document, current feeling is that some prisoners should have their voting rights suspended,

while others need not. Similarly, certain parolees should be allowed to vote, while others should not. It can depend on the nature and severity of the crime(s) committed, such that those guilty of less-severe crimes can still be allowed to exercise the franchise, while the harder criminals can be considered as having waived their right to vote by making a permanent enemy of society.

Question 639.2 (continued)

How best to summarize and quantify these findings?

Added in October 2019, from quick recollection of previous discussion, that we should have a 2/3-1/3 season split if there are two Divisions in one Conference.

Question 653 (continued)

What case of pronouns is appropriate in the predicate position?

Added sometime in October 2019 that we can have an exception if the phrase is followed by a relative clause, such as "It was I who blew the whistle."

Question 658.3 (continued)

What other words/expressions in our vocabulary do we feel should be either modified or at least clarified?

Preventive, Preventative - added in November 2019

Notwithstanding any claims made by anybody else, we hold that it is better to say 'preventive' than 'preventative'. Two reasons why: First, we don't really need the extra letters and syllable when the shorter version conveys the exact same meaning. Second, we observe a parallel between 'prevention' and 'invention' with their similar roots; if the adjectival form of 'invention' is 'inventive', then we see no good reason for the corresponding form of 'prevention' to be anything other than 'preventive'.

Question 113 (continued)

Do we want to encourage the use of absentee ballots?

We had agreed upon a Yes answer in Session 62. However, we reconsidered our position during the Third Pass (November 2019), because the author was never thrilled with the idea of encouraging mailed ballots over Election Day voting. It may be all right for closed-minded voters who vote sheepishly for whichever candidates are nominated by their favorite political parties, and who therefore pay little or no attention to anything which happens during the campaign. It certainly could also help for those who live in severer climates, or who for some other reason can't easily (or at all) vote on the actual Election Day. Others of us, however, can vote on Election Day, and prefer to use every day and every moment of campaign time to inform our final decisions. If we encourage everyone to vote by mail, and then allow people to vote again in person if they change their minds about any races or propositions, it can run into a lot of work in eliminating the duplicate ballots, election workers might screw it up, and even if they don't screw it up it could add a lot of time to the process of determining the final winners. We now think it net-best to allow vote-by-mail, and to announce continually to the public that the vote-by-mail

option exists, but generally to encourage Election Day voting over vote-by-mail wherever practical, so that voters can have the option to finalize their decisions at the end of the campaign without imposing an excessive administrative burden on the counting process. Besides, it's a good look -- from the angle of voters, precinct volunteers, the press, and any onlookers -- when people actually come out to vote at the polls with their neighbors, it's good theater, it shows very dramatically how We The People have the ultimate charge over our communities.

Question 114 (continued)

Certain political organizations currently send applications for absentee ballots to prospective voters, under guise of catering to their convenience: Should this practice be permitted?

Because we modified our Answer 113 in the Third Pass (November 2019), this point was in play as well. Sending out applications for mail ballots feels a lot like a salesman eagerly trying to 'close the deal' before the prospect has a chance to reconsider. More specifically, it seems to be encouraging voters to close their minds and vote immediately, without allowing themselves to be influenced by any debates or other revelations which may emerge during the campaign.

Reflecting further during the Third Pass, yes we do still see some utility in at least enabling (if not encouraging) mailed ballots as a means of increasing willing voter participation, particularly among those voters who find it an inconvenience or a drudge or a physical challenge to travel to a physical polling place, and for the duration of the time that we do not have secure electronic voting everywhere. However, we still have a problem with the suggestion (whether explicit or implicit) that voters should make their decisions prior to the conclusion of the campaign, and also with candidates appearing to encourage such premature and underinformed decision-making by sending vote-by-mail applications to voters. We also have a hangup about the idea of telling candidates how to campaign, especially if with advancing technology we end up getting away from postal literature of any kind, in favor of more electronic forms of outreach. Some candidates may still want to send out such applications whether they are required to or not, but the step could backfire if it increases voter participation in favor of the candidates' opponents. On balance, while there is much to be said on both sides, we guess that we can allow candidates to send out vote-by-mail applications if they really wish, but not require it, and that any accompanying literature should emphasize that such mailed ballots are to be used only by those voters who have already made up their minds about the entire election, although the principal encouragement is that voters generally should seek to keep an open mind until the end of the campaign, same as we ask jurors not to form any opinions on a case until all the evidence and closing arguments have been presented. However, we also suggest that voters should harbor a level of distrust against any candidate who encourages vote by mail, or who includes vote-by-mail applications in their campaign literature, on grounds that they are seeking to encourage voters to make their ballot decisions before all the facts are in.

Question 574.6 (continued)

Any other suggestions on testing protocols?

Added in November 2019: Dabrowski's "Theory of Positive Disintegration" is a fancy way of presenting a very basic concept, which is that we get stronger and more self-

fulfilled as we confront various challenges in our lives, and learn to overcome at least some of them, whereas those who never experience any difficulties don't have much opportunity to grow as individuals.

This principle (which was mentioned in our Answer 0.8) applies to our Education model in a couple of key ways. First, those kids who are considered 'gifted' in terms of their educational aptitudes may find primary and secondary school so easy that they never 'learn how to learn', and thus can find things overly difficult when they get to college. Second, most kids will need to face the reality that they are not as adept in certain areas (at least not yet) as certain other kids of the same chronological age, and should not suffer lasting damage to their self-esteem as a result. Our tracking model helps with the latter point, but we should also factor both points into our testing protocols.

Specifically, we should not succumb to those who argue that we should not have any tests or exercises or competitions which demonstrate the relative proficiencies of all students in a particular class. Even if it momentarily hurts the self-esteem to receive a less-than-perfect score, or a score which is lower than one or more other students in the class, the Dabrowski theory appears to argue that we should use that feeling to motivate us to learn more, and to do better the next time. Conversely, students who are routinely scoring 100% on their tests in a certain subject probably should be advanced along that track sooner rather than later, so that they can make more efficient use of their school time. More specifically in the case of what we currently call 'high school', as we are exposing students to a much wider array of subjects, we should allow for the fact that many students will do better in some subjects than others, so we should use the lower test scores to tell us where each student needs to concentrate more, or which subjects to de-emphasize in favor of those where she has a stronger natural aptitude.

Question 124.4 (continued)

In general, what Voting Method is best for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies?

We read an article at scorevoting.net/bulletbugaboo in November 2019, and made some notes. Main page of site asserts that Score Voting is "simple enough ... to be used by kindergarteners", but we question this assertion, because we thought that most kindergarteners can't already count to 100, but one of our SIG correspondents said that they do, and found some online sources to corroborate that it's expected of at least those who are close to Age 6. However, the same correspondent reacted that "there may be a certain amount of hyperbole" in the website's assertion that the system can be used by kindergarteners.

We also questioned their assertion that score voting is "simple enough to run on all of today's voting machines", big bad phooey on that one.

Same correspondent made good point that even sincere voters will tend to apply different ranges to candidates if given the option. Some may keep between 50-100 (or maybe even 80-100 if they're in a really good mood), while others may use the entire 0-100 scale, so we would end up with an 'apples & oranges' effect when seeking to average them. We agreed that a 5-point scale reduces this effect, and she was also okay with our 3-point scale.

Question 589 (continued)

What facts and/or skills and/or values will we want to teach in each of the subjects in each of the disciplines at the primary level, and how much time do we expect the teaching to take under ordinary conditions?

Civics - Economics - added in November 2019

Contrary to popular perception, the "Federal Reserve System" is neither Federal nor a Reserve, but instead "is a privately owned banking cartel that issues our currency, establishes interest rates, and operates to make a profit for its private shareholders."* [*Eggelletion, Andre M., "Thieves in the Temple" (Milligan Books, 2004). p.14, where the author also decries the disestablishment of Civics education in our public schools.]

Question 379.1

How does the Federal Reserve system currently operate, in comparison with the model described above?

We began in November 2019 to read the 2004 book "Thieves in the Temple" by Andre Michael Eggelletion, who described both the history and the functionality of the current 'Federal Reserve', which he contended is actually neither 'Federal' nor a 'Reserve'. We did not agree with all the assertions and opinions in the book, but several of them seemed sound enough to warrant serious consideration, and so we packaged them under this new Question as part of the Third Pass.

According to Chapter 1, 'The Fed' was created from 1910-1913 by seven private bankers who secretly created a system whereby they would be sanctioned by Congress to issue currency and control interest rates. Although the members are private, the seven Governors on the Fed Board -- as well as the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board -- are appointed by the President with consent of the Senate, so there is some 'federal' aspect to the body after all.

The nominal purpose of 'The Fed' to stabilize the economy has been repeatedly unsuccessful, with multiple depressions and recessions in recent decades. Eggelletion claims that the cycles are deliberate in order to keep the Fed bankers getting richer, but even if it is not true the system still isn't working. He further suggests that the bankers have deliberately instigated many of our larger wars of recent decades, in order to generate more interest income for themselves when the warring governments inevitably borrow more money. We cannot independently confirm this to be true, but the motivation certainly is there with our current system.

Chapter 2 goes more into the history of the Federal Reserve. Sometime after A.D. 1000, early bankers in medieval England began issuing paper receipts to clients who kept gold in their vaults, and then began releasing more paper than they had gold for. They lent out the paper currency at interest, and obtained large profits on money which they did not really have, in what the author calls 'fractional reserve banking'. Problem with this theory of history is that the bankers were not getting more gold back as a result of all this lending, and therefore would have been getting back only more of the paper which they themselves printed, so their wealth was not really increasing.

A son of the original Rothschild (who changed his name from Bauer after learning about banking in Hanover) cornered the British securities market in 1815 after learning through his spies that Napoleon had lost at Waterloo, selling his stocks to create a run as though Napoleon had won, then buying back the stocks when they bottomed out. After the 'Great Financial Panic of 1907', the Rothschild family (really marrying only within itself?) energized their agents (including J.P. Morgan) to sell the American Congress on the idea that only a central national bank could stabilize our economy. As a result, the Rothschilds and their partners gained control over American as well as European wealth.

Chapter 3 describes that the experiment to maintain a central national bank owned by private interests was attempted several times in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, but it always generated more wealth for the private owners, and economic instability for citizens and local businesses. "Anytime you give bankers the power to create money out of nothing and loan it back to the government at interest, they are going to expand the money supply until the money in circulation becomes worthless." However, their listing of the four types of money appears to omit the accounting entries which we use to record the movement of existing monies among entities and funds and accounts.

According to the first part of Chapter 4, after the American Civil War, to combat the continued use of greenbacks issued by Lincoln to finance the war independently of the European bankers, the bankers allegedly precipitated economic crises in 1873, 1884, 1893, and 1907 by severely contracting the money supply, so again we must make sure not to do it too suddenly if we do it at all. We did more reading later.

Question 118

Wouldn't this result in extra expense to staff the polls during the additional times, and/or potential security risks in having polls open during the late-night hours?

This was not directly addressed in Session 62, because we were then more focused on maximizing mailed ballots. However, noted in the Third Pass (November 2019) that our 'black book' of preliminary ideas offers the following response:

"Possibly, and this is an area where each locality can choose (by ordinance or by popular vote) whether they wish to have the polls open for the entire 24-hour period, or whether they wish to take a break, say, from 10:00pm to 4:00am (local time). The important considerations are that the opening and closing hours for the polls are the same in real time across the nation, and that everyone in each jurisdiction has a fair and equal opportunity to vote in person at some time during that 24-hour period. Then, the results of voting can be tabulated for the entire country all at one time."

Question 124.4 (continued)

In general, what Voting Method is best for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies?

Added in Third Pass (November 2019) that it would be actively useful when all candidates in a race achieve negative scores under Method E1, for it would send a strong statement that the electorate is generally dissatisfied with all the candidates being produced by the political establishment, and that we crave a new type of

candidate. This is one big reason why it is better to express Method E1 on a scale of +1/0/-1, instead of as a variant of Method F1 with a 0-2 scale, because being greater or lesser than 0 is a much more dramatic look than being greater or lesser than the total number of votes cast. Another big reason is that voters can understand more easily casting a Negative vote for a hated candidate and considering an Abstain to be equivalent to zero, whereas the 0-2 scale would require the voter to give a positive score to a neutral candidate. Algebra may be the same, but packaging is important too.

Pursuant to the suggestion offered in Session 67, to require the net-approval margin under Method E1 to surpass some given quantity or percentage in order to count for victory, we continue to find in the Third Pass that there should be no such minimum.

Method E1 still was our method of choice at this time, but we had begun to refer to in our public conversations as "Approval With Abstention Option" or "AWAO". The interested Twitter user may find under hashtag *AWAOvoting* a thread of 20 short tweets which describe and exemplify how the AWAO method defeats either Single-Vote Plurality or Ranked-Choice Voting in solving the Polarized-Environment Problem. We had been pushing this method extensively among groups which are interested in reforming our Voting Methods, particularly any pushing for either Ranked-Choice Voting or Approval without the Abstention Option.

Question 124.4 (continued)

In general, what Voting Method is best for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies?

Contrary to the analysis presented at beginning of Session 68, as of the Third Pass (November 2019) we expect and even relish the prospect that the highest-scoring candidate will have a net-negative approval rating, for this fact may be taken as a message from the electorate to the political establishment (whether you still have actual Parties or not) that we are generally dissatisfied with the candidates which you have been providing to us, and that it's time for a different breed, whatever that may translate to. This is one reason (among others) why we now specify that our preferred Voting Method use +1/0/-1 as its scoring scale, instead of 2/1/0 as some on Twitter have suggested, so that we can more easily see which candidates have net-positive approval and which (or all) have net-negative.

Question 105.5 (continued)

Should we be having jurisdictions set a fixed number of candidates on each ballot, or instead allow any number of candidates to appear who have fulfilled the signature requirement?

By the time of the Third Pass (November 2019), we had modified the individual signature maximum to be one-third of the total number of candidates.

Question 49.6 (continued)

Should payments of any kind ever be made to incumbent officials?

Added in Third Pass (November 2019): What about businesses in which you had an ownership interest at the time of selection for office? They generally (if not always)

should pay you off for whatever you had earned as of the selection date, and then you should divest those interests. You are not going to be available during your incumbency to perform any further work or consultation for those businesses, so it makes no sense for you to continue drawing income from them. Meanwhile, maintaining any ongoing association with those businesses could constitute a serious conflict of interest. One recent example was in 2019, when it was reported that the then-President was promoting his hotels and other income properties while in office, including as sites for political and diplomatic meetings such as the G-7 economic summit. If you want to buy back shares of those businesses after you leave office, so that you can go back to work earning incomes from them, then that's probably okay, except insofar as you did anything while in office to promote certain businesses upon the expectation of benefitting financially from them later on.

What about sales revenue from books written while in office? If you have time to write one or more books while in office, then you probably are not serving your constituents satisfactorily.

What about sales revenue from books previously written, or other accomplishments previously achieved? That's probably okay, since there is no real conflict of interest.

Question 105.5 (continued)

Should we be having jurisdictions set a fixed number of candidates on each ballot, or instead allow any number of candidates to appear who have fulfilled the signature requirement?

We had adopted a provision back in Session 68 whereby each jurisdiction would decide what the minimum (L) and maximum (H) numbers of candidates should be for each type of race in that jurisdiction (the top L signature-gatherers automatically being listed on the ballot, with any additional candidates also listed who have gathered a certain number (S) of signatures, until the total number of qualified candidates reaches H, in which case the top H signature-gatherers are listed), and whereby any organization that is discovered to have attempted to 'corner the market' by sponsoring at least L/2 candidates in any election would have all of its candidates disqualified.

By the time that we reached the Third Pass (November 2019), however, we found that these provisions are way too complicated, and instead decided to recommend a default of 15 candidates for National office, 10 for State office, and 5 for Local, each jurisdiction modifying as it sees fit. In any case, the candidates with the highest signature counts get on the ballot. Also, if N candidates are allowed on a given ballot, then each voter should be limited to signing N/3 petitions (rounded however you like), so that no one 'wing' (not even the centrists) can dominate the ballot.

Tempted at this time to overrule our finding from Session 68, that "the number of signatures acquired by any candidate should not be disclosed until after the deadline for submitting them to the Elections Office", because we had begun to envision a system where all nominees are listed on the government website in descending order by signatures collected so far, to make it easier for signers to find serious candidates. However, still sticking with the finding for the reason stated, "that nobody's actions are dictated by anyone else's actions". [Reconsidered later.]

Question 124.73 (or 124.7C) (continued)

Who should approve a recall?

We had found in Session 69 that just cause must be established in removing any public official, but we modified this position in the Third Pass (November 2019), partly because we had previously agreed that just cause is not needed for a recall election if you have enough signatures, and also because the 'at will' employment relationship which has arisen in recent years sometimes precludes the requirement of good faith. We therefore added Question 458.3 at this time:

Question 458.3

How do we feel about the 'at will' relationship which has arisen in recent years between employers and employees?

Came up in November 2019 during our Third Pass review of Question 124.73, because we had cited that the termination of any government official by a superior should follow the same 'good faith' rules as in any other employer/employee relationship, but that was back in July 2001. Since that time, we have seen more instances of an employment agreement explicitly designating that the relationship is 'at will', meaning that either party may quit the arrangement at any time, possibly with a minimum notice period, but without needing to designate any cause.

We see both sides of the argument: On one hand, the conditions which impel two parties to enter into an employment contract could change over time, in which case neither party should be required to remain in the contract to their detriment. On the other hand, as with a marriage, part of the appeal of the old-style employment contracts was the stability factor, that as long as I continue to satisfy all the job requirements, and barring any economic downturns necessitating any layoffs, I will be able to keep my job until retirement, and never again need to go through the distasteful process of securing a new job.

Which argument is more compelling? One additional factor which may serve as a tie-breaker is that the 'at will' clause can allow an employer to discriminate against an employee without legal consequence. For example, suppose that a homophobic employer hires someone for some job, and then learns two years later that the employee is gay; under the modern laws of most jurisdictions, the employee could not be fired simply for being gay, but the 'at will' clause allows the employer to sever the employment relationship without stating any cause, so the employee could end up getting fired anyway, without enough evidence to prove unlawful discrimination.

Pending cogent counterargument, then, we are currently inclined to disfavor the 'at will' employment contract. As with a marriage, the individual who is seeking to be employed usually is looking for a permanent or at least long-term arrangement, and generally has good reason to expect that the arrangement will continue as long as the work is getting done sufficiently well. Involuntary severance of such a contract should necessitate some valid reason which may be freely disclosed to the public, or else the employee is subject to unfair discrimination at any time, and must live in continual fear that employment could end at any moment. We don't want fear, we want peace and stability and happiness, so no please do not impose lifetimes of anxiety among your workers by tying them down with 'at will' employment contracts.

Question 124.73 (or 124.7C) (continued)

Who should approve a recall?

Now that we had found in new Answer 458.3 against the idea of an 'at will' type of regular employment, we saw in November 2019 that we were right the first time, that the unilateral termination of any government official should necessitate the 'good faith' establishment of 'just cause', although that requirement does not apply if a recall is ordered by either legislative vote or popular election.

Question 300 (continued)

Should judges be elected, appointed, or some of each?

As to the recall process asked about in Question 124.73, we noted during our Third Pass review in November 2019 that it is Legislatures not Executives who really should be doing the appointing, and that those assemblies remain in office even as delegates rotate in and out, so Legislatures still can perform the recall function when needed. Terms and conditions of judicial recall can be left up to each jurisdiction to decide, but as with anything else the voting requirement should be low enough to be achievable and high enough to be difficult and thus a resort only when really needed.

Question 458.2 (continued)

Shall we impose any maximum chronological age for working?

4) Added in November 2019 for a No that a mandatory retirement age sends the distasteful and inaccurate message that anyone over Age X has no further use.

Question 124.75 (continued)

Who should replace the person being recalled?

Reconsidered our position in the Third Pass (December 2019) about allowing a spouse to succeed a recalled incumbent, especially in light of the discussion about granting to his widow the seat of Congressperson Elijah Cummings. We now distinguish in our discussion between filling a vacancy caused by death and filling a vacancy caused by recall. For, when there is a finding on the part of the electorate that a particular official needs to be removed from office forthwith, the good chance that the official's spouse shares similar values and interests makes that person ineligible to fill the seat or recommend a replacement. Conversely, when a seat is vacated by death, and there is no showing that the electorate was opposing the incumbent's continued tenure, it could be argued that the spouse might be qualified to either fill the vacancy or recommend a replacement, on the chance of the two sharing similar values, although we definitely know of certain married couples who disagreed politically. Decided at this time to roll this out as a separate Question:

Question 124.76

Who should replace an official who deceases before end of term?

Again, this Question grew out of our Third Pass review (December 2019) of what we are now calling Answer 124.75, to consider whether our standard provisions for

filling vacancies created by recall should be any different when the incumbent deceases in office.

In that we now have provisions within our model for filling any government position in case of mid-term vacancy (presumably, the same provisions which apply for recall would apply in case of a resignation), we may not need or want anything further in case of death in office. On the other hand, there is both recent and distant precedent -- both in America and within other Nations -- to allow the deceased's spouse to take over the remainder of the term. How do we feel about the practice?

Short answer is, mixed feelings. On one hand, we usually (if not always) want to be sympathetic to the spouse and family of the deceased, and in many cases the spouse is actually in the best position to carry on the legacy of the elected incumbent, at least until end of term, as a result of possibly sharing similar values and having been exposed to at least some of the discussions and introduced to at least some of the key people with whom the deceased incumbent previously dealt. On the other hand, it is by no means a lock that the deceased incumbent and his/her spouse shared similar political ideas or values, and certain positions may require levels of education and training and experience which the spouse simply may not possess.

We have worked out a compromise solution which we are proposing until someone (if ever) comes up with a better plan: Give the spouse first option to fill the vacancy. If the spouse agrees, then the accession takes place immediately, but can be overruled by a 3/5 vote of the population-based house of the applicable Legislature. (Simple majority would be too easy to achieve, whereas a 2/3 vote might be too difficult.) That way, if a large proportion of the People's house finds that the incumbent's spouse is insufficiently qualified for some combination of reasons, then they don't need to accept the spouse as a member against their will, but the accession can be allowed in the ordinary case.

Another option is to transfer the overrule authority from the higher-level Legislature to the supervising board of the County which most nearly coincides in area with the District being represented, or by the applicable State Legislature in the case of a United States Senator, on grounds that the representatives of the original electorate are in better position to assess whether the incumbent's spouse -- or any other possible replacement -- truly shares the feelings and values of the incumbent. We lean against this option, though, because the State and County assemblies might not have enough knowledge about higher-level politics to make a well-informed assessment. May be better to keep State and County assemblies focused on their own jurisdiction levels, and let the higher-level assemblies tend to their own.

Question 3.7 (continued)

Can human corruption be sufficiently negated, corrected, overcome, or mitigated in such a way that its effects will not cause the degradation of any society?

Added in the Third Pass (December 2019) the recent debate as to whether the violence portrayed in some current video games is tending to contribute to the violence which we are seeing in real life, and suggesting for safety that we seek to wean ourselves away from either virtual or real violence, unless and until it can once be satisfactorily established that violence in video games definitely causes decreased violence in real life.

Panelist had suggested in Session 70 that improved technology might mitigate corruption, because the cost of production would be greatly reduced. However, corruption was still rampant around the Nation and the World as we reviewed these notations for the Third Pass, even with greatly-advanced technology, so we are now dubious about that prospect.

Question 497.1

Should the pre-existence of a power relationship between two individuals prevent them from forming a personal relationship?

We read in SIG correspondence during December 2019 a suggestion to legalize sex within a power relationship if not prohibited by corporate policy. Considered later.

Question 126 (continued)

What is the motivation for any particular government agency to follow such principles?

Still intrigued as of the Third Pass (December 2019) by the idea written in the 'black book' in 2005 to use the Census as a polling mechanism to determine government salaries, but at least temporarily we would want any 'votes' taken via the Census on taxation or spending levels to be non-binding, at least until we get a better feel for whether enough people will take the exercise seriously enough to give sincere and constructive responses. As it is, we fear that many residents will vote for Zero Taxation in order to maximize individual liberty, while others will vote for Total Taxation in order to maximize government control. If you average those out, and come up with something in the 40-60% range, then you will end up with a system that Nobody wants. Maybe we end up 'throwing out' a certain number of extreme responses, as they have done with certain Olympic events. In any case, let's see how the Public actually responds before we commit to a binding vote. As we proceed with our real-life trials, we should inform the Public that we will be more likely to make their votes binding in the future if they are sincere and constructive now, whereas unrealistic responses will tend to make us forget about the whole business.

Even at that, though, whether the vote is binding or not, and even if many people actually try to provide sincere and constructive responses, can we really rely on those numbers to be useful? As much as we may try to simplify and equify our systems of taxing and spending in the course of this model, there still will be many factors which go into the decisions of which rates to set for different types of tax under different types of conditions. Although we would wish it otherwise, and maybe someday it will be, for now it may yet be too much math to expect ordinary adults with grammar-school or even high-school education to grasp, even if they try.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

We can see as of the Third Pass how it might be useful to have a bureau of the Department of Defense focusing on threats to our security which come from within

our borders, particularly policing as needed any actual or potential acts of Terrorism. We therefore decided to be okay with having a Bureau of Homeland Security within the Department of Defense, so that there will be a unified command in case of any threat potentially affecting both our borders and our homeland.

Question 318.3

If the defendant claims in an arraignment to be 'not guilty', then which side shall have the burden of proof?

Added in December 2019, can't believe that we left this out: It has been the standard of American jurisprudence for many years that the prosecution shall have the burden of proving 'beyond a reasonable doubt' that the defendant committed the act(s) in question, and/or that such actions constituted a violation of applicable law.

We concur that this is an appropriate standard to maintain. False accusations (whether by malice or by honest mistake) have plagued America throughout our history, going back to the Salem witch trials, down through the McCarthy era, and into our present day. Police departments and prosecutor's offices have sometimes been shown to 'jump the gun' by trying the wrong individuals, and we still often hear in the news how certain men (usually of color) have their convictions overturned after decades of incarceration because of new evidence establishing their innocence.

It is far too easy to make inaccurate accusations, so the mere fact of an accusation should not be considered a reliable indication of guilt. Rather, it is important to make sure that the relevant facts and legalities are all established beyond even more of a 'reasonable doubt' than we have been applying up to now, because we clearly need to improve the accuracy of our conviction rates.

However, it should not ever be stated that the defendant is 'innocent until proven guilty', although we often hear that inaccurate expression in current real life. The correct expression is 'presumed innocent until proven guilty'. Some people like the shortcut, both because it is a shortcut and because it sends the message that the accused is still to be regarded and treated in all respects as an innocent person, although the fact that he has been arrested and summoned to a criminal trial belies that premise. In any case, we have heard it incorrectly interpreted that the accused is actually innocent until the moment of his conviction, at which time he is definitely guilty, neither of which is the true case. If the accused actually committed the bad act in question, then he was guilty the moment that he did it, and he remains guilty for life, whether we successfully prove his guilt in a court of law or not. Conversely, if the accused is actually innocent of the crime in question, then he is still innocent even if he gets wrongfully convicted. In order to avoid confusing and misleading all the non-lawyers any more than we already have done, we recommend against using the shortcut, and for the full 'presumed innocent until proven guilty' expression.

Question 48 (continued)

What executive model can we construct as a useful starting point for States and Localities to consider?

We found a big problem during our Third Pass (December 2019) in there having been no Police function at the County level. Counties are regional administrative arms of the State, and the State has no means of enforcing its laws in the field

except through an active Sheriff's organization within each County. In addition, even if there were not any mandates from the State to be enforced, most/all Counties would still want some number of sworn officers maintaining Law & Order throughout all unincorporated areas of the County, and possibly also to supplement the efforts of certain incorporated Cities which may not possess the resources or resolve to manage all their own problems. Therefore added a Sheriff's office to the Health & Safety Department. However, the Drug & Liquor Regulation function may continue as a separate bureau, and may utilize the services of the Sheriff's office in certain enforcement situations.

Noted in the Third Pass that Arts did end up in the City structure, but we were amenable to restoring it to the County level as well, especially if the general-public group turns out to have recommended it, but maybe even if not, because otherwise the unincorporated areas of the County might be Artless.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Arts note in the Municipal section from Session 90 stated that any government involvement should be limited to local events, and may need not to exist at all. Reading this note during the Third Pass (December 2019) made us uneasy, as with the corresponding discussion in the County segment. We get that we need to prioritize, and make sure that our people have their basic survival needs met before we move up Maslow's ladder toward Self-Actualization, but on the other hand the whole idea of limiting our public participation in the Arts may be adding toward the tensions which we have been observing within our communities and among our Nations. In the end, governments at all levels must do whatever they and their constituents determine to be in the Public Interest, and that may in some cases involve some amount of Arts sponsorship. Arts help us, so don't overlook them.

Our previous finding on Libraries (that they should be a bureau in each City's "Cultural Enrichment Department") was reached back in 2002, and we recognize in the Third Pass that people are now able to access much more information in electronic form without getting off the sofa, and that we may not need brick-and-mortar Libraries to the same extent that we used to. Insofar as any particular Cities decide that they should be phasing out Libraries as an ongoing civic function, that's all the more reason why Libraries currently should be organized as part of a Department with several other Bureaus, because it is easier administratively to eliminate a Bureau than an entire Department.

Question 275.6 (continued)

Any questions on debate rules, including time limits?

Added in December 2019: Houses and committees must have at least 50% of their memberships present (either in person or electronically) for a quorum in order to call a session to order, but business may continue during the session as normal if attendance falls below quorum at any time prior to adjournment. This way, it would be impossible for an unethically-small number of delegates to assert by themselves

that a session is in order, and then they attempt to undo any and all previous resolutions ever made by the house, but neither are we making it too difficult to get business transacted when it needs to be. And, if attendance during a properly-called session ever needs to fall below that quorum level, the departing delegates would be in a position to realize that their departure would be causing the below-quorum condition, and so they would be in a position to ask for adjournment before they leave, and then the full assembly present would have the opportunity to decide whether it is more important to get the pending business transacted immediately or to wait until a broader cross-section of delegates again becomes available.

Question 20 (continued)

How shall we determine how many governments we are to have, and over what territory they will have jurisdiction?

Added in December 2019: As to possibility #3, of scrapping our borders and starting over with a permanent plan, one theoretical possibility which might be net-fair to all (although still hugely disruptive, so we are not necessarily recommending it at this time, but neither would we oppose it if someone else suggested it) is to plan all Nations around our natural river systems. For, that's how many of our civilizations developed in the first place, starting where the rivers hit the coastlines, and then expanding up the lengths of the rivers, and spreading out among all river branches. Also, whenever you have multiple Nations sharing a river (either on opposite sides, or one upstream of the other), it is often possible that dams or other construction projects initiated by one Nation could adversely affect the other, so it might be easier all around if one Nation controls and benefits from the entire river valley. In theory, they should then have all the resources and 'living room' which they need to survive and prosper, and they should have little or no motivation to initiate war on any other country. Borders could be established along watershed lines between river valleys, except of course in riverless areas like the Sahara, which if this main model were adopted would need to be considered on a case-by-case exceptional basis.

However, we performed at this time a preliminary check of World maps to determine the number of major nations which would exist on each continent if we adopted the river model. Conclusion was that we almost certainly would not want to build a separate nation around each independent river system, because a quick look at Texas shows the Brazos and a separate Colorado running almost parallel across the state before they dump into the Gulf of Mexico, but then again maybe we could combine parallel states into larger nations. Further, the big nation of Canada has numerous points where rivers connect with the Beaufort Sea and the Hudson Bay and the Labrador Sea and other large bodies, and we see no compelling reason to break up Canada into 20-50 sovereign nations.

Important thing would be that no one river is shared, so there would no problem to have multiple river systems contained within a single nation if no strenuous objection. Maybe we would do it for the just the longest rivers in the World with all their tributaries, and then we see what's left over? We made preliminary sketches for the longest rivers, sticking for now with those over 1500ft. Mississippi system goes up through the Allegheny River to near the shore of Lake Erie, which of course connects with the St. Lawrence: Do we really want these systems to be in separate nations, where the possibility of canals or portages is reduced?

Built chart of major river systems in the World by continent, to help us tie down major nations if we wished to explore with blank map templates later:

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------------|-------|-------------------|-------------|---------|-----------------|----------------|
| Africa | Congo | 5660 | Atlantic | Asia | Amur | 4127 | Tatar Strait |
| | Nile | 4160 | Mediterranean | | Chang | 3964 | East China Sea |
| | Niger | 2590 | Guinea Gulf | | Yenisey | 3694 | Kara Sea |
| | Zambezi | 1700 | Indian | | Huang | 3395 | Yellow Sea |
| Amazonia | Amazon | 16340 | Atlantic | Ob-Irtysh | 3362 | Ob Gulf | |
| | Rio de la Plata | 7027 | Atlantic | Lena | 2734 | Laptev Sea | |
| | Sao Francisco | 1988 | Atlantic | Indus | 2700 | Arabian Sea | |
| | Orinoco | 1600 | Atlantic | Mekong | 2700 | South China Sea | |
| America | Mississippi | 24202 | Mexico Gulf | Ganges | 2415 | Bengal Bay | |
| | Columbia | 4916 | Pacific | Ob | 2268 | Ob Gulf | |
| | Yukon | 3677 | Bering Sea | Brahmaputra | 1800 | Bengal Bay | |
| | Colorado | 3189 | California Gulf | Euphrates | 1700 | Shatt al-Arab | |
| | Rio Grande | 2826 | Mexico Gulf | Amu Darya | 1550 | Aral Sea | |
| | St. Lawrence | 2024 | St. Lawrence Gulf | Volga | 4344 | Caspian | |
| Australia | Murray | 3291 | Indian | Danube | 2823 | Black Sea | |
| | | | | Dnieper | 1952 | Black Sea | |
| | | | | Ural | 1575 | Caspian | |
| | | | | | | | |

Question 125 (continued)

What guiding principles should be observed by government agencies?

Added during Third Pass (December 2019): We want to provide good service to our citizen-customers, but we also want to do so in a streamlined manner, so that we can help as many people as we can with the limited time and resources which we have available. We therefore need a good protocol for both mailed and walk-in requests for service. Part of that protocol is that all citizens should contact directly the specific agency in charge of whatever the issue is, so that they can take direct action as needed, as opposed to sending everything to the office of the President or some other Senior Executive and letting it 'trickle down' to the appropriate level. In order for them to be able to do that, each governmental jurisdiction should maintain a public directory (using a telephone book in the 'old days', now using the Internet) which clearly and easily allows the user to identify the correct area. It would also be helpful to maintain within each government's Administration Department a general service desk which fields submissions not directed to any particular agency, and then the service desk can route them as appropriate. Higher-level managers receiving submissions directly from the public should first inspect each statement for evidence that the appropriate lower-level agency was approached first and failed to respond adequately, and then route the submission to that agency (in stages through the chain of command, if needed) if no such evidence appears. Any office routing a citizen submission to any other office should send a letter to the initiator, briefly explaining where the request was sent and why, and informing the initiator which offices should be approached with similar issues in the future. When the request finally reaches its appropriate destination, it should be stamped with a 'tracking number' (such as "2019-000135"), which should be communicated to the initiator at earliest practical opportunity, so that both the initiator and the government workers can follow the request through to completion. Tracking numbers allow the agency to report how many requests they processed each year, which can help with staffing allocations and the government's 'image'. Multiple requests pertaining to a single issue should be consolidated together with the same tracking number. Agencies should also consider whether to display these requests on a public website with their tracking numbers, because a long 'pending' list and a long 'completed' list would

show all onlookers how busy the agency has been, but a 'pending' list with too many aged items (such as 'replace water mains in Flint') would show how slow the agency has been. Actually, this latter fact should provide extra motivation for agencies to get these old requests completed, and any agency which refuses to display such a website can be viewed as basically admitting that they are too slow to allow such transparency. Therefore, we are now recommending a standard expectation that any government agency which fields any requests from the public at all should display those requests on a public website according to date received and tracking number, including all pending requests and those requests completed within the preceding year or two, and that any such agency not displaying such a website should be routinely suspected of attempting to cover up its inadequacy.

Question 138.5 (continued)

Should any action be brought against an Executive whose spouse is found guilty of treason?

We did not see in Session 93 that any influence upon the Executive outside of the 'Cleopatra complex' would be that big of a problem. However, by the time of our Third Pass review (December 2019), we had heard of numerous individuals (including Russian leader Putin, and personal attorney Giuliani, among others) allegedly exerting nonsexual-but-still-undue influence over the sitting U.S. President. Some of those individuals were indicted and incarcerated, others were not, but in either case the question remains whether the influence lingered even after the individuals were removed from direct contact with the President. If yes, then what do we do? We claim in the Third Pass that such ongoing influence can and should be considered satisfactory grounds for Recall, under the procedures which we set in Subsection I-C-5. In other words, even though the Constitution currently allows for removal of the President only for "high Crimes and Misdemeanors" or if "unable to discharge the powers and duties of [the] office", we claim that it should be made possible to remove the President for other reasons as well, including for innocently (or otherwise) getting surrounded by too many of the wrong people.

There is also the possibility of removing a Chief Executive other than by Recall election (which can be a huge logistical pain, especially once we have gotten into a rhythm of one election every two years for everything) or by declaration of the Cabinet (which is unlikely to come from people who were appointed to their jobs by the subject). Removal by some combination of one or more Judges is not very savory, because the case would often be tried by and/or appealed to Judges who -- like the Cabinet -- were appointed by the Chief Executive, at least until we have gotten deeper into implementation of our model, which calls for all Judges who are not publicly elected to be nominated and approved by the Legislature without any input from the Executive. We therefore probably should allow removal by the Legislature, but as of the Third Pass we were not at all happy with the removal process as then specified in the Constitution. Specifically, we feel that the Senate should have no involvement in the process, because when you have been able to secure the election of an entire State, we must presume -- even in the zero-party environment which we propose -- that you must have benefitted from the help of some number of special interests to whom you probably owe some ongoing allegiance which could compromise your vote. Getting elected by a smaller district is easier, and generally does not require nearly as much help from external interests, so delegates in the population-based house can be more trusted. Of course, we must make the voting requirement for removal higher than a simple majority, or else

it would be too easy to turn out one narrowly-disapproved President after another, to the net-disruption of the Executive Branch. However, if we set the removal rate as high as 2/3, then it might never be possible to remove a sitting President when needed, even in our proposed zero-party environment and our centrist-favoring voting method. We currently feel that 3/5 probably is an adequate level, high enough to be difficult, but low enough to be achievable, but can consider further.

Question 580 (continued)

What about for driving, voting, military service, drinking, sex, and other such stuff where we have established chronological age cutoffs in the past?

Added in Third Pass: Combining the individual poll responses (the more, the better) will give us a hopefully-reliable idea of overall public opinion as to Social Friendships.

There need be no kind of educational requirement in order to form or maintain a non-sexual social friendship, and you generally may do so at any chronological age when you can. The issue is how much older or younger the prospective friend is than you are. It can come into play when an older person is suspected of 'corrupting' a younger person by forming a non-sexual friendship now which might turn into a sexual relationship before the younger person is ready, and it can also be a concern on the part of parents and teachers regarding children who they feel should be associating only with other kids of similar chronological ages.

On the other hand, as suggested through SIG correspondence during the Third Pass (December 2019), a true social friendship between an adult and a child (such as those organized by the Big Brother mentoring program) can be beneficial to both parties, especially for kids from single-parent or zero-parent households, provided of course that there are no sexual expressions or overtones at any time.

Our group has shown itself to be fairly libertarian where such social topics are involved, so we generally would seek to impose as few limitations as we can on any human interaction which does not immediately cause or threaten any injury to anyone. However, as discussed in the Sex category above, the volume of tweets posted during 2018 as to the friendship practices of certain celebrities suggests that our opinion on this point is not universally held, and that some age combinations are apparently inappropriate even for friendships where no sex is currently involved. As far as kids hanging out with other kids, we recall attempts to segregate the students by grade into different areas of the playground when we attended primary school, and we also once again cite the important film *Lean On Me*, which contained a scene where the high-school principal asked a freshman why he was sitting at a lunch table with seniors, who allegedly were "providing a deleterious influence". Apparently, we need some guiding parameters.

Question 258.4 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the County agencies listed in Answer 135?

Health & Safety - Animal Regulation

Added in December 2019 from SIG correspondence that Counties should decide what kind of policies they want to have for the movement of animals in public areas, including for 'service animals' who may or may not tolerate being leashed. Cities

could theoretically override such policies, but then they would need separate Animal Regulation offices to administer them, which might be an unnecessary level of bureaucracy, besides which it's easier for citizens to remember one set of standards for the County instead of several codes for the different Cities which they visit during their daily lives. Whoever does it, though, the main point is that these days we are seeing many more dogs being introduced into areas which previously were held as people-only, such as offices, restaurants, apartment buildings, schools, buses, train stations, airports, and regular parks. We have even seen on Twitter a proposal to bring 'therapy animals' into hospitals. With regrets, good conscience requires us to recommend against such practices. Even if the animals provide you with some increased comfort, it often comes at the expense of someone else's increased anxiety. Even those individual animals who have been designated as 'hypoallergenic' can still produce allergic reactions in certain people, as the Moderator can personally attest. In addition, even the most well-behaved animals can by their mere presence in the room frighten people who have lingering trauma from having been bitten or otherwise attacked by animals in the past, as the Moderator can also personally attest. Further, many animals (even those who have been designated as for 'service' or 'therapy') are not very well-behaved, and jump on and/or lick other people who don't like to be jumped on or licked by animals; no matter how friendly it may be intended, we still don't like it. Moreover, the loud barking of dogs can be very startling and even painful for people who expect to be in a quiet environment, as the Moderator can also personally attest. Our 'basic social rule' from Section I-A is that people generally should be allowed to do as they please if they are not injuring or threatening others, and unfortunately the presence of animals in certain places can cause others to feel injured and/or threatened, so we generally recommend strict limits on where animals may be allowed to travel, even if they are nominally intended for 'service' or 'therapy'. Counties may opt to override this our recommendation if support from the local population is overwhelming (as it might be among our more rural areas), but then they should clearly designate their policies on their official websites and other public media, so that those who are uncomfortable around animals will know not to live or work or shop within those Counties. If a County's preferred policy is to allow individual businesses and other public venues to decide for themselves whether or not they want to be 'dog-friendly' or 'animal-friendly', then each such place should be required to post its policy prominently, again so that those who are negatively impacted by the presence of animals can modify their plans as needed. If 'service' or 'therapy' dogs are allowed in any particular venue, notwithstanding how uncomfortable they can cause other people to feel, then at least please make sure that they are trained not to approach strangers who are not bothering either them or their human partners, and not to bark too loud.

Question 146.5 (continued)

The 'travel checkpoints' question: To what extent (if any) should we be maintaining checkpoints at points of entry, for either disease control and/or criminal screening?

We wanted to keep American borders as open as we practically could as of Session 95. Of course, by the time of our Third Pass (December 2019), some folks alleged that both immigration and drug traffic had become sufficiently problematic for us to increase our border presence and restrict cross-border movement by any means necessary, although this perception was far from universally held, and it certainly is not a component of our A2E model. Furthermore, we still would like to continue America's role as the one place in the World where people can go if they're getting hassled in their own countries.

Question 147.2 (continued)

Should a nation which chooses to remain politically neutral be obligated to supply military aid to the I.O.O. upon demand?

Added in the Third Pass (December 2019): Nations which don't have armaments or trained troops to contribute to an Allied military action may still be able to participate passively by lending their roads and harbors and airports and other facilities to the Allied forces. We still may not be able legally or morally to force them to do so, but they will carry much more diplomatic weight in future i.o.o. deliberations if it can be shown that they willingly partnered with the global community when most needed.

Question 148 (continued)

The 'Canadian relations' question: Given that America and Canada (with the possible exception of Quebec) are so similar in culture, history, language, natural resources, and government structure, and that there has long been a strong economic cooperation between them, and that there is little or no border security to speak of, and that some have suggested that many Canadians (again, possibly excepting those residing in Quebec) don't have as strong a sense of national identity, might it be better (assuming that all details could be worked out) for the two to be one nation?

We had declined the option in Session 96 to encourage a Canadian-American merger. The prospect seemed even less desirable during our Third Pass review (December 2019), in light of how Canadian and European leaders came to view rather disdainfully the individual who had recently acquired the position of American President. How would the Canadian people feel about having their country managed by the American oligarchy instead of by an independent local government? We are guessing that they probably wouldn't dig the concept much.

Third Pass also rejects "lots more room for people" in Canada, because most of the country is far too cold and harsh for habitation by any but the hardiest of souls.

Further, evolving continental politics aside, we apparently overlooked both in the 'black book' and in Session 96 the general strategic reason for leaving things as they are: One of the big reasons why America has prospered militarily over the years is that we are geographically remote from most would-be aggressors, except that we do have a close proximity across the Bering Strait with the nation of Russia, with whom we have a long history of political tension. In order to help protect the heart of America from a military aggression through the Yukon, it would continue to be helpful for us to have large and peaceful Canada located in between the two Powers to act as a 'buffer state'. Further, in order to help shield our friend Canada from the same aggression, we propose to continue maintaining large and mountainous and sparsely-populated Alaska as an additional 'buffer state'.

Finally, while we are open to discussing minor adjustments along the Mexican border which may possibly serve the interests of both Nations, a complete merger with Canada would constitute such a huge expansion of the American homeland that it might look like part of a larger strategy of imperialism and global domination, and belie the concept which we are seeking to promote of multiple sovereign Nations living peaceably within their own borders, providing the Peoples of the World a wide variety of cultures and laws and political systems and economic policies. If we try to

gobble up huge chunks of land at this late stage, then it could make Russia and China and other Nations very nervous, possibly motivating them to acquire more territory of their own, and/or to build up their military forces even further, leading to a continued environment of beating each other up for land instead of resting content with conditions as they are. In sum, best to leave our friend Canada alone.

Question 272 (continued)

What should be the scope of the Rules Committee, the Ways & Means Committee, and certain other Committees in Congress?

Also, wondering as of December 2019 why the House 'Judiciary Committee' has been conducting hearings relating to the Executive, and not on the Judiciary; they should change either their mission or their name.

Question 272.5

Should any/all of the houses maintain Budget Committees, and if so then what should they do and how should they operate?

Notes added in December 2019 in connection with Question 272.6, rolled into separate Question during the Third Pass:

At least one House in each Legislature should maintain a committee to create and monitor a Budget of revenues and expenditures for the applicable government. As with most committees, the work of the Budget Committee should be subject to approval and amendment by the full House. The process of approving the Budget should never interfere with the ongoing operation of the government, so there never should be such a thing as a 'government shutdown' due to any problem with finalizing the Budget. Instead, the most recent Budget should always continue in effect until a new Budget has been duly created and approved to replace it.

Question 277.3 (continued)

Under what conditions (if any) shall an individual legislator or minority faction be permitted to Filibuster, that is, to force a delay in taking up a particular question, or in taking the vote on any pending question?

Added in January 2020: Previous finding implies an end to the Filibuster as we have always known it, even though Jimmy Stewart's character used it to great effect in the classic 1939 film *Mr. Smith Goes To Washington*. Once the minority position has had a fair chance to be heard, and a clear majority of the assembly wishes to dispatch the current question and move on to the next thing, they should be able to do so. The trick which Jefferson Smith used -- namely to continue speaking in a standing position for 24 hours straight -- could be used by small groups of legislators on a rotating basis to block any action indefinitely, as well as to prevent the assembly from conducting any other business at all. Notwithstanding the charm of the film, and the courage and persistence which the lead character demonstrated, it yet seems to our judgment that no minority faction should be allowed to hold the assembly hostage like that. We therefore propose the following: Even if the rules of the assembly would ordinarily allow debate on certain questions to continue indefinitely, at some point the majority should be permitted to invoke 'cloture' and end the debate at once. It is an unusual and possibly prejudicial step to end the

debate before it is ready, so a clear supermajority should be required for passage. A 3/5 majority intuitively feels too low for our taste, but a 2/3 majority seems too high, so we are currently recommending a 5/8 majority (easier to calculate in our 600-seat House of Representatives). It would be improper to continue calling for one cloture motion after one another, to completely silence the minority when only a narrow majority is ready to end debate, but on the other hand conditions change over time, and we can easily envision that a legislator who voted against cloture an hour ago might vote in favor of it now, because by this time she has clearly heard enough. We therefore propose that a new cloture motion may be introduced every hour, on an undebatable basis, with the vote to be taken in an expeditious manner (that is, not with a lengthy roll call), so that substantive presentations may continue.

Question 622 (continued)

To what extent (if any) should we be allowing tobacco-smoking at all?

Added from SIG correspondence: Tobacco haters should be able to enjoy the casino experience as much as their smoking cousins, but as of January 2020 they almost never get to do so, because nearly all casinos permit tobacco smoking everywhere. Even getting inside the hotel often requires one to walk through a tobacco-saturated section of the casino, which turns us tobacco haters off from ever wanting to travel to a place like that at all. Casinos and hotels can achieve greater market penetration if they encourage tobacco haters to patronize their businesses. Specifically, some casinos may want to establish non-smoking sections through which some travelers may walk in order to enter and exit the hotel, while some other casinos may want to go completely smoke-free in order to corral that additional market. If they do not do so voluntarily, however, then at some point it may be necessary for some level of government to require such provisions in order to protect the public health, although we recognize that most local governments will be reluctant to impose any restrictions upon the businesses which are generating so much local revenue.

Question 159 (continued)

Given the admission into the enlisted ranks of all combinations of gender and gender preference, how should we arrange barracks and latrine assignments?

While we were still reticent of the concept as of Session 99, it seems as of the Third Pass (January 2020) that maintaining individual shower stalls is the ideal solution. Regardless of how conditions were in 2003, we now have many more admitted homosexuals in the military and other areas, as well as an increasing variety of 'transgender' and other personal identities which can make some folks uncomfortable in intimate settings. In other words, it is no longer about the 'straight' male/female stereotype referenced above. Best therefore to just go ahead with the individual shower stalls, and let everybody have his/her/their privacy as much as desired.

Question 675 (continued)

Do we want to reset the date of the New Year back to the Winter Solstice, or stick it in March as the Romans did, or leave it as is, or do something else?

Added in January 2020: One argument for leaving New Year's Day in its current location is that the weather is historically spectacular on current January 1 in the City of Pasadena, where the annual Rose Parade and Rose Bowl are stunningly broadcast

to a worldwide audience, whereas the weather is typically lousy in that area on current December 22. There's something about the movement of the Earth and the local topography which virtually dictates that the weather is cloudy and wet at the point of Solstice, but becomes clear and dry a few days afterward. Is this enough of an argument to override our desire to harmonize our calendar with the actual Solar Year? Maybe. We could also consider changing the calendar but having the Rose Parade and Rose Bowl on what would then be January 11, but we understand and appreciate that there is a huge charm for having those ceremonies on the first day of our calendar year; it's why we have them there in the first place. Maybe the net-best solution is to leave everything as it is, for it is not really that huge of a priority to change our calendar. However, pending further discussion and consideration, our official position still is to move the calendar ten days back, and to conduct the Rose Parade and Rose Bowl on the new January 1, lousy weather notwithstanding.

Question 103.4

Who should be invited to participate in the debates?

Added in January 2020: We perceive it as a big problem that many debates have been limited to the two nominal frontrunners, or some other small subset of the entire pool of qualified candidates. It has been a further problem that certain candidates are invited to a debate while others with higher poll tracking have been snubbed. If you have a pluralistic system like the one proposed by Answers To Everything, then it is likely that you will have several viable candidates for high political offices, and to some extent they all should have a fair chance of presenting their respective cases. Your stage may not be big enough to accommodate all the declared candidates for a given race, nor even all those who have acquired some given minimum number of petition signatures, so we understand that debate hosts often need to limit their invitations. However, we suggest and ask that you always invite at least three participants if at all possible, so that we can get away from this polar and divisive us-versus-them mentality, which we have seen can lead to societal unrest and outright Civil War; always let there be at least one centrist to offset the two extremists. Whatever number you invite, though, always let it be the candidates who have acquired the most petition signatures in that race, because snubbing an apparently-superior candidate in favor of an apparently-inferior one creates at least the perception if not the reality of discrimination, which can result in the wrong person being elected, to the detriment of the entire society; in effect, let it be The People who decide which candidates are viable enough to be seen in live debates.

Question 277.4

Should we continue to allow/encourage legislators to give speeches to empty chambers?

Added in January 2020: It looks really dumb for legislators to post footage on Twitter showing them giving speeches on their assembly floors, with few or no other legislators in attendance. They clearly are trying to create the impression among their constituents that they are out there doing their jobs, defending their principles through public address, but it's all a sham. The speeches usually do not have anything to do with any pending order of business, but instead they are part of a miscellaneous Special Order section to allow remarks to be entered into the official record on any random topic, even though nobody's watching, nobody's listening, nobody's reading the official record, and nobody cares. You don't look like a wise

and conscientious legislator, you look like a silly tool and a slave to formality. If you want to speak to your constituents by video, then do so from your own office. If you actually are trying to communicate something to your fellow legislators, then do so when they are actually present. Rules allowing this idiot practice should be modified to prohibit it, not because it's intrinsically harmful to anything, but simply on grounds that it makes us look stupid, both to the American voters and to the rest of the world. ("Look at those stupid Americans. Not only do they give speeches to empty rooms, they even take video evidence of it!") Speeches on the assembly floor should be permitted only when a specific question is pending before the house, at a time when there is a sufficient quorum to decide that question, and must relate to that question. If you want to give a speech on a topic not currently pending, then add an item to the calendar and wait your due turn like everyone else. If you must continue the practice notwithstanding our recommendation, then at least make sure to shift between closeups of the speaker and master shots showing the empty chamber, because if we're going to be dumb then let's at least be more transparent about it.

Question 31 (continued)

If there is an i.o.o., then how should its enforcing arm be staffed?

Again, original results rendered not completely (if at all) applicable during Third Pass, (January 2020) as a result of more advanced communication technologies later becoming available. However, people may yet find some utility in conducting actual meetings in an actual room where you can look at everyone's faces concurrently, instead of pressing some button to switch to only one face at a time, and where you can point at maps together and move around the tokens which indicate the position of different military units. If you do, then the original model of total Committee membership and necessary quorum and on-call availability may yet be useful. If it is not, then again for the sake of the World please make sure that all delegates and other stakeholders understand whatever other model you put in its place.

Question 643.2 (continued)

To what extent shall we either allow/encourage or prohibit/discourage the use of 'performance-enhancing drugs' (PED's) in professional or amateur Sports?

Added in January 2020: Another argument against PED's is that they have harmful side effects for many users, who should not be required to undertake such serious medical risks in order to pursue an athletic career.

Question 660 (continued)

With three or more items in a series, should a comma be placed before the last item?

Added in January 2020: We have now heard (thanks to thewritelife.com) of an appellate ruling in 2017 (*O'Connor et al. v. Oakhurst Dairy*, First Circuit no. 16-1901) where the court agreed that placement of the 'Oxford comma' bore a direct impact on how much overtime certain workers could earn. It seems that Maine law exempted payment of overtime for "The canning, processing, preserving, freezing, drying, marketing, storing, packing for shipment or distribution of (1) Agricultural produce; (2) Meat and fish product; and (3) Perishable foods". With no comma before the 'or', it was disputed whether "packing for shipment" and "distribution of" the numbered items were separate exempt activities, or whether "packing for

shipment or distribution" was a single thing. Court found in favor of the drivers, costing the dairy an estimated \$10 million, so it is a non-trivial matter.

Question 497.1 (continued)

Should the pre-existence of a power relationship between two individuals prevent them from forming a personal relationship?

Added in January 2020 from SIG correspondence: Although we recognize that many power relationships have been abused for the purposes of personal gratification (especially in the Film industry, and allegedly with Weinstein in particular), yet we also recognize that 'the one' for a particular individual may happen to be in a position of some kind of authority over that individual, and we would not want the potential of that personal relationship to be unrealized because of the pre-existing power relationship, and neither would we want either of the two individuals to resign her professional position over it. We are thinking in particular of when U.S. Rep. Katie Hill of Saugus CA was pressured to resign from Congress because of a 'close friendship' with one of her staffers. There was no showing of either personal or professional problems with their relationship; it merely seemed too improper for too many people. We feel that Rep. Hill should not have been pressured to resign, nor to sever her personal or professional relationship with the staffer in question. If everybody is happy, and all the jobs are getting properly performed, then leave conditions as they are. In the general case, the individual in power should never initiate suggestion of any personal interaction with the subordinate, because that would constitute sexual harassment on its face, a bad act. It can sometimes also constitute harassment if the subordinate wishes to 'come on' to the superior, if for any reason the latter prefers to keep things at a professional distance. However, if two people have somehow managed to get past that initial uncertainty, and are happy in both their personal and professional relationships, then they should be allowed to retain them on an exception basis.

Question 161 (continued)

What is or should be the main purpose of the Treasury Department?

Added in January 2020: Companies doing business in multiple States should incorporate at the Federal level, while local businesses can incorporate through their own States. We have seen it as a problem that companies not doing substantial (or any) business in Delaware or Nevada will still incorporate within those States in order to take advantage of certain 'loopholes' in their legal regulations; seems like cheating to us. Further, when you are doing business with an entity which is incorporated in New York or some other State which has unusual legal provisions, you need to make special adjustments on your own, up to and including the creation of a separate subsidiary company. We recognize that escalating the incorporation process from State to Federal may appear to contradict our Basic Principle of 'subsidiarity', but we also observe that the current legal confusion over needing to deal with 50 different sets of business regulations may be creating more problems than it's solving. If you are doing business in only one State, then you do not need to deal with the Fed if you don't want to, and you may incorporate through the Corporations Bureau of your State's Commerce Department. If you are doing business in multiple States, or if for any reason you wish to bypass your State structure, then you can incorporate through the Business & Securities Bureau of the Federal Department of Finance.

Question 167.5 (continued)

Are there any additional ways that we can improve conservation efforts, particularly of paper goods?

As of the Third Pass (February 2020), we perceived that our response from Session 101 (*viz.*, "If you want to conserve, then just do it.") may be underappropriate. Our model proposed in Section II-C of replacing the Income Tax with an increased (but nonregressive) Sales Tax is intended to encourage conservation of physical resources. We can also continue to provide monetary incentives for recycling. Suggestions can be added here as they are put forward from any direction.

Question 656 (continued)

Shall we consider it acceptable to use the personal pronouns 'he' and 'him', and the possessive adjective 'his', when a generic unisex reference is being made?

A male SIG correspondent had recently suggested that we develop a hybrid solution in which 'he' and 'she' would be alternated for general pronominal references, for otherwise we might contribute to the then-current trend of "misandry". We responded in February 2020 with the following points, which we might use later:

Men have historically enjoyed huge advantages of power over women, physically and sexually and politically and financially. It's going to be hard to convince the new enlightenment (whatever that means) that we should feel sorry for the male gender at this stage of history, and treat them with tender mercy. Of course, we should not overgeneralize any group, and not all individual men are guilty of bad behavior toward women. A lot of us are, though, and we must find ways to accept some level of penance for our actions.

One good general way of imposing penance is to make the sinner experience the pain which he imposed on his victims. That tells him not only that we're mad at him, but the reasons why. When he feels what it's like to be victimized in certain ways, he is often (though not always) more inclined to avoid such abusive behaviors in the future.

If we agree this far, then I claim that an effective way of imposing penance for millennia of gender suppression is to make the male gender feel at least some amount of the inferiority which they have historically imposed upon their female counterparts. Where we bravely called them 'the weaker sex' for years and years, maybe it's time that we got used to being thought of as net-inferior to women.

This particular manner of doing it with our pronouns and possessive adjectives is relatively painless. Be thankful that we are not going even further in that direction, such as by genitally mutilating men or denying them the right to vote.

Also, ... the usage is intended to be only temporary, just to increase awareness among men of the historical problem. Maybe we go to more of a 'they' environment later, although I still dislike the confusion which it can engender (excuse the expression) [when] describing multiple sets of people.

I don't see us using different pronouns for alternating sentences. That's too much tracking even for a compulsive datakeeper like me, so it's gotta be way beyond the ability or desire of 'ordinary people'. Besides, it's too confusing for a reader to see different pronouns applied to the same individual within a short space. We're going to think that you're talking about different people, and we're going to suspect that we missed a reference somewhere, so we go back and look, and we don't find it, and many of us will give up reading any further at all.

If we are really determined to get away from binary classifications for our pronouns and possessive adjectives, then the long-term solution is to invent a set of unisex terms which are all clearly singular. Trouble is, that has been attempted before, and more than once. Seem to remember Shaw trying something along those lines. But it has never worked, and Esperanto is never going to catch on either.

Language is organic, cannot be imposed, much as I would prefer. So, while we wait for that to happen organically, the suggested substitute will at least give us men some temporary time to stand in the corner, and think about what we did.

Question 643.1 (continued)

Do we have continuing problems with any particular Team names, logos, colors, or other similar attributes?

Added in February 2020 from SIG correspondence: Excellent alternative is the 'Cleveland Rockers', paying homage to Cleveland as the traditional birthplace of Rock n' Roll. New Orleans can have Jazz, and even Utah has been allowed to have Jazz for some time now, so Cleveland certainly can have Rock. There might be a bit of confusion with the Rockies of Colorado, so that may need some further thought, and some adjustment here or there, but in principle it's a great concept.

Question 662.5 (continued)

What about this whole 'metric system' business?

Added in February 2020 from SIG correspondence: One argument for sticking with the English system is that its units were more closely based in real life, such as the 'foot' being the average length of a 'foot', and a 'mile' being approximately 1000 (from the Latin *mille*) paces. We use a similar argument in suggesting that we align our calendar year with the solar year. Whether that argument is potent enough to outweigh the other aspects of the matter is problematic.

Question 671.1 (continued)

Is it appropriate to circumcise male children during infancy?

Added in February 2020 from SIG correspondence: No matter how many modern Jews may be eschewing the practice of circumcision, we can expect that many traditional Jews (especially the Rabbis) will hold on to it zealously. Question then becomes, should they be allowed to impose the practice on boys who are not old enough to form and express their own decisions? Could be argued that this relates to our Answer 598, which holds that no 'bad act' should be excused on the basis of religious preference. (Jihadists may believe that it is their religious duty to kill all the infidels, but that doesn't make it true or morally appropriate.) On the other hand, this may be a special case because there may not really be a victim here. For, how many young men are coming forward and saying dammit I wish that they hadn't circumcised me? When that groundswell becomes sufficiently enormous, we can reconsider. Until then, if the recipients of the procedure are not really complaining about it, then we probably shouldn't be complaining about it on their behalf.

Question 675 (continued)

Do we want to reset the date of the New Year back to the Winter Solstice, or stick it in March as the Romans did, or leave it as is, or do something else?

We were not sure as of February 2020 how relevant it is, but a SIG correspondent asserted that the reason why the Winter Solstice is now on December 21 is because Pope Gregory, when he moved the calendar forward in 1582 and eliminated the leap

years which set the calendar back, moved the calendar forward only ten days instead of the thirteen that it had been off since Julius Caesar's time. This allegedly was both due to ten being an easier number to deal with and also because he was only interested in correcting the calendar to the time of the Council of Nicaea in 324.

If this story is true, then it does not dissuade us from our position that the calendar New Year should begin on the typical date of the Winter Solstice. Rather, it suggests to us that Gregory screwed the pooch, so maybe Popes are fallible after all.

Question 661.2

Any other suggestions to make on quotation marks?

Added in February 2020 from SIG correspondence: There is an argument for applying the same italic usage to TV series as to feature films, being that the human effort in assembling even one season of a TV series is at least as much as in most feature films; even some individual episodes are more elaborate and expensive than some feature films. Adding that observation has moved us to review our First Pass findings in this area, and we now agree that they should be changed. I guess that we can concede the approximate equivalence of TV series and feature films when it comes to italicizing. Individual episodes of TV series should be double-quoted, if only because we have seen them double-quoted on numerous actual programs, including on original *Star Trek*. Newspaper titles should be italicized, because that is a long-standing practice which always looked nice and never hurt anybody.

Question 600 (continued)

What limits, if any, shall we place on 'free speech'?

Added in February 2020: Any speech which specifically calls for unlawful violence to be inflicted upon anyone should be punishable at either the criminal or civil level.

Question 673 (continued)

If keeping the current year-numbering convention, then do we want to make any change to the current use of the abbreviations 'B.C.' and 'A.D.'?

Added in February 2020 from SIG correspondence: Suggestion was offered to use 'B.J.' instead of 'B.C.', in order to acknowledge the life of Jesus as being central to the historical narrative of many of our subcultures, without acknowledging that individual's alleged divinity. We countered that the suggested abbreviation is also American slang for a certain sexual act, and that we would never hear the end of ridicule if we were to propose using it for any other purpose.

Question 175 (continued)

What functions or issues should be handled by the Bureau of Communication?

As of the Third Pass (February 2020), our model had undergone extensive revision, such that we now had only a Bureau of Electronic Communications within the Interior Department. Only specific function named for that bureau up to this point was that it should seek to connect all populated areas of the country. We now imagined that it also should enforce whatever restrictions may be found appropriate in Q176 next.

Question 176 (continued)

What restrictions -- if any -- should be placed on what material is broadcast on radio, television, the Internet, and other media?

Added in the Third Pass (February 2020) that warning categories can include tobacco, following the highly encouraging sign that 'historical smoking' had by then become a warning label for many new feature films.

Also added in Third Pass that our e-mail addresses are not yours to sell, and that it should be illegal to make the saleability of our e-mail addresses a condition of purchasing any product or service.

Question 379.1 (continued)

How does the Federal Reserve system currently operate, in comparison with the model described above?

We resumed reading the book "Thieves in the Temple" by Andre Michael Eggelletion in February 2020. Additional notes follow:

Chapter 4 went on to describe that the bill to create the Federal Reserve passed the U.S. Senate by a vote of only 3-0 on 22-Dec-1913, most Senators having gone home for the holiday without formally adjourning the assembly.

Last two pages of Chapter 4 summarize the Fed's process of money creation through 'fractional reserve banking'. First, the Fed's Open Market Committee approves the purchase of U.S. Bonds, with electronic credits going to the banks which sell the bonds. Second, the banks use these electronic deposits as reserves against withdrawals, allowing them to loan out up to 10 times the deposit amounts at interest. Supply of money in circulation increases without being backed by a corresponding increase in actual wealth, so previously-issued Dollars are worth only a fraction of their previous value. When they want to contract the money supply, they reverse the process by selling bonds to the public and reducing their loans.

Question 19.5 (continued)

How do (or should) we feel about War?

In addition to our stated reason why War persists (each generation wishes to prove that it is just as tough as the previous), Andre Michael Eggelletion alleges in Chapter 5 of his book "Thieves in the Temple" that wars are promoted in order to increase debt and divert more wealth to the bankers. Even if the allegation is untrue, the debt certainly does happen, and the bankers certainly do get richer.

Question 379.1 (continued)

How does the Federal Reserve system currently operate, in comparison with the model described above?

Chapter 6 reports that President Woodrow Wilson later regretted signing the Federal Reserve bill, blaming himself for placing America into the hands of "a small group of dominant men". Book went on to describe the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR),

established in 1919, which as of the writing contained 3000 members controlling 3/4 of American wealth and operating in all branches of American government.

For fairness, it should be noted that the author's credibility dropped by repeated references to the "Shaw [*sic*] of Iran".

Question 370 (continued)

Given that we will not attempt to carry a single currency for the entire world, should there still be such a thing as an International Monetary Fund, and if so then why?

Andre Michael Eggelletion established in Chapter 8 of his book "Thieves in the Temple" that he dislikes the IMF.

Question 459 (continued)

Shall we impose tariffs or other trade restrictions on goods produced in foreign countries?

Andre Michael Eggelletion alleged in Chapter 8 of "Thieves in the Temple" that an excess of imports over exports is a bad thing, so he loses some further credibility.

Question 176 (continued)

What restrictions -- if any -- should be placed on what material is broadcast on radio, television, the Internet, and other media?

We had seen in Session 105 that it might be a while yet before hack-resistant technology was developed to enforce restrictions reliably, and as of the Third Pass we continued to recognize that hackers will sooner or later get around any attempts to stop them, and that the quest of Good against Evil is likely to continue forever.

We held as of Session 106 that there should be no further Internet regulation beyond certain specific parameters such as parental control, since we didn't want to stifle the creativity which the tool had displayed. However, as of the Third Pass (February 2020), we yet allowed for possibly needing exceptions someday.

Question 678.3 (continued)

How do we currently feel about 'Columbus Day'?

Added in February 2020 from SIG correspondence: The fact that numerous good things have resulted from Columbus' big navigational error does not mean that we necessarily should keep honoring his memory more than 500 years after the fact, especially given all the bad things which also resulted. A suggestion to rebrand Indigenous Peoples Day as All People Of The Americas Day was politely rejected, partly because we don't need a holiday for every single attribute of our existence (shall we also have Blue Sky Day and Continental Drift Week?), and partly because any such holiday (regardless of the time of year) would necessarily remind people that a big reason for our current diversity is the African slave trade, deservedly souring any attempt at celebration. Good point was offered that dumping Columbia from DC may implicitly call for all similar place names to be recast, which may or may not be a net-good or net-feasible thing; however, DC may be an exception,

because we are calling in Answer 45 for the territory to be downsized to exclude all residential areas, so it may not then need any name at all; if it still does, then maybe just name it after Washington, even though he was a slaveowner too.

Question 263.3 (continued)

Any problems with introduction of legislation, and other business prior to committee referral?

Added in March 2020, both here and to Answer 277.3: In a pluralistic environment, we need not stack every new bill or other motion at the extreme bottom end of the Calendar, to be expedited only upon majority vote of the full assembly or some 'steering committee'. Better scheduling is to prioritize bills from those legislators who have introduced the fewest bills during that session, so that everyone has a better chance of being able to demonstrate to their constituents that they did at least one thing during their term, and so that no one gets to monopolize or dominate the Calendar. This way, each legislator is less likely to waste their first bill with a frivolous and irrelevant proposal such as naming a post office after a local celebrity, so the more important business has a higher chance of being dispatched first.

Question 277.3 (continued)

Under what conditions (if any) shall an individual legislator or minority faction be permitted to Filibuster, that is, to force a delay in taking up a particular question, or in taking the vote on any pending question?

Added in March 2020, as well as to Answer 263.3 above: Prioritize bills from those legislators who have introduced the fewest bills during that session, so that everyone has a better chance of being able to demonstrate to their constituents that they did at least one thing during their term, and so that no one gets to monopolize or dominate the Calendar. Each legislator is less likely to waste their first bill with a frivolous and irrelevant proposal such as naming a post office after a local celebrity, so the more important business has a higher chance of being dispatched first.

Question 675 (continued)

Do we want to reset the date of the New Year back to the Winter Solstice, or stick it in March as the Romans did, or leave it as is, or do something else?

Added in March 2020: One problem with the current placement of New Year's Day is that it maintains a modern human practice of deciding our dates and times according to arbitrary definitions instead of according to Nature. That same problem results in our moronic Daylight Saving Time, and in some very weird placements of time-zone boundaries. We might do better as a species if we paid better attention to Nature.

Question 682 (continued)

Do we want to keep Christmas on December 25?

Notes added in March 2020 from SIG correspondence: One problem with the current placement of Christmas Day is that it maintains an old human practice of according super-human status to certain individuals for allegedly being born on certain special days of the year when they really weren't. George M. Cohan famously allowed

people to think that he was born on the Fourth of July, because it suited his image as a "Yankee Doodle Dandy" according to his song, but he really was born on July 3. Similarly, the Church fathers guesstimated that someone as important as Christ must have been born on some special day, and what day is more special than the Winter Solstice? If they had picked September 25 instead of December 25, then Jesus might not have received the amount of press which He eventually got, which might have been bad for the Christian Church but good for those of us who don't like humans making up history to suit their various personal purposes.

Another problem with the current placement of Christmas Day is that it takes our collective attention away from the Winter Solstice. In common with Thanksgiving, the Winter Solstice is an opportunity for the entire community to come together in celebration on a non-sectarian basis, to pat ourselves on the back for having survived another pass around the Sun, because some of our friends and relatives were not so fortunate. By making it a sectarian celebration, we maintain the division of our society into Christians and Pagans, which is enough of a problem already, and which would be a nice thing of which to take a day off once or twice a year.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

As we reviewed matters during the Third Pass (March 2020), it became clearer that Transportation probably fits best as a Bureau in the restored Interior Department. Two main reasons why: First, the Interior Department treats all issues relating to our physical homeland, and we cannot consider any changes to our Transportation infrastructure without considering possible impacts upon our physical environment; meanwhile, our Transportation needs should be considered in any proposal to do anything with our physical homeland. Second, we have all Departments represented in the Cabinet largely so that we can hear how any proposed change might impact their operations, and most new policies don't affect Transportation enough that it needs to be represented in the Cabinet separately from the Interior Department.

Question 42 (continued)

What functions should be handled at the Federal level, and what functions should be handled at State or Local levels?

We were unhappy to read in the Third Pass (March 2020) that we had removed Elections from the Federal executive structure in Session 114. It ended up being a part of our model that each governmental jurisdiction -- up to and including the Federal level -- would carry an Elections office which would maintain an official website, where any qualified individual could file for office, and which would count all petition signatures received by that nominee, comparing with the counts for all other nominees to determine who would end up on the ballot. It follows that we should have at least one Elections office at the Federal level. As to the argument that they wouldn't have anything to do outside of the campaign season for President/VP, we now claimed that they also could maintain one or more websites to conduct massive polling of the American public, as to both politician performance and various 'hot' issues of the day, including each year's budget allocations. We therefore at this time

restored Elections to our Federal structure, settling it within the Administration Department, since it usually will be mostly a clerical function at the Federal level. Any investigation of alleged voter fraud or election mismanagement -- either at the Federal level or anywhere below -- could still be conducted by what has once again in our model become the Bureau of Investigation within the Justice Department.

Question 258.4 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the County agencies listed in Answer 135?

Added in March 2020 from SIG correspondence: Suggestion was offered to allow adults without dependents to stay at home during mandatory evacuation, but we did not adopt the suggestion. Problem with the proposition is that it appears to look at things from only the homeowner's perspective, whereas (loath as we are to admit it) the State actually has a legitimate interest here as well. Author was living in New Orleans when they evacuated the city for Hurricane Gustav in 2008, and they made it very clear that they actively wanted us all to leave, because they did not want to tie up precious time and resources tracking who was still staying in town, and keeping emergency vehicles nearby to service them which could be better used elsewhere. Also, if you need to make a tough strategic decision affecting an entire area (such as busting a levee in order to flood the city and put out a raging fire), you don't want to be hampered by the fact that some narrow-sighted residents have decided to remain in harm's way. Author also lived long enough in the brushfire-prone foothills of Sylmar and Sierra Madre to know that the authorities will keep evacuations voluntary for as long as they practically can, and that only when it is truly necessary do they ever escalate the status to mandatory evacuation. At some point, they can do more to save your home if you're not in it than you can if you are still there, so we are much more inclined to do whatever the Fire Department says.

Question 258.7 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the City agencies listed in Answer 135?

Transportation - Traffic Management

Added in March 2020 from SIG correspondence: Suggestion was offered to eliminate side roads from the algorithms used by Waze and other navigation apps, on grounds that residents on those streets should not be forced to deal with increased traffic on their roads due to a new technology, but we did not adopt the suggestion. We had not seen any evidence that such residents were experiencing higher traffic as a result of new navigation technology. If anything, we imagine that it might be less, because people are spending less time driving around randomly while lost. Also, a resident of a quiet street should want her street to be visible on the apps so that any invitees can find her, and so would not be eager to have the option eliminated.

Question 437.5 (continued)

Do we have any product suggestions to be advanced by American industry?

Automobile Headlights

Added in March 2020 from SIG correspondence: Suggestions were offered to ban LED headlights and lower truck headlights, but the group did not adopt them. First

suggestion included a ban of all LEDs in public places except for low luminescence or unless they are at least eight feet above the floor and not directly pointing at one's eyes, and a ban of all LEDs from residential areas unless we use filters to ensure they do not give off the blue wavelengths that can hamper people's sleep; we had not heard these suggestions before, and we felt that the issues involved were too Technical for our scope, as opposed to being either Political or Economic or Social. As to second suggestion, there may not be a whole lot we can do with that; trucks need to be able to see clearly in order to drive safely, and to keep our goods moving where they need to go, and without any experience driving one of those big machines we have a hard time imagining ourselves going up to a truck driver and telling him that he needs to have lower headlights.

Question 184 (continued)

What functions or issues should be handled by the Department/Bureau of Transportation?

Added in March 2020 from SIG correspondence, but may relate to Transportation agencies at lower levels in addition to the Fed: Suggestion was offered to stop allowing old Railroad rights-of-way to be taken up by houses or other permanent structures, on grounds that these paths are useful for expanding our public transportation network, but suggestion was not adopted by the group. This was another area where we had not seen much evidence of a problem. We imagine that if a previous right-of-way was converted to housing at some point, then it must have been because the path was seen as no longer sufficiently useful for public transportation, or that the need for local housing was even more severe, or maybe some third thing. How could we now substitute our judgment for that of the folks who were on the scene at the time and made whatever decision they made?

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It was at this point that the Moderator-author began working his day job completely from home, in consideration of the Corona virus. The time saved on grooming and driving enabled him to spend much more time packaging the Third Pass.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

As of the Third Pass (March 2020), the other agencies of the erstwhile Department of Communications & Transportation had been rearranged into different departments, but the Post Office remained a non-element in our Federal model, possibly because the group did not verify until later that the Post Office was a line item in the current Federal budget. In any case, the author still had misgivings about making/leaving the Postal function completely private, notwithstanding the preceding arguments. He felt that there still should be an agency in the Federal structure to at least make sure that the function is being performed, whether directly by government workers or through private outsourcing, and in any case to monitor operations for ongoing compliance with established expectations. We kept it out for the present, but noted

that we would be very receptive to changing the structure if the Wednesday general-public group turned out to have supported making/keeping the operation public.

Question 200 (continued)

What are the functions of the Elections agency?

We have restored Elections as a Bureau of the Federal Department of Administration. If they have little to do, then they don't need to be very big, and may not even require the same level of full-time staffing in all seasons. However, there should be national standards for national elections (whether for political office or for public initiatives/referenda), and there should be a national agency making sure that the standards are applied properly and equitably throughout the Land. They also should be maintaining the website which collects signatures for all national offices, listing all candidates in descending order by volume, and making sure that no voter is able to sign more than the allotted number of petitions. We also suggest as of the Third Pass (March 2020) that they should conduct ongoing polls of the entire American public, not just the couple of thousand whom the private polling firms select for a 'scientific sampling', as to incumbent performance and any public issues of the day.

Question 202 (continued)

Should the federal Elections Office set any limits on campaign funds received, funds spent, or advertising space purchased?

As of the Third Pass (March 2020), we are in only partial agreement with our finding from Session 118, that both parameter-setting and monitoring should happen solely within the Legislature. We still strongly felt that the parameters should be set by the Legislature. However, the application of those standards can happen within the Executive Branch, especially as they relate to Legislative elections. Legislature can also perform monitoring and oversight of the function if they wish, especially as regards Presidential elections. We also would not be averse to the Judiciary Branch maintaining an office to monitor any or all national elections, and/or entertaining cases of alleged impropriety on the part of certain State election agencies. When the function is being audited by multiple independent agencies, not only do we have greater coverage of the function itself, but the agencies would in effect also be auditing one another, because an irregularity which is caught by one Branch and not by another Branch may be an indicator that someone is not performing their job sufficiently well to be retained.

Question 206 (continued)

What is the motivation of individuals and families to respond to the Census?

In the Third Pass (March 2020), we found our response from Session 118 to be inadequate. Whether a given State has 17 or 18 delegates in Congress is often of little import to the average person, so representation will not always be a big impetus. Also, we did end up eliminating 'revenue sharing' at the Federal level, so the amount of public funding which any State receives is no longer going to be a function of their decennial population levels.

What will make the Census more interesting and more desirable for people is if it presents an opportunity for them to tell the Government things which it may not already know, especially how we feel about certain topics not on recent ballots.

Question 126 (continued)

What is the motivation for any particular government agency to follow such principles?

Added in April 2020 from SIG correspondence: In that case [referring to our note from December 2019], what about a hybrid solution? Instead of asking everyone to perform a thorough periodic review of our entire profiles of spending and revenue, and allowing for the possibility of wide swings based upon a lot of underresearched darts, maybe it would be better to ask the public a much simpler question: Should spending and taxation remain at their current levels, or should we give the government a 'raise' in order to reward performance or encourage more public activity, or should we give the government a 'cut' as a penalty or economic stimulus or other incentive? Suppose that we printed the current base rate for each jurisdiction level on each resident's Census form, and then ask whether the current rate should be raised by as much as 1% (that is, from 21% to 22%, not from 21% to 21.21%), or whether it should be lowered by as much as 1%, or whether it should be left as is. We can average those responses out, so that the result will be a maximum swing of 1% either up or down, so any changes would be gradual. We would get a better sense of the aggregate sentiment of the public towards either more or less government control over our lives, as that sentiment may evolve over time according to additional experience and changing conditions.

We are not formally adopting this concept as of the Third Pass, but we are leaning in favor of it, again at least on a non-binding basis, and maybe on a binding basis later on if the trials go sufficiently well, and depending on any feedback of other groups.

Question 580 (continued)

What about for driving, voting, military service, drinking, sex, and other such stuff where we have established chronological age cutoffs in the past?

Added in April 2020 from SIG correspondence: Agreed that we should allow an 'it depends' option in the above-referenced poll if practical. Unsupervised social contact may be fine all the time for some age combinations, and none of the time for others. For still other combinations, it may be fine only under certain conditions. Therefore, if technically possible and if the public is willing, we should allow a +1 option for 'always okay', a -1 option for 'never okay', and a 0 option for 'it depends'. We can then average the responses to gauge the aggregate public sentiment for each combination. We could have similar polls for Sex and Marriage. If possible, we should like to be able to click on any dot in any sub-poll to get the exact vote count and the exact percentage for that result. In any case, poll should bear a disclaimer that it only measures current public opinion, and does not specify actual right and wrong. Suggestion offered that ages over 21 should be expressed in 5-year increments for simplicity; maybe, but the whole idea of asking about the entire range of human life is because we don't want to make any presumptions about which age combinations are appropriate; also, keeping the years separate would make it easier for us to notice any wide fluctuations indicative of a too-small sample size.

Question 214 (continued)

In both the current economic environment and the one to be described in Section II-A, there will be a need for the Government to monitor prices of various goods and services which are produced and provided in this country, to maintain basic price stability and to allow prices for particular goods and services to achieve their true relative values: Given what we have established as to the new Executive structure, which Government office is best equipped to discharge this function?

Since the time that the group found in Session 118 that this function should be managed by the Domestic Trade Bureau of the Domestic Affairs Department, we had considerably and repeatedly restructured our model Executive Branch, such that the Domestic Affairs Department no longer exists. We also observed as of the Third Pass (April 2020) -- having been through all the Economic discussions of Part II -- that it is not actually obvious going in how much effort the Government should/would actually be performing in terms of Price Controls, versus simply keeping the Money Supply stable and allowing the Free Market to do the rest. We therefore will make sure in the Fifth Pass that all such Economic topics are placed before any discussions on Executive structure. In the meantime, we currently have bureaus in the new Finance Department for Business & Securities, Currency, and Domestic Trade, any one of which would be a potentially-good candidate for performing any Price Controls which need to be performed. However, as of the Third Pass, we are resting with the Currency Bureau for this function, because the whole idea of their existence is to control the Money Supply according to periodic fluctuations in key Price levels.

Question 661.2 (continued)

Any other suggestions to make on quotation marks?

Added in April 2020: Generally, we should use single quotes when referring to a word or expression without quoting anyone, except if the word or expression contains an apostrophe (like the "ain't" of Question 655), in which case use double quotes. Otherwise, double quotes should be only for actually quoting somebody.

Notwithstanding any conventions which may have been recommended or used in previous years, we recommended the following updated convention in the First Pass for referring to various published works in print: Use *italics* if you are referring to a book or a feature film, because it is one large work of human effort, and therefore should be set aside from the surrounding text very clearly. Use 'single quotes' if you are referring to a newspaper (or article) or TV series, because those are works which are produced in stages, so each issue or episode is only a partial effort, so the title does not need to be set off so distinctly from the surrounding text. As with the previous paragraph, though, okay to use double quotes as an exception, if the title of the TV series contains an apostrophe (such as in "Murphy's Law"). Use "double quotes" if you are referring to a specific episode of a TV series. All clear?

Question 643.1 (continued)

Do we have continuing problems with any particular Team names, logos, colors, or other similar attributes?

Added in April 2020 from further SIG correspondence: Above-noted confusion with the Rockies of Colorado should not be much of an issue, if we eliminate inter-league

games as recommended in Answer 639, except in the rare circumstance that the two teams meet in the World Series, and even then it could be played up for a once-in-a-lifetime meeting of the Rockers versus the Rockies.

Question 658.3 (continued)

What other words/expressions in our vocabulary do we feel should be either modified or at least clarified?

ASAP

Added in April 2020:

We contend that this expression (extruding to 'As Soon As Possible') is often used improperly, and that the misuse can cause problems in our business interactions.

Moderator-author has extensive personal experience in various companies with co-workers requesting some report 'as soon as possible', vendors requesting payment 'as soon as possible', etc. They sometimes mean it literally, and they sometimes do not. Either way, it's a problem.

If they mean it literally, if they really mean that they want/expect you to drop immediately whatever else you're doing, and not even read to the end of the e-mail which is communicating the request to you, then in most cases (if not all) they are being unreasonable. If you have the type of job where you need to juggle multiple different duties and stay current on all of them, it is often highly helpful to arrange them according to a time budget, and work through one task completely before you pick up the next one. If you interrupt your workflow every time that somebody wants you to cut a check, instead of doing all checks on the same day of the week, then your work will take a lot longer, and you increase your chance of making mistakes. Unless the office is on fire, anything that anybody wants can just wait, and if they wanted it earlier then they should have asked earlier. You should not be made to endure stress or mess up your job while satisfying other people's unreasonable demands, nor to feel guilty for not doing so. Better for them to say something like 'as soon as practical' or 'as soon as convenient'.

If they don't mean it literally, if they really do mean 'as soon as practical' or 'as soon as convenient', then they really should change what they say in order to be closer to what they mean. Otherwise, you might think that they really mean 'as soon as possible', and again you are liable to experience stress or guilt, or mess up your work and your time budget unnecessarily. Allowing them to continue to misuse the expression could be bad for you and your stress levels, but asking them to clarify their intent or change their usage could also be bad for your business relationship. Nevertheless, the author has sometimes asked vendors and co-workers to avoid indicating 'as soon as possible' if they don't really mean it, and hopefully people will read our recommendation here so that you do not need to ask them yourself.

If we can all once accept that 'ASAP' should mean 'as soon as practical' instead of 'as soon as possible', then we may continue to use that abbreviation in that context. If not, then we wish that the expression could just be completely retired, for it may be causing more problems than it's solving.

Question 49.6 (continued)

Should payments of any kind ever be made to incumbent officials?

Added in April 2020: As a general rule to encourage/require divestitures, no public official should be richer when leaving office than when entering, except by the amount of any government salary. (This includes any deferred compensation, such as releasing funds to the official a month or a year after he leaves office, because the promise still constitutes an Account Receivable as of the end of term, so it's still an Asset, and so it still constitutes an increase in Total Wealth.) Without such a rule, it could be the case that the official somehow manipulated the system while in office in order to come away with more wealth than he would have had otherwise, which would mean that wealth was undeservedly taken away from others. Even if manipulation was not intentionally inflicted, the very possibility and perception would be sufficient to undermine our faith in our government officials, as we have already seen. Therefore, as a Qualification for Office (so this Question may fit better in Subsection I-C-2 than in Section I-B), every public official should either divest all business interests prior to taking office, or else be prepared to turn over to government or approved charities any excess of net exit wealth over entry wealth.

Question 600 (continued)

What limits, if any, shall we place on 'free speech'?

Added in April 2020 from further SIG correspondence: Such liability should be a civil case of wrongful death, because a criminal violation would be much more difficult to prove in the case of an alleged oral inspiration to commit violence.

Question 261.2 (continued)

To what extent should Territories (or different classes of Territories) be represented in the National legislature?

Sometime prior to April 2020, we modified our conclusion from Session 136, finding that all residential neighborhoods in current DC should be assigned to nearby States, such that there would be no reason for DC to be represented as such in any house.

Question 675.7 (continued)

Given the placement of the fundamental Time Zone(s) of the World, where specifically should the Time Zone boundaries in America be?

Added in April 2020 from SIG correspondence: We have a level of flexibility with Alaska, which of course is big enough to straddle multiple time zones, and which therefore may not need to be all in one time zone as the other States should. In fact, our principal recommendation is for the Eastern Panhandle to be in Zone 9, and for the Western Aleutians to be in Zone 12. For the main part of the State, we feel that it would be cleanest and easiest for the area east of Mount McKinley to be in Zone 10, and for the western area to be in Zone 11. However, we have read about a change approved internally in 1983 to place the entire State (excluding the Western Aleutians) in Zone 9. We are not eager to tell Alaska how to do things from 3000 miles away if they're not hurting anybody, so pending cogent counterargument we are content to keep the bulk of the State in a single time zone if they really want.

However, our primary recommendation still is to use Mount McKinley as the prime demarcation between Zone 10 and Zone 11, for we would like to get the entire Nation and World accustomed to the idea that your time zone should be wherever you are, and that you are only confusing things if you seek to make it otherwise.

Question 258.7 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the City agencies listed in Answer 135?

Public Safety - Disaster Relief

Added in April 2020 from SIG correspondence: Suggestion was offered to allow homeowners to enter condemned buildings after a disaster to recover valuable personal possessions, but we agreed not to adopt it. City officials and agencies may be subject to extensive civil liability if they determine that a particular building is too structurally unsafe for any amount of occupancy, and then allow residents to go inside for any nonzero amount of time. When the families of the crushed victims criticize and sue the City for such reckless endangerment, what will be the City's defense, that it was because the Answers To Everything SIG recommended it? There are many times and conditions when the Government's motives are suspect, but when they are deciding which buildings are safe to occupy and which are not, we have no reason to question their sincerity, and no foundation to challenge the professional judgment of the experts which they engage in engineering and architecture to make those decisions. If any residents were too short-sighted to get their key possessions out earlier, then at some point it's on them, and our only other recommendation would be for them to wait until the building is demolished in a controlled manner, and then they can pore through the rubble as it is hauled away for any possessions which may have survived. Better yet, get your stuff out sooner.

Question 219.5 (continued)

What should an office for Language Services be called, and where should it report?

As of the Third Pass (April 2020), we had eliminated the Domestic Affairs Department for being too large in scope, and had reassigned Electronic Communications to be a Bureau in the restored Interior Department. Language Resources had been re-removed as a Federal office in Session 280.

Question 220 (continued)

Shall there be one or more languages with which every resident/citizen of a given nation shall be expected to have some working familiarity?

Upon reviewing everything afresh in the Third Pass (April 2020), we concur that it generally makes sense for each Nation to have exactly one 'official language' at least for purposes of official communications between its Government and its Residents, that we generally should not impose such a requirement at the Global level upon any Nation which for any reason prefers to engage in official communications using multiple languages, that American English should be the one and only 'official language' of the United States, and that for that reason every American resident should be expected to have some working familiarity with it.

Question 221 (continued)

Shall there be one of these languages, or more than one?

Added during the Third Pass (April 2020) a notation made in our 'black book' but apparently not referenced during the panel discussions: It had been suggested by a certain schoolteacher (who never attended any of our panel sessions, but whose excellent idea it was to transform this Project to a group effort), that we should expect each child to learn at least three languages, especially in a country as diverse as America, so that those who cannot connect with one language might be able to with another. Although this idea has a lot of charm, and we would not strenuously object if enough other folks were eager to put it into practice, yet we felt then and still feel that it may be overly optimistic, and a counterproductive use of primary-school resources when we are simply trying to get everyone to learn the Basics of social interaction. However, we gleefully recommend that Foreign Languages be included as electives at the secondary-school level, as they often are already, and that American Sign Language (ASL) be one of them if qualified instructors are available. Whether completion of at least one Foreign Language course should be a condition of secondary-school graduation, or whether it is merely presented as an option for those who wish to learn, can be examined further in the actual Education section, but we certainly should at least encourage such a course actively, and allow students to take courses in two different Foreign Languages if schedules permit.

Question 224 (continued)

Which language(s) shall be chosen as the 'official' languages of the United States?

During the Third Pass (April 2020), we corrected our reasoning from Session 120 about the United States being "the only country in the Americas which could have English as an 'official language'". We had totally forgotten about Canada! We thus now leave it up to the Canadians to decide (and change over time if desired) whether they want to maintain a separate thing known as 'Canadian English' as distinct from what folks speak South of the Border, or whether they prefer to speak a more-or-less unified version of English with the Americans, such that what we call 'American English' is really more of a 'North American English', whatever that might mean.

Question 233 (continued)

Given that American English is selected to be the official language of the United States, and that the Office of Language Services is in place to provide standards of communication, shall a minimum understanding of American English (written and spoken) be a requirement of citizenship, under the terms of citizenship as discussed earlier?

Not sure as of the Third Pass (April 2020) whether we ever reconsidered this Q in light of our decision in the Second Pass to restore Citizenship to our model.

Question 238 (continued)

How shall the Disaster Relief Office be funded?

Not sure as of Third Pass (April 2020) whether we ever completed this Q following our establishment of Economic principles in Part II, so flagged it for follow-up.

Question 239 (continued)

Any objection to continuing to maintain an office for Patents and Copyrights, or to placing it within a Department of Citizen Services?

By the time of the Third Pass (April 2020), we had eliminated the Department of Domestic Affairs from our model for being too huge and diverse, and we ended up placing the Bureau of Copyrights & Patents within the Finance Department.

Question 246 (continued)

Would such facilities be open to citizens only, or could aliens use them who wished to integrate into American society and make positive contributions?

Phrasing of the Question looked rather 'leading' as of the Third Pass (April 2020). In any case, as with Q233, it was not clear as of the Third Pass whether we had ever taken this up again after restoring Citizenship to our model, so flagged for follow-up.

Question 247 (continued)

How many orientation centers should there be, and where should they be located?

Added in the Third Pass (April 2020) that the number of centers may (and hopefully will) need to decrease over time, as we get more people employed and able to manage on their own, so the facilities in our network should be flexible enough to consolidate as the need for their existence lessens. We may also be able to make use of facilities currently dedicated to the Military, if global tensions ever reduce (as proposed in Section I-B) to where we can safely scale down our Standing Forces.

Question 250 (continued)

What shall this agency be named, and where shall it report?

We had found in Session 126 that the agency managing our 'help centers' should report to the Social Services Bureau of the Domestic Affairs Department. However, that department was eliminated from our structure by the Third Pass (April 2020), so we apparently now needed to make a decision: Current structure contains a bureau for Economic Aid in the Public Services Department, but we recalled that the main focus of that agency is sending checks to residents in need, as opposed to catering to the Homeless. Current structure also includes a bureau for Immigration in the Foreign Affairs Department, but that is more for looking at the bigger picture of how many people are coming in from where, as opposed to helping individual immigrants. We therefore went out on a limb at this time, and established a new Bureau in Public Services called 'Orientation', which hopefully will be somewhat self-explanatory, and yes that certainly would be the only function performed by that agency. [Changed.]

Question 252 (continued)

Once this system is up and running, could local jurisdictions pass and enforce stricter ordinances against vagrancy, loitering, begging, etc.?

Noted in the Third Pass (April 2020) that this whole business about begging might/would be rendered moot if we eliminate Cash as considered in Part II.

Question 253 (continued)

The description of this "orientation center" sounds very much like the old "poor house" concept: Might it not be considered degrading for some people to need to attend such a facility?

We had misgivings as of the Third Pass (April 2020) about the conclusion reached in Session 127, that we should allow Homeless individuals to sleep in public if they prefer not to utilize our 'help centers'. Big part of the idea of these centers is to get the Homeless off the streets, both for their own sake and to relieve fear and blight in our local communities. We concluded in Answer 242 that we should not simply "Let Them Be", because to do so would be equivalent to leaving in place the *status quo* which we seek to solve. To sleep on a park bench when a more decent alternative is locally available presents an unnecessary threat to the general public (or at least the perception of a threat, which is effectively the same thing), which is a violation of our Basic Social Rule about doing what you want only if you are not injuring or threatening others. Compromise solution which we offer at this time is that users of the help/orientation centers may walk freely wherever they will on public grounds, same as everyone else, but that they must sleep at the centers if they have no other housing available. Benches are for sitting not sleeping.

Question 254 (continued)

Should the use of alcohol or other drugs be permitted within the orientation center?

Added in Third Pass (April 2020) that the provision decided in Session 127 -- that Alcohol and other Drugs should be prohibited in our 'help centers' in consideration of those residents who are trying to recover from substance abuse -- also should apply to both Tobacco and Marijuana, even though they may not properly be considered 'drugs' in the technical sense. Point is, they are substances from which some people are trying to recover, and which can be harmful to those within smelling distance.

Question 258.1 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the State agencies listed in Answer 135?

Car Safety: As of the Third Pass (April 2020), function of Car Safety would need to be under the Consumer Protection Bureau of the Public Services Department.

Insurance: Conclusion reached in Session 128 against redlining for Comprehensive still looked quite tenuous as of the Third Pass. We get that allowing premium variations according to geographic area allows the perception or reality of certain communities being 'targeted' with higher premium rates, making it harder for them to obtain insurance, and requiring those who can afford it to sacrifice in other areas. It also makes some sense to spread the collective risk over more of the pool of policyholders, which is the basic idea of having Insurance in the first place. On the other hand, should the less risk-prone have to pay for the losses incurred by the more risk-prone? Again, that's what happens generally with Insurance, so to some extent Yes. Also, it was later suggested in Part II that we should compel richer folk to subsidize more completely the needs of the poorer folk (including by the use of a Wealth Tax), so that's another argument in favor of richer policyholders paying higher premiums as needed in order to make things easier on poorer policyholders

with higher risk factors. On the other hand, if Insurance will cover all losses everywhere, and if all premium rates are even for all policyholders, then there is little or no motivation for individuals and communities to reduce their risk exposure, whereas allowing premium variation by geographic location might motivate some communities to try harder to reduce local criminal activity. Then again, having your car stolen or vandalized is still a pain even if your loss will eventually be covered by Insurance, so individuals and communities still would have some level of motivation to reduce local crime if they possibly could. But, we also remember from our personal experience and education that the Insurance industry is very elaborate and precise when it comes to their actuarial science, so we are not convinced that their "loss data may be unreliable". And, there is the Libertarian argument that companies in a free market should be allowed to set their own prices for their own products and services, although Insurance may need to be an exception because it cannot truly be a free market, since it is "affected with the public trust" and must be regulated at least enough to ensure that each insurer carries enough reserves to cover actuarially-expected losses. On balance, we are sticking with our original finding for the continued present, but we are still very receptive to being persuaded to change our minds. [Revisited later in Third Pass.]

Question 258.1 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the State agencies listed in Answer 135?

Insurance: Noted in the Third Pass (April 2020) that the practice of discounting premium rates for good drivers was by then fairly common among Insurers, even though a prominent insurance company made a big deal in a commercial from 2019-2020 about how they provide good-driver discounts, as if it were a shocking big thing. Fact is, drivers with good records pay lower rates all the time, but it's not so much because they are being discounted. Rather, it is because the bad drivers (those with tickets and at-fault accidents on their records) are getting penalized with higher-than-standard rates, to reflect their higher risk factors. The statement therefore actually generalizes to the idea that insurers may continue to graduate their premium structures according to the recent driving records of the insureds.

Highways

Added note in Third Pass that we had recently seen the lighted message that "BUZZED DRIVING IS DRUNK DRIVING", and that we take official exception to that assertion, on the grounds that anyone who makes that claim must not have personally attempted both. Author admits with regret that he has attempted both, and personally attests that they were distinctly different experiences, at least for him. Alcohol tended to make me sleepy at the wheel, and a distinct danger to myself and others. By contrast, a modest amount of Marijuana an ample time prior to driving helped me to relax some at the wheel and be less nervous, but still enabled me to remain awake and alert the whole time, and may actually have made me a slightly safer driver. Your mileage may vary.

As to the suggestion raised in Session 129 for using dashboard-mounted video to catch traffic offenders, noted in Third Pass our subsequent conversation with a lawyer that we probably could not use such anonymous evidence to prosecute any offender directly, if we uphold our current legal principle that an accused should be able to face his accusers in court. However, we later figured out that we could at least use such footage to issue warnings, and then when an actual cop catches the

driver committing the same 'bad act' the penalty can be stiffer than it otherwise would, because we will know that the driver knew about the law and transgressed it anyway, so he should be treated as though it were a second or third offense.

CHP/Troopers: Added in Third Pass the note from above, that the video footage would be used only for warnings to ordinary drivers, so there would not be so much of a Class distinction or other social problem. We are content with States setting their own parameters as to how many video captures shall be sufficient to initiate different kinds of job actions against cops who appear to drive too recklessly.

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We finished reading the book "Thieves in the Temple" by Andre Michael Eggelletion in April 2020. Additional notes follow:

Question 370 (continued)

Given that we will not attempt to carry a single currency for the entire world, should there still be such a thing as an International Monetary Fund, and if so then why?

Added in April 2020: Following statement from pp.157-158 of the book "Thieves in the Temple" by Andre Michael Eggelletion (described further in Answer 379.1) concurs with our view of what to do and not do with global wealth management:

The perpetually expanding debt of Third World countries causes great hardship for their people. Their governments spend far more on debt service than on health care and education. This consigns millions of souls throughout less developed countries (LDCs) to hellish sociological ramifications, such as poverty, famine, disease (AIDS, Hepatitis, and Ebola), and ignorance. Therefore, no matter how much money is sent to starving children, solicited by a litany of TV fund raising efforts, the suffering and its ripple effect will continue until the debt slavery ends and the nations are allowed to develop and support themselves.

Question 2.8

How do we know anything?

Added in April 2020: Overall, some of the citations in the Eggelletion book are sketchy (including from Wikipedia), and we did not agree with all that author's observations and conclusions, but we did agree with some of them. We therefore noted for our text that when two people who disagree on Proposition A agree on Proposition B, then at least Prop B is fairly reliable. We packaged this note for the Third Pass under a new Question which we added after we posted the note.

Question 258.1 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the State agencies listed in Answer 135?

Behold, it turns out that we never got around during the First Pass to the planned discussion of Parole in Q345, so we picked it up in the Third Pass (April 2020), placing the new notes in that spot.

Question 345 (continued)

By what criteria shall a particular jurisdiction determine the appropriate number of years of imprisonment?

Observed while reviewing our notes from Session 130 during the Third Pass in April 2020 that we had told ourselves that we would take up the subject of Parole during Question 345, but we now did not find it addressed during that Question's original consideration, or (based on searching for that term) anywhere else during the First Pass. Closest that we came was Question 353.1, where we discussed voting privileges for convicted criminals. We therefore needed to treat it here and now. Allowing ourselves to be guided by the spirit of the original Answer 345, we are content for now to allow the evolving guidelines of the U.S. Sentencing Commission to include for different types of crimes any requirements or restrictions (including as to voting) which are to apply to recent releasees from Prison, and how long those requirements or restrictions are to last. As with all other elements of the guidelines, the Commission can allow itself to be swayed according to the prevailing mood of the country as to whether we are being too tough or too lenient with our convicts and ex-convicts, and we should retroactively apply any relaxed standards to previous sentencees, but not retroactively apply any tougher standards.

Question 414 (continued)

Are there any methods other than traditional taxation which might be considered for raising Government revenue?

Added during Third Pass (April 2020) that we had decided in Subsection I-D-4 that criminal fines can be used at the City level to subsidize capital improvements and other special projects, and/or to increase Police staffing during high-crime periods, and/or to help families cover the costs of Police funerals. [Amended in Third Pass.]

Question 258.7 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the City agencies listed in Answer 135?

Public Safety - Police - We previously found that once the federal help/orientation centers for homeless and other disadvantaged individuals are operational, local communities may enact tougher laws against actively threatening the public, but should leave alone 'passive panhandling' and other non-harmful/non-threatening activities. We find this finding to be suspect as of the Third Pass, because a 'passive panhandler' standing on the center divider while you're waiting to turn left can still appear (or be) very threatening, as can one who is standing outside the restaurant or market or other business which you seek to enter. Besides, when a driver dispenses cash to a panhandler standing on the center divider next to the left-turn lane, that can back up the cars behind and create a traffic hazard. Problem phases out as we continue to phase out physical cash, and in the meantime we discourage giving cash to panhandlers for the encouragement of that continued behavior. To the extent that these people want to hang out and beg anyway, businesses can establish and request Police enforcement of reasonable no-loitering boundaries, and communities can decide whether they wish to allow 'passive panhandlers' to stand any place like a center divider where drivers or other citizens are required to stop for any period, although we are generally recommending in favor of such prohibitions.

Street Signs - Third Pass was a long and pretty lonely operation, with no in-person meetings being held anymore, and with the only outside input coming from any e-mail reactions to our Second Pass reports (and there had been plenty of those lately as of April 2020, but not on this topic, which for lack of consensus was not officially addressed through the Second Pass), and any Questions which I may occasionally spring upon the housemates. I was tempted to rely on the majority of our quorum of one during the Third Pass review of the previous suggestion on street signs, but for safe side ran the Question past the housemates, who expressed no opinion. We therefore sided with the Moderator's original argument, on grounds that even a driver in the far-left lane is closer to the passenger-side sign than the driver-side sign, and so should generally be expected to look there for the address numbers. However, we also officially noted that opinion seems to be divided, and that until further analysis Localities may make the decisions which appear to work best for them, whether determined by popular poll or Council vote or some other mechanism.

Special Events - Overruled our decision from Session 134 in the Third Pass (April 2020). We did not now like the cumbersome expression of 'Special Civic Events', and it turned out that we may not need the term 'Special' at all, because it's not really an 'Event' at all if it is not also 'Special'. (Where, for example, is the agency which handles 'Ordinary Events'?) However, we did want to distinguish between Events put on directly by the City and those which are organized by the Public through the Permit process. Solution therefore seemed to be to rename 'Special Events' in our Municipal structure as 'Civic Events', so ruled.

Red Light - Generalized in the Third Pass the dichotomy from Session 134 about turning right on a red light, to allow local communities to make their own decisions about Traffic Management based on local conditions, provided that they post prominently at municipal borders and/or at the lights themselves any significant changes in Traffic laws from those enacted by the adjacent municipality.

Changing Lanes - As noted in Subsection I-D-2, we should have stricter enforcement of the law requiring use of signals when turning or changing lanes. Said enforcement can include private citizens submitting video evidence to the police for the issuance of warnings, as that technology becomes more widely available.

Tobacco - In the Third Pass, we did not envision performing any reconstruction within business districts to distinguish between smoking and non-smoking areas (as suggested in Session 134), too costly, too restrictive to everybody's movements, too unnecessary, too ineffective. Better to establish simply that one may not smoke tobacco within a certain radius of any business entrance, said radius to be determined by local ordinance, and posted throughout local business districts. Author's primary preference is No Tobacco Smoking anywhere at all ever, secondary preference is to disallow throughout any business district, but will settle for radii to be established by local action. If a given community chooses the third option, then please remember that smoke travels, and will not always stay within your radius.

Question 260 (continued)

What are the advantages of a two-house legislature versus those of a one-house legislature?

We added another reason in the Third Pass (April 2020) which eventually occurred to us for application at both the Global and National levels, if not also lower, that the

different houses can be assigned different areas of business, in order to increase efficiency and improve decision quality through specialization.

Question 261 (continued)

What number of houses is recommended for the different levels of American government?

Added later: One reason for having a 'middle' house is to have a hierarchy that can help with navigation of new bills. Another reason is to allow representatives a more gradual path of advancement. Another reason is that some people might associate the number of delegates in a given house with its relative importance or prominence, and they might wonder why we didn't have a per-Area house in the original Constitutional model if it was important enough to have a delegate count as low as (or lower than) that of the U.S. Senate, and they further might wonder why it's necessary to have such a 3rd house at all if it is so unimportant as to have a delegate count as high as (or higher than) that of the per-Population house. If we can show that this 3rd house is more of a balancing influence between the 'upper' and 'lower' houses, by having both the delegate count and the term length (see below) fall somewhere in the middle, then that might be more understandable to more people. Yet another reason for not tying the delegacy of the per-Area house to that of the per-State house is that we don't want to re-norm the districts of the per-Area house if we are merely changing the number of States within the same geographic area.

Question 671.2

Under what conditions (if any) is it appropriate for any individual, organization, or government to display any flag representing the former Confederate States of America?

Added this Question to the 'black book' in April 2020, but addressed it later.

Question 245 (continued)

What services would be included in such 'orientation centers'?

Added in April 2020: We now found that the expression 'help center' is better overall than 'orientation center'. It's shorter and easier to pronounce, but main reason is that they are providing services of much broader scope than just orientation to immigrants, including as a temporary retreat for victims of domestic violence.

Question 250 (continued)

What shall this agency be named, and where shall it report?

Added in April 2020: Because we now call them 'help centers' instead of 'orientation centers', we now renamed the supervising agency as the Bureau of Public Assistance.

Subsubsection I-D-1-h-viii: Public Health

Unit added to Outline in April 2020, in response to the Corona Virus crisis, for which America was clearly underprepared. Squeezed everything into a single Q for now.

Question 255.5

Any suggestions to offer as to pandemic management?

We would not have thought it necessary to tell America how to prevent or manage a pandemic. We already had the World Health Organization (WHO) at the global level, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) specifically for America. Between the two agencies, networked and coordinated with State and County health offices, we imagined that proper steps would have been taken to prevent any kind of pandemic, and to mitigate the effects of a pandemic if one ever broke out. In our model bureaucratic structure, we retained a Public Health Bureau within the Department of Public Services, and we placed a Health Committee/Council within the population-based House of Provinces in our model 'Earth Congress', to continue coordinating all this research and response as needed. We previously asked ourselves no further Questions on the subject, not only because we lack any foundation to offer qualified medical suggestions, but primarily because we trusted the Federal Government to protect the American public as sincerely and conscientiously and effectively as they practically could. It appears that we misplaced our trust.

Now that the onset of the pandemic is behind us as of this addition in April 2020, what lessons have we learned which can help us as we continue to fight this particular "invisible enemy", and/or which can help us to mitigate the impact of any such emergencies going forward? We started with the following observations:

First, our model is helped by our anti-conflict rule and expanded legislative oversight. Part of the Corona problem was that certain high (too high?) Government officials were promoting the use of medications which had not been scientifically suspected (let alone proven) as being safe and effective against the new virus, because they allegedly had ongoing investments in the firms producing those drugs. This is a classic example of why we want no public officials holding any business interests while in office, because they present a 'conflict of interest' which could directly endanger (and cost) numerous American lives. Also, insofar as the Administration delays any responsive action, or provides any misinformation to the public, or orders private companies to re-open for business before they safely can, or in any other way betrays our public trust, the Congress under certain conditions should be able to direct the applicable officials to do the right thing, or to remove them from authority if they do not, up to and including the President of the United States.

Second, the recent experience has reopened old debates on the relationship between People and the Government, and between Federal and State governments. Does the Government at any level get to order the public to practice 'social distancing' or the use of masks and gloves? Do they get to close parks and beaches and other public facilities? Do they get to close restaurants and hotels and other private businesses? Do they get to re-open any such facilities whenever they feel like it? If yes to any of these, then what happens if a particular State wants to manage things a certain way internally, and the Fed has a different idea for the Nation as a whole?

Principle of Subsidiarity says that responsibility and authority for different functions generally should be pushed to the lowest bureaucratic or governmental levels which can adequately manage them. Principle of Eminent Domain says that higher levels get to impose restrictions upon lower levels as they deem fit. Both principles have places in our lives, and in this model, but we cannot always observe both of them at the same time, so where do we draw the line here?

We previously derived a Resolution #1B in our Answer 25.9, that a Nation generally gets to do what it wants, provided that it is not injuring or threatening another Nation against its will. We are now generalizing this to Resolution #1C, that any civil jurisdiction generally gets to do what it wants, provided that it is not injuring or threatening any outside jurisdictions against their will. Thus, if the State of Florida or the City of Las Vegas really wants to place their residents in harm's way by calling for beaches and casinos to operate for economic benefit while a pandemic is still raging, and as long as they are not endangering any outsiders by doing so, then maybe they should have that option. Conversely, once it becomes clear that a State or City policy is indeed endangering lives outside its borders, the higher jurisdiction does and should have standing to protect the other lives as needed. Until then, the National government should focus on the National problem, and the Global governance (if any) should focus on the Global problem, all networking to share research and ideas among different governmental levels as needed.

Third, seems to us that we need a policy on corporate bailouts. We don't want any workers losing their jobs or homes because their employers can no longer conduct a 'critical mass' of business to remain in full operation. But, if we allow any corporate bailouts at all, then they will tend to go to the larger firms which don't really need them, particularly to industries such as Coal and Oil which we would like to see phased out anyway, but which still maintain powerful lobbies in the American government through monetary contributions to Executive and Legislative leaders.

If you really want to have any corporate bailouts, whether in a pandemic or under any other condition, then first require that the recipient is in genuine need, and not just looking for padding at the public expense. Next, make sure that the recipient is one whom we want to remain in business and fiscally solvent, by requiring a vote of Congressmembers who do not have any financial stake in any of these firms, probably by a two-thirds vote since we are talking about appropriations in excess of budget. Finally, establish clearly where the money is coming from. Are you simply continuing to borrow from future generations and expand the National Debt (which may be much harder to remediate in a post-pandemic economy), or are you just going to print a bunch of Monopoly money in the form of paper checks and direct deposits which do not actually come out of any bank account or any other government asset, or are you taking only from the super-rich while keeping the money supply stable, or something else? There's an argument which says that as long I get to pay the rent and stay in my house, and as long as I can keep the food and other essential supplies coming in, we don't/shouldn't care where the Dollars come from or where they go. At some point, however, if the Money Supply gets too large, and products become easier for people to buy, then businesses in a free market are going to raise their prices simply because they can get away with it, so landlords will need to raise their rents in order to generate the extra income needed to keep up, which is how Rents keep rising and the Dollar keeps sinking.

Maybe if you want to talk about an overall freeze on price increases for Food and Rent, then yes maybe we can get by with some sort of emergency process to keep people fed and sheltered in their homes, and allow landlords to pay all their bills, and then maybe we don't really need to sweat the macro impact on the purchasing power of the Dollar. However, we would then be talking about a Nationalized economy, where the Government maintains ownership control over businesses, and dictates Wages and Prices instead of allowing them to be determined by a free market. If you don't personally care because 'the system' is managing to take care of you and

your family, then maybe we can't persuade you that this is a potentially dangerous course. Then again, we might indeed have greater unemployment and homelessness and poverty if we do not take such measures. On the other hand, maybe the Fed wants to exert control over the private sector, and is issuing these small amounts to middle-class taxpayers to buy their silence, while the big amounts go to the corporate and political fatcats who will use any excuse and take any opportunity to fleece the American public. Choose wisely. [Amended later.]

Question 124.4 (continued)

In general, what Voting Method is best for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies?

We read in May 2020 a certain paper compiled by a group led by Antoinette Baujard of the University of Lyon*, and recorded the following notes to help inform our comparative discussion on voting methods:

*Baujard, A., European Journal of Political Economy (2017), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpoleco.2017.09.006>

Paper described a French experiment from 2012 comparing 'evaluative voting' at different range scales, including -1/0/+1 and 0/1/2 (so they recognized them as potentially different things) and 0/1 (so we can compare against Straight Approval) and 0-20 (so we can compare against larger scales). We were delighted that they included the full range of viable options, so the experiment could be considered potentially probative.

Last two sentences of the 1-paragraph abstract at the head of the paper stated much: "The data show that scales are not linearly equivalent... . Scale matters, notably because of the symbolic power of negative grades, which does not affect all candidates uniformly."

Three-level grade voting (where you either cross out, or leave alone, or mark plus, which is what we call #YesNoAbstain) was possible in Latvia.

Previous experiments had confirmed that voters tend to prefer longer scales, but not too long, and prefer scales with negative grades to scales with only positive grades.

"Longer scales may enhance more strategic behaviors, and voters who vote strategically will have even more power than voters who vote honestly."

Strasbourg sub-experiment showed that larger scales tend to produce more inconsistency, probably because the increased complexity causes more voters to make honest errors.

Bottom of p.8 confirmed that #YesNoAbstain favors 'inclusive' (i.e. centrist) candidates and disfavors 'exclusive' (extremist) others.

Minor candidates actually do tend to stay "far from the top", so we may not need to worry so much about one winning, although it is a possibility, but of course it is, which is why they are running. However, our #OpenBallot proposal, in which one achieves ballot access only by being a major candidate as determined by signature count, makes this point less relevant.

In the 21-point scale, voters tended to emphasize the scale points divisible by 5, "probably because of their particular symbolic significance". However, they also observed smaller lumps between the 5-point modalities, suggesting "that a 9-level scale would be more satisfying for most voters".

Not much variation in distribution of approval thresholds observed between 0-2 and 0-20, but definite difference between 0-2 and -1/0/+1.

They summarized on p.12 that 0 in a 0-2 scale is often used for both rejected and unknown candidates, whereas 0 in a -1/0/+1 scale is often used for unknown candidates while rejected candidates get the lowest grade. This finding means that lesser-known candidates have a better shot under -1/0/+1 than under 0-2, further undermining the chances of a bad incumbent.

Interestingly, voters like to use the two positive values in 0-2 as degrees of positive support, whereas they will compress all positive support in the +1 under -1/0/+1.

However, because scales matter, they felt that "evaluation voting" should not be used without further tests, particularly as to the difference between scales with negative values and those without.

In three ballots in Louvigny, all candidates were approved

Participants "clearly expressed" in oral or written remarks the difficulties in grading candidates on a 0-20 scale.

Question 261.8 (continued)

Given future technology, any continued need for a house Chair?

Amended during Third Pass (May 2020): In addition to other power limitations which we are recommending for house officers as to introduction or consideration of pending legislation, we are also finding generally that neither the house Chair nor any other house official (especially including any so-called 'Majority Leader') should have unilateral authority to call any house into session, or to adjourn it. The house shall set its own annual schedule of convening and adjourning within any parameters established in the Constitution, according to established parliamentary custom for questions which have several pending proposals for solution. Once that schedule is established, to call a special session or to adjourn prematurely should require a majority vote of the entire assembly, including by remote tally if necessary.

Question 269 (continued)

Under what circumstances -- if any -- may a member of a committee be expelled?

Modified a finding from Session 138 in the Third Pass (May 2020): We now conceive of circumstances where an individual may be unqualified to serve on one Committee but qualified to serve on another. For example, you may have a conflict to serve on the Judiciary Committee if your brother-in-law is on the Federal bench, but you still might be okay to serve on the Budget Committee. Or, maybe you disrupt Budget too much, but you're a gentle pussycat when the Rules Committee is in session.

Modified another finding from Session 138 in the Third Pass: Committee may make an internal decision without escalating the matter to the full house. We recommend a 2/3 majority as being necessary and sufficient for dismissal, because a lower level may be too subject to innocent political differences, whereas a higher level may never be achievable. Failure of the expulsion motion shall cause the matter to rest, but passage shall automatically be appealed to the full house, where we imagine that a 3/5 majority is a more realistic requirement for confirmation of the Committee action, with any lesser vote causing the dismissal to be overturned. The subject of the motion may always cast a vote on it, until that right is duly removed.

Question 269.5 (continued)

How shall the leadership of committees be selected?

Added in Third Pass (May 2020) that all votes for the leadership of Committees should be anonymous, same as decided for Answer 262 eight months earlier with respect to voting for leadership of the entire assembly.

Question 271 (continued)

Standing committees having been designated for a given house, who shall determine what standing committee(s) shall evaluate a given piece of proposed legislation, or whether a special committee shall be formed?

Added in Third Pass: Designating too many Committees could increase the number of recommendations against a bill, and/or delay the process, so don't go overboard.

Question 272 (continued)

What should be the scope of the Rules Committee, the Ways & Means Committee, and certain other Committees in Congress?

Added during Third Pass that Judiciary Committees in Congress also investigated certain Executive officials during the Watergate scandal of the 1970's. However, having done things in a certain way doesn't mean that we should continue.

Question 271 (continued)

Standing committees having been designated for a given house, who shall determine what standing committee(s) shall evaluate a given piece of proposed legislation, or whether a special committee shall be formed?

We found questionable in the Third Pass the suggestion offered in Session 141, that the Steering Committee of each house generally should decide the sequence in which items reported back from Committees are to be taken up by the full assembly, to get more time-sensitive items dispatched first. For, if the bill has already been assigned and researched then it really should be considered beyond the scope of the Bill Assignment Committee to do anything, and we are leery of any small cabal having excessive influence over what gets considered when. However, even if we do not have any Committee influencing the order of items in the Calendar, the full assembly may do so, as previously decided, so an Executive appointment still can end up getting delayed because other items of business are seen as having higher priority.

Question 272.7 (continued)

What votes shall be required to overturn an ordinary Executive action?

In case not clearly established before: Executive Oversight Committee continually reviews all unilateral actions of the Executive Branch, generally through notifications from all units in the Executive Branch, but also upon its own investigations, including as to excessive information collection, as described in Subsubsection I-D-1-g.

Question 19.5 (continued)

How do (or should) we feel about War?

Added in May 2020: Following good quote comes ironically from one of our worst Presidents, statement delivered upon the dedication of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington Cemetery on the third anniversary of the WWI Armistice.

The loftiest tribute we can bestow today ... is the commitment of this Republic to an advancement never made before ..., with war's distressing and depressing tragedies barred from the stage of righteous civilization. ... There must be, there shall be, the commanding voice of a conscious civilization against armed warfare. --Pres. Warren G. Harding

Quote appeared on Page One of the following day's *New York Times*.

Question 675.4

Should we have Time Zones in the world?

Question added in May 2020 from SIG correspondence: Suggestion was offered during consideration of Question 675.7 that we should continue to allow jurisdictions like Ohio to declare that they wish to have time alignments different from those naturally indicated by their longitudes. We responded that Time Zones benefit not only the locality by allowing it to have a solar day which corresponds with the actual apparent behavior of the Sun, but also all other people which have any interaction (business or personal) with that locality, because we will all know what time it is within that locality at any given moment, without needing to look it up on a map every single time. Helps us to know when certain things are going to happen in business, and when we may safely call our personal contacts without waking them up or otherwise interrupting their known schedules. Correspondent yet argued in favor of local control, so we figured that we had better introduce a general Question on whether/why we should have Time Zones at all, in hope that the general argument for having them might be more persuasive as to why they should be acknowledged by everyone without local variation except for nearby borders.

Question 485.9

What balance should we have between Liberty and Security?

Added in May 2020 from SIG correspondence: Franklin famously suggested that whoever would sacrifice Liberty for Security deserves neither, but we never really understood or accepted that premise. To the contrary, we find that an optimal Quality of Life contains both elements. For, if all folks can do whatever they want

like the Wild West, then we may have total Liberty, but we will be beset by bullies all the time, we may not survive very long, and our short lives will be highly stressed and painful. Conversely, a life of total Security such as one receives in prison is also highly dissatisfying if it excludes all Liberty. It is necessary sometimes to sacrifice some Liberty in order to enjoy more Security, and also the other way around. They must be balanced. Where we draw the line is a matter of some conjecture, and may in the end need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In any case, though, we shouldn't be automatically averse to the idea of sacrificing some Liberty for added Security, notwithstanding Franklin's claim, as long as we don't go overboard. For example, speed limits can be useful for keeping us all safer, but it is possible (and it has happened in real life) that they can be made unreasonably restrictive.

Question 580 (continued)

What about for driving, voting, military service, drinking, sex, and other such stuff where we have established chronological age cutoffs in the past?

Intro note added in May 2020 from correspondence that New Zealand apparently allows all adult activities at 16 (incl working, contracts, sex) except military at 16.5 and liquor/voting at 18. We still don't like fixing such privileges at chronological ages without regard to education level, but it is encouraging to see that our current culture of requiring higher ages for certain activities is not universally observed.

Question 647.9 (continued)

Any changes to recommend in Chess?

Couple of other suggestions added in May 2020: First, chess apps should deduct for inactivity, because at any level you generally are a worse player when you have stopped practicing for a significant period. Second, chess analysts (both human and electronic) should use better piece values, for our experimentation has suggested that P=3 N=8 B=10 R=13 Q=24 is a more accurate reflection of relative piece strengths than the classic 1-3-3-5-9 paradigm still appearing in the Chess.com app.

Question 1a (continued)

Are we satisfied with the current political/economic/social order?

Added in May 2020: Regardless of which news sources any of us may consider to be 'real' or 'fake' or something else, they all seem to agree on a few things, including that war has continued to happen all around us, that we still have a lot of poverty in the world, we still have racial tensions in America, we continue to have class struggles, and other problems still abide with us. The different news sources may have different ideas on how those problems should be solved, but they do all agree at least that they are problems needing some kind of solution.

Question 277 (continued)

If so, then is it acceptable to allow anyone to vote after time has expired?

Of course, as of the Third Pass (May 2020), we observe that remote debating and voting may be unavoidable during a pandemic like the Corona Virus of 2019, so the following Question really should be addressed in the final package before this one.

We also see now that the notes from Session 142 do not appear to include the main reason why we included this Question in the first place, being that we had seen repeatedly on channels like C-SPAN that votes were allowed to count long after the nominal time limit had expired. As a viewer, I had always found that very annoying, because the voting period (usually on the order of 15 minutes, but sometimes longer) was one of the most boring segments of the entire proceeding, and I found myself watching the countdown on the screen, and looking forward to when the time expired so that we could finalize the vote count and move forward with the agenda. Besides, it rings a little hollow for Congressmembers to bemoan to their constituents the heavy backlog of legislative business, when they appear to be taking their sweet time on votes which one would imagine ought to take a lot less time than they do.

Question 261.1 (continued)

What number of delegates should we have in each house of the National legislature?

Refined further in Third Pass (May 2020): Best model may combine the State/County approach with the Latitude/Longitude approach, by selecting the County boundaries (since they are mostly square-ish) which are closest to the applicable lines of Latitude and Longitude. That way, we get national uniformity (the map looks awfully pretty) without local political manipulation (obviating most recent paragraph on this Question), and it still is easy for voters and candidates to tell which per-Area district a given County is in, so there should be limited confusion. Also, some of the districts will be able to cross State lines, so there can be at least some amount of reduction in State-based politics.

Question 278 (continued)

Do we agree in general that it is constructive for the President (or Chief Executive of a lower jurisdiction) to be able to veto any passed bill which she feels is not constructive, subject to a 2/3 override?

Clarification added in Third Pass (May 2020) to reflect previous statements, that the Executive veto power should not apply in the case of purely internal measures, such as debate rules or quorum requirements. It should apply only for measures which would require some amount of administration from the Executive Branch.

Question 280 (continued)

If allowing a full or partial veto, then what rules should govern such procedure?

In case not clearly established earlier: In looking at the option of partial veto, we considered allowing the bill authors to designate that certain provisions of the bill are inextricably tied together, such that one portion couldn't be vetoed without also vetoing the other portion(s), the idea being that it shouldn't be possible for a bill to go through to enactment if an approved portion is directly dependent on a portion which got vetoed. However, we have found that it would be too easy for the Legislature to abuse this process, by designating that the entire bill is one big portion, which therefore couldn't be partially vetoed in any way. This would have the effect of denying the Executive the option of partial veto, and would then allow the Legislature to resume its old tricks of forcing bad measures through by attaching them as amendments to good measures, or by amending bad measures with good.

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We began in May 2020 to re-read Thomas J. Hailstones' book "Principles of Economics", which we previously had read in vicinity of 1990 for the education program offered by the Life Office Management Association (LOMA), which resulted in the Moderator receiving the professional designation of Fellow, Life Management Institute (FLMI) to show his all-around knowledge of the Life Insurance business, which was very useful for the specific company where he was working at the time, and which also provided him with the training in Corporate Accounting which was enormously helpful for his second career. We had mixed feelings about the Hailstones book at the time, particularly in its support of deficit spending and government debt as means to stimulate economic activity. We re-read the book as part of the Third Pass, in order to capture all the specific good and bad points which might be introducible into the complete rollout. Primary aim was to modify Answer 383 as may be needed, but there are points covering numerous economic topics, so in the Third Pass we have packaged them under all the applicable Questions:

Question 354 (continued)

How shall we define 'economy' for the purposes of this discussion?

According to p.3 of the Hailstones book, "**Economics** can be defined as a science that is concerned with the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services." We took issue with this definition right away, because we claim that it's also the practice, not just the science.

Question 359 (continued)

What are the basic methods by which these goals can be achieved?

Hailstones at least acknowledged on p.13 that there are different economic philosophies as to what government should do with its taxing and spending. However, the two given examples were poor because they both involved an increase of government borrowing, so it is little wonder that they "are aiming at the same end, that is, to increase deficit spending". Presumably, we get to generalize that some economists will agree against deficit spending.

Question 459 (continued)

Shall we impose tariffs or other trade restrictions on goods produced in foreign countries?

Good note on Trade appears on p.17 of Hailstones: "An economy of specialization and exchange yields higher individual and total incomes than an economy characterized by self-sufficiency."

Question 355 (continued)

Why should we concern ourselves with looking at economy at all?

Hailstones made following assertion on p.24: "Whether the government is socialistic, communistic, or capitalistic, the basic function of any economic system is to provide the framework for economizing. There must be some way of deciding what and how

much is to be produced, the manner in which it will be produced, and the means by which goods and services will be distributed to the people in the economy." But, he didn't seem to spend a lot of time seeking to distinguish socialism and communism.

Question 429 (continued)

Shall the Government get involved at all in rate regulation if a concern has more than a certain percentage of market share?

Good note regarding Antitrust appears on pp.27-28 of Hailstones: "Sometimes business firms may be able to exclude others from the industry and thereby exercise substantial control over price, industry output, and employment conditions. When this happens, it is deemed the responsibility of government to restore competitive conditions. Rather than taking control of the industry or assuming ownership of the means of production, the central political authority is expected to impose legal sanctions against restraint of competition or abuses that are defended in the name of competition." Last phrasing is cumbersome, but otherwise a good defense of the concept of regulated capitalism.

Question 17 (continued)

Is it necessary to have any kind of government at all in modern society?

Hailstones defends the necessity of government on p.35: "Government intervention was and is necessary to remedy the inequities that develop as the result of imperfect competition. Antitrust laws are necessary to prevent the restraint of competition by monopolies and large-scale business combinations. Labor laws are essential to protect the rights of laborers. Public utility regulation is necessary to prevent consumer exploitation; food and drug laws are designed to protect the health of our citizens; antipollution measures are enforced to preserve our environment; and safety regulations are enforced to protect workers." Punctuation was not great, but we get the idea, so maybe we will cite it in the public version without quoting.

Question 41 (continued)

Do we agree with the principle of subsidiarity?

Definition which we affirmed in Session 42, from p.36 of Hailstones: "According to the principle of subsidiarity, it is wrong for a higher economic unit to take unto itself a function that can be performed adequately by a lower unit or by the individual. ... According to this principle, the federal government should encourage states/provinces, communities, subordinate groups, and individuals to handle all matters that they can handle adequately; higher economic or political units should intervene in the activities of the lower units only when necessary, and then in a subsidiary or helpful way and not in a manner that will destroy or absorb the lower unit."

Question 281 (continued)

Should procedures allowing for referenda and initiatives in California be instituted at the Federal level, as well?

Added in Third Pass (May 2020) that we apparently overlooked a note handwritten into our 'black book' on 2-Mar-2004, to make sure that no ballot proposition

(whether referendum or initiative) is contingent upon the passage of some other measure. This had recently happened in California with the linkage of Propositions 57 & 58; author liked the latter, but not the former, but we couldn't approve them separately. If the topics interrelate, then have them on the same bill. If they're really independent, then keep them independent.

Question 283 (continued)

If so, then should there be a single authority running such operations?

Observed in the Third Pass (May 2020) that we had apparently overlooked a note which had been handwritten in our 'black book' at some point, that we should also have at least one Congressional Prosecutor on staff, to prosecute high officials in the Executive Branch.

Question 283.2 (continued)

Under what conditions may a member of Congress be recalled or expelled?

Added later: Disqualification of a delegate from his/her membership in a particular house without a recall vote from that delegate's constituency must be grounded upon some alleged gross misconduct, so the Motion to Expel must state one or more causes for the proposed dismissal. Conviction should require impartial adjudication by an outside body, in order to mitigate cabalism. House can vote by simple majority to request/direct a trial to be conducted by a tribunal of the Supreme Court, the justices determining which three among their own membership shall preside, their approval being necessary to complete the termination.

Question 283.4 (continued)

Who gets to say that this is "National XYZ Week" or "National XYZ Month", and who doesn't?

Added later: Conversely, if a measure manages to make its way through all 3 houses of Congress, and especially if it does so before the particular week/month to be celebrated, then it must be pretty important and pretty meaningful, so best to let Congress be the only federal entity who may officially designate any particular time period as meriting national attention toward any particular cause or other purpose.

Question 283.6 (continued)

Anything on lobbyists?

At some point prior to the Third Pass, the following two paragraphs were inserted before the penultimate paragraph of the original notes from Session 148:

"The Answers to Everything SIG has already identified a few improvements in our system that can help to mitigate the influence of lobbyists. These include decentralization of many of our functions and authorities (in contrast to the current EU), removal of political parties from the formal electoral and legislative processes, and several changes to our standard campaign structure. However, all these improvements combined can only partially mitigate lobbying, not totally eradicate it.

"What further can we as a society do, then, at either the national or international levels? In order to figure that out, we need to know why we still have so many lobbyists in the first place: Just where exactly are we currently failing?"

We observed in the Third Pass (May 2020) that, because of the different forms of benefits briefly exemplified in Session 148, bribery can still happen to some extent even if we phase out physical cash and trace all large monetary movements as recommended in Part II, so that won't solve the whole problem.

Question 314 (continued)

Is it appropriate for a statute of limitations to apply to certain types of crimes, such that no individual may be arrested and/or convicted after a certain number of years have passed following the alleged crime?

Noted in the Third Pass that we generally prefer for there to be Statutes of Limitations on pretty much all bad acts, because at some point any evidence (including personal recollection) deteriorates in reliability to the point of endangering innocent defendants. However, we can have an exception for situations such as bribery involving lobbyists, where we might not discover evidence of any wrongdoing until years later because it was deliberately concealed, and where we can apply gradually-increasing standards of evidence acceptability with increasing passage of time. In other words, the longer ago a bad act allegedly occurred, the more reliable your evidence had better be in order to proceed with prosecution.

Question 485 (continued)

Any other suggestions as to probate, inheritance tax, or anything else on personal/family economics?

Added in May 2020: It may seem heartless to foreclose on a tenant who can't pay the contractually-agreed rent, as characterized in numerous staged melodramas from around the 1880's, with the evil landlord typically dressed in black cape and top hat with a large curly black mustache, demanding that "You must pay the rent" by monetary or 'other' means. But, what are our alternatives? Shall a private landlord (who is often renting the entire building before subletting apartments to individual tenants, and who otherwise must pay ongoing maintenance and insurance costs in order to remain in operation) be required to forgo rental income indefinitely for any tenant who is unable or unwilling to pay? We probably wouldn't see very much new low-income housing that way. Shall we convert to a Communistic environment, where some 'People's Central Committee' is somehow providing every family with a suite of rooms and hot clean running water? Maybe, but historical experience has shown that those in control of the wealth needed to undertake large projects like that are often reluctant to give it up, unless they are either forced by taxation or motivated by the promise of increased wealth for their investment. Until we are once persuaded to the contrary, we are continuing to believe in some form of Capitalistic approach here, with private propertyholders providing places to people for profit. Rent levels can then be set according to how much people are willing to pay out of their current resources and any new incomes for the privilege of staying there. If you rent a particular property, then you are agreeing (usually in the form of a written contract) that you will pay a certain agreed-upon amount every month. If for any reason you later cease to be able/willing to keep up the rent, then it's only fair (isn't it?) for the landlord to replace you with another tenant who is able/willing

to pay that amount. We do suggest some sort of 'grace period', so that tenants who face sudden short-term difficulties such as car repair or an uncovered medical expense can get back on track after a short time of saving up, provided that they eventually cover the entire backlog of rent. In our model environment, job losses are expected to be far less frequent, because we are spreading out our aggregate workload more evenly among all available workers, and because we are providing better and faster job placement if sudden unemployment does occur. In addition, our proposed national network of 'help centers' will provide emergency public housing if you do ever get kicked out of your apartment, so at least you will not need to sleep on the street. With these provisions, we are continuing to allow private landlords to impose foreclosures on non-paying tenants. Convince us otherwise.

Question 447 (continued)

Shall the Government require that employers must provide a certain level of non-salary benefits to their employees?

Added in May 2020: Sick leave should be a standard market expectation, insofar as it is not already. Sticking for now with our original finding that it should not be a Government mandate, because that way may lie more problems than solutions, although it may need to happen someday if the market fails to do the right thing. Most people -- even those who work hard at maintaining wellness -- get sick for a few days out of the year, or perhaps they need to attend to sick family members, or deal with other short-term emergencies at home. It is unrealistic and unreasonable to expect all people to be robots, punching in at the same assigned time every assigned workday until they retire. We are human beings, and things sometimes happen which require us to be away from our jobs for short periods on little or no notice. Larger employers should allow for this reality by spreading out your daily workload among your remaining staff, and/or by cross-training so that single-person jobs can be backed up as needed. Smaller employers should be prepared to allow certain desks to remain unworked for short periods of time where practical, or else should encourage their line supervisors to fill in whenever needed. We should not require medical confirmation of the need for sick leave until the term of absence becomes long enough that Disability Insurance needs to kick in, for again it may not need to be a personal illness -- or even a family illness -- in order to need an occasional day off of work. There is an argument that employers should not be expected to pay you wages for work which you are not performing, and for some industries that may need to be the way to go, that you still have a job when you finish being sick but are unpaid in the interim. For other industries and jobs, especially those with enough time-flexibility that you can take an occasional day off and still catch up on your full workload later, a suspension of salary may not be indicated, and hopefully will not be needed.

Question 358 (continued)

What are the features of a 'good' or 'healthy' economy?

Hailstones makes the suspicious argument on pp.41-43 that economic activity must grow continually, in order to accommodate the continued influx of new workers, but does not seem to allow for population stability or decrease. He also argues that saving is bad because it reduces economic activity, but we claim that activity should meet demand and that we should conserve resources if we comfortably can, so this is where we begin to diverge from his philosophy.

Question 383 (continued)

But, what about the economic theory which has it that continued government spending is good, to stimulate the economy?

It is on pp.50-51 where Hailstones argues that a government budget deficit will increase economic activity if we are at less than full employment, or price increases if we are at full employment. Even if this theory is correct, we still argue that it is a net-undesirable result. For, increasing economic activity is something which we may want to do sometimes, but not necessarily all the time, lest we outstrip our natural resources and/or cause undue environmental damage. And, we don't want price increases in any one sector unless there are corresponding decreases in other sectors, so that the purchasing power of our base currency unit remains stable.

Question 373 (continued)

Given that many goods (particularly food items) are consumed shortly after production, and also given that a large part of the economy comprises human services which cost nothing other than time to provide, shall the total credit amount be a fixed figure, or shall it fluctuate with population, or shall it fluctuate with the total amount of material wealth currently in existence, or shall some other means be used to determine it?

It may not be relevant to our model, since we generally dislike inflation, but Hailstones describes on pp.52-55 the different types and sources of inflation, including Demand-Pull, Cost-Push, Structural, and Social.

Question 426 (continued)

Any changes in corporate finance, particularly the stock market?

Hailstones asserted on pp.84-85 that profit is part of the cost of production, whereas in our accounting world they are entirely separate concepts, although to some extent we see the argument that production would not happen if a certain amount of planned profit did not result from it, but on the other hand the cost is what the entrepreneur invests into production before goods are produced and sales are made and profit is realized.

Question 7 (continued)

What rights (if any) are inherent in all human beings, regardless of where or how they choose to live, and which rights are only optionally agreed to by members of a civil society?

In the first part of the Third Pass (May 2020), we still had the more basic Question hanging in front of us: If any two people disagree on whether XYZ is a Natural Right, then is it even possible for it to be a Natural Right at all? If something is a Natural Right, then isn't it going to be trivially obvious to everyone, in all generations as we said? In other words, if any two people disagree on whether something is a Natural Right, then doesn't that disagreement automatically disqualify the quantity in question from possibly being a Natural Right? [Resolved later in Third Pass.]

Question 437.5 (continued)

Do we have any product suggestions to be advanced by American industry?

Added in May 2020 from personal reflection: Why do we buy beer in pints at an English-style pub, but in 12-ounce containers when we buy a six-pack at the store? This can be a problem for those of us who would like to keep a modest-but-regular portion of beer in our diet. Moderator typically likes these days to have exactly one beer with dinner, because one is flavorful and relaxing and complementary to the food, whereas two will make it too difficult to get up bright and early for work the next day; however, a 12-ounce beer is often not quite enough, and we would like maybe another third of a serving (i.e., 16 ounces in all) without opening another container and letting the remainder get flat overnight, or forcibly drinking more than is really desired. According to <https://vinepair.com/articles/beer-bottle-size/>, in 1971 'the U.S. government-run National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), an organization run by the National Institutes of Health, defined "the typical drink" as a pint, or 16 ounces, of a 5-percent beer', so our English-influenced perception was not that far off. Then, in 1980, 'the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA), a study published every five years by the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services ... defined a "standard-size drink" as "Twelve ounces of regular beer, 5 ounces of wine, and 1 1/2 ounces of distilled spirits". ... Why the government went back to 12 ounces wasn't explained, but it matched the bottle and can size of most beer sold at the time.' As some breweries already do, we recommend that more American bottlers at least consider packaging their beer in 16-ounce portions, including in the 6-pack and 12-pack containers.

Question 255.5 (continued)

Any suggestions to offer as to pandemic management?

Fourth, added in May 2020 from SIG correspondence, we considered the suggestion which has been offered by some within our outside communities, to reduce/eliminate all facility closures and 'social distancing' in order to actively encourage more of our population to contract the disease, so that we can build up a 'herd immunity', which would allegedly be in our larger-scale and longer-term interest. We are receptive to being persuaded in the light of more authoritative information, but our position as lay individuals with little/no medical training among us is basically to follow the advice of medical professionals, especially those who are recognized as 'experts'. In the particular case of COVID-19, or anything similar which may pop up later, we especially listen when the experts tell us not to contract this disease if we can at all avoid it, because the severity of the symptoms and the rate of mortality are too problematic. The idea of 'herd immunity' might work for less-serious and less-mortal diseases such as chicken pox, get it once, possibly suffer mild discomfort for a few days, then you're done with it for life. However, that same approach probably does not and probably should not extend to all diseases, especially the more serious ones such as COVID-19. The cost in human lives is too great.

Question 298.5 (continued)

Any other procedural specifications as to filing and processing appeals?

Added in Third Pass (May 2020): Our finding from Session 166, that we can retain fewer Judges if we're able to get cases heard consistently within 3 months, hopefully

would not mean that we need to lay anyone off. Rather, we can trim by attrition, simply refraining from filling any vacancies created by promotion or retirement.

Question 302 (continued)

How shall the judiciaries of the several jurisdictional levels be funded?

Added in Third Pass (May 2020) that, if anything, losing party may need to compensate the prevailing party for their time and trouble in dealing with a court proceeding which should not have been needed.

Question 302.3 (continued)

Is there any way that we can do without lawyers?

Added in the Third Pass (May 2020) that the idea of oral presentation freaks out a lot of non-Lawyers, and even some yes-Lawyers who work out of court, so also for that reason many will want to hire Lawyers for court.

Question 299

For what types of cases (if any) is it preferable to have multiple judges presiding, and when is it best to have a single judge in control?

As with Questions 300 and 301, it appears that we completely skipped over this Question in the First Pass, so we picked it up in May 2020 as part of the Third Pass.

We probably should not get too specific without input from others, and we will be interested in what the Wednesday general-public group had to say on the topic, but we feel pretty good in establishing some general parameters here on our own.

Few reasons why we usually want to have only one judge for most ordinary original trials: First, local dockets are often too jammed now, with most original cases being handled by solitary judges, and we don't want to burden the process further being creating unnecessary redundancies in judicial assignments. Second, expanding court size for ordinary cases would just create a lot of confusion and indecision and erosion of confidence, because a panel of two would bicker a lot, and a panel of three would often create a 'third wheel' situation through majority voting. Third, if a panel of any size always agreed, then a lot of folks would perceive that the extra positions constituted an unnecessary public expense, and they might be right.

Conversely, when a particular case has gone through multiple appeals and is still being contested, there apparently is something about that case which is tending to impede an impartial and clearly-accurate adjudication by a solitary jurist, so at some point in the appeal process you will want to expand to a three-person panel, so that multiple judges can observe the same proceedings in real time, and hopefully come to a better group consensus of the best legal way of approaching the situation. If you do not do so, then the case may continue to drag on for years with several further appeals. In other words, at some point, better to use three judges at the same time than four or more judges consecutively.

We then can visualize special situations where the judgment of even a three-person panel would be deemed insufficiently reliable to accept with no further attempt at

remediation. For those special situations, we can see going to a 'tribunal of tribunals', equivalent to the nine-person Supreme Court which we have had in America for many years.

At that point, though, we generally would recommend that a nine-person panel should not be able to decide by a 5-4 majority to overturn any lower-court jurisdiction, or any previous decision by the Supreme Court. As we have frequently observed in history, it is too easy for the collective personal and political sentiments of the panel to shift back and forth, as the American public keeps switching between the Big Two political parties without enduring satisfaction. It is only when the panel can achieve a 2/3 majority that we have even a semi-decent hope of being able to rely on the accuracy and sincerity and morality of the decision being reached. Even then, it is not a lock, because if it really were a lock then it would be a unanimous decision, but that is probably too unrealistic to expect in real life, no matter how or by whom the panelists are selected, so we might settle for 2/3 being sufficient, to match with what the majority of a three-person panel would constitute, although our original Answer 303 ended up having other ideas.

For military trials, we imagine that a solitary judge should be sufficient when it is an original proceeding or first appeal for an enlisted serviceperson, and that you probably want to escalate to tribunal-level when the defendant is an officer or for secondary appeals involving enlisted personnel. Maybe you go to a five-person panel for officers above a certain rank. However, we do not presume to overrule the collective experience and wisdom of our military establishment.

Question 300 (continued)

Should judges be elected, appointed, or some of each?
25-may-2020b

Added during Third Pass (May 2020): Primary-level judges should be elected by the local communities, so that above reasoning will apply; promotions to appellate levels (at least the higher ones) should be nominated and/or approved by applicable legislatures, who with their legal backgrounds are in a better position to assess judicial performance.

Question 301

In general, what are the motivations for a judiciary to discharge its duties fairly, honestly, and consistently?

5/25/20c

As with Questions 299 and 300, it appears that we completely skipped over this Question in the First Pass, so we picked it up in May 2020 as part of the Third Pass.

As with most government jobs, and with most positions of employment generally, motivation is largely up to the individual. Many workers in many fields and industries have genuine passion about their work, and are in those positions in the first place largely because they want to make sure that the work is being done right. Others have a lot less concern about the quality of their work, they are there merely to collect a paycheck, and will often do as little work as they can practically get away with. It is only those with limited self-motivation that we need to bother with.

Some industries and professions can provide compensation-based incentives for exceptional performance, such as commissions on higher sales, royalties for good

inventions, better contracts when your team wins a certain number of games during the previous season, etc. Most industries and professions also have the negative-reinforcement incentive of the possibility of wage cut or suspension or dismissal in the case of substandard performance. How can we do either with a judge?

We claim that we should be able to suspend or dismiss judges before the end of their projected terms, if we have sufficient indication that they are corrupt or inept or lazy or otherwise inadequate. As with most government jobs (and as we believe that we have established by Resolution), whoever does the selecting generally gets to do the dismissing. However, for popularly-elected judges, we sometimes may not want to wait until the next election to take a chance of non-renewal, and we don't want to conduct a special election in the environment which we have established with only one election every two years for everything. We therefore want to allow the Legislature to suspend or dismiss a judge if it can establish by sufficient majority (probably 2/3) that we cannot allow that individual to remain in power.

We also like the idea which we believe that we have established elsewhere in the document, that a public website can track how often cases adjudicated by a particular judge are accepted for appeal, and how often they are overturned on appeal, to give us an idea of how good the judge is, which can be useful for either the decision of keeping the judge in place or possibly modifying his/her salary.

Question 304a (continued)

To what extent shall government be involved in disapproving initiatives/referenda for alleged unconstitutionality?

In the Third Pass (May 2020), contrary to our finding from Session 177, we are now tending to rely on a higher-than-simple majority as being necessary to override a previous action generally, but especially in the case where a government body declared the measure to be constitutionally problematic. For, a simple majority would mean that civil policy could change too rapidly with small shifts in voter sentiment, and with greater variations resulting from lower voter turnouts. A 2/3 majority of popular vote is often extremely difficult to achieve for anything, so it might be too unreasonable for overturning any laws not specified in the society's Constitution, so we're guessing now that 3/5 is better for that, whereas we should stick with 2/3 as being necessary to show reliably that the overall society really does want to change its Constitution.

Question 306 (continued)

If a judge has interpreted a relatively vague law in a certain way, and sentenced a defendant on the basis of such interpretation, and if the legislature later clarifies their actual intent by passing a revision of the law, under which revision the defendant would no longer be subject to sentencing, should such defendant be released from further punishment? Should he be compensated in any way for punishment already inflicted?

We have concern in the Third Pass about the phrasing from Session 178, that a prisoner released as a result of applying a legal relaxation retroactively should receive flat rate of monetary compensation per year of time served, in order to at least partly offset the injustice of being punished without any actual criminal intent. Problem here is that, even though the restrictive law resulting in his imprisonment

was relaxed later, it still existed at the time of the original act. It is highly likely (although certainly not definite) that the defendant knew that his act constituted a legal violation, under which condition it could possibly be argued that he possessed a "criminal intent" at the time. However, if his intent was not malicious, which is to say that he did not intend to harm or threaten anyone against their will, then this same provision can apply. In short, replace 'criminal' with 'malicious' in the above.

Question 313 (continued)

Is it appropriate for an individual to be arrested whenever any police officer thinks it appropriate, or should probable cause be established first?

Similar to the footage mentioned in July 2019 of a Dallas police officer restraining a suspect by kneeling on his back and twisting his head in a particularly uncomfortable manner, we saw in May 2020 footage of a Minneapolis officer (not South Alabama, mind you, but Minneapolis!) kneeling on the neck of a man named George Floyd to his death. As of this notation, the officer and his enabling partners were promptly fired from their jobs, so that's good, but there was no sign of criminal prosecution.

Question 331 (continued)

Is it appropriate, then, to find a defendant 'innocent by reason of insanity'?

We thought during the Third Pass in May 2020 that we should take a slightly longer look at this discussion. Particularly, we observed that the discussion in Session 189 may not have considered closely enough that a normally-sane person might in fact become 'temporarily insane' under certain conditions. For, many of us have observed -- and/or have personally experienced -- a situation of someone who is normally reserved and controlled suddenly 'flipping out', and committing a violent act or uttering an offensive statement or doing some other bad thing out of character.

If we define 'sane' as 'able to control your actions to prevent harm to others', and 'insane' as 'not being thus able', then an argument could possibly be made for an existence of 'temporary insanity' in this instance. For, the fella was "reserved and controlled" before, and thus satisfied this definition of 'sanity'. Then, during some short period of time, he lost this ability to control his actions, so for that period he could possibly be defined as 'insane'. Finally, he experiences a 'What have I done?' moment, and he snaps back into being able to distinguish right from wrong, and sees that his previous action was wrong, so he was back to being 'sane' again.

If this is a correct evaluation, then what? Should the perpetrator receive a lighter sentence because his insanity was only 'temporary'? We think not. We certainly can take into account that a given 'bad act' might be somebody's first, meaning that his recent behavior contradicted his entire previous life of self-control, but that doesn't mean that he was 'insane' at the time, either temporarily or permanently. He may just still be young, and may just have needed a little course-correction in order to assist in the development of his self-control mechanisms, just as even the "normally reserved and controlled" author needed a few speeding tickets in his underdisciplined youth before he finally learned that it is net-best to keep it slower.

Or, if the first-offender in question is already in his mid-40's or something, then he probably has already fully formed his self-control mechanisms, possibly so well that his life of rigidity eventually caused him to snap, as Ned Flanders' character did in

the 'hurricane' episode of *The Simpsons*, and as Lucius Vorenus did several times in HBO's *Rome*. If this is the case, then what? Should we assume that such 'insanity' is temporary, and let's all forget about it and move on? We think not. Such a snap could yet be an indication of deeper emotional issues which may need treatment by trained psychiatric professionals, so each such occurrence should at least warrant a psychological evaluation before disposition is decided.

In this case, it might be suggested that the subject is 'temporarily insane', and will either come back to normal on his own or can be brought back to normal through a short course of psychiatric treatment. Or, the subject may somehow have become 'permanently insane', such that any psychiatric treatment would not be able to result in behavioral improvement, so other dispositions may be needed, per Section I-F.

However, we still have a hangup about the use of the expression 'temporary insanity', as though it should translate to a lighter disposition than would be indicated otherwise. Anybody of any age or education who commits any 'bad act' on a first-time or occasional basis can maybe be said to possess some level/variety of 'insanity', but still may need some of punishment (per Section I-F) in order to 'get their attention' and motivate them to change their behaviors. If all criminals get to claim 'temporary insanity', then the distinction becomes meaningless.

In the end, we probably should assume (as we believe has been indicated within the foregoing 1000+ pages) that anyone committing any 'bad act' possesses some level of insanity, so we should not try to distinguish 'sanity' from 'insanity' on a mere behavioral basis, but rather only upon clear neurological damage, as discussed in the original treatment of Question 331. In other words, we are contradicting now the previous claim about there not being such a thing as 'temporary insanity', but the dispositions should still be basically the same as previously established.

Question 302 (continued)

How shall the judiciaries of the several jurisdictional levels be funded?

Although we agreed in Session 193 with the general principle of United States Sentencing Guidelines §5E1.5, that the "costs of prosecution shall be imposed on a defendant as required by statute", we observed in the Third Pass (May 2020) that this provision contradicts our Answer 302, that the losing party generally shall provide compensation to offset the prevailing party's legal costs. We felt in the Third Pass that our original Answer is better, and that defendants should not be required to cover any costs of lawyers or judges or other court personnel if they are innocent.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Confirmed in Third Pass (May 2020) that the United States Sentencing Commission discussed in Answer 342 should reside in the Department of Justice. We are now specifically recommending that it be attached to the Bureau of the General Counsel.

Question 344 (continued)

If we imprison somebody, do we have an obligation to keep him reasonably well-fed, comfortable, and protected from crime?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: Convict's choice of gender environment on a penal island would be subject to overrule by the court upon sufficient grounds. Also, we are presently leaning away from the idea of allowing prisoners to reproduce, because whatever mental aberrations originally caused/allowed their criminal behavior could be passed on genetically, in which case we would not be doing any favors to the human species.

In any case, we generally are leaning away from the whole idea of deportation to an insular penal colony. With our advanced technologies, it is much easier now than in previous centuries for outsiders to smuggle supplies onto the islands, or to help the prisoners to escape. Even if they escape on their own using primitive technologies, and make it back to organized society before we have confirmed that they are sufficiently fit, then they might be inclined to exact revenge upon other people for their experiences, so we are presently thinking that the strategy would be too unsafe for the rest of us. Probably better to keep them in smaller confined spaces where we can monitor their actions far more closely, and provide them with the direct training which they would need for eventual peaceful reintroduction into ordinary society.

Question 443 (continued)

How do we solve the problem of unemployment in America?

When he uses the phrase "full employment" on p.137 and elsewhere, Hailstones apparently does not mean only that all available workers are performing enough paid work that they can cover their costs of living (which, as derived earlier in the history of this Question, we can accomplish or at least approximate by spreading out our aggregate workload using overtime revaluation), but rather that the available workforce is producing as much as it physically can, so that no further increase in productivity is possible. He therefore really means 'full production', not 'full employment'. For, he states on this page that "a full-employment economy ... implies full employment of resources and productive capacity as well as labor".

Question 364 (continued)

What are the production limitations of a straight barter system, and how can we improve upon it while still emphasizing individual control?

We agreed in May 2020 with the definition on p.149 of Hailstones that "**money** is anything that is commonly accepted in exchange for goods and services".

Question 346 (continued)

When a Legislature sets ranges for imprisonment, to what extent should the Judiciary be able to 'review' that legislation, and strike it down as being excessive and/or a violation of the Constitution?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: If the Legislature is under-responsive, then where appropriate the Judiciary may also call for a referendum, so that a

popular vote may either ratify or overturn the Legislature's action, and in any case so that the public can be more keenly aware of the legal disagreement between the Branches, which awareness may inform their electoral decisions later.

Question 352 (continued)

Given that life termination may not be inflicted for any one crime, no matter how heinous, due to the possibility of error, what number of years shall we set as a minimum, beyond which an accumulation of sentence minima shall constitute a waiver of the criminal's right to live, permitting the active termination of his life?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: Our current standard of 200 years for 'earliest release age' is based upon our current life expectancies, which show 72,197 centenarians living in the United States during 2014 (according to a report from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention), out of an estimated total American population of 318 million (according to the U.S. Census Bureau), for a margin of a little over 2 one-hundredths of one percent. When that same percentage of the population is alive beyond some significantly-higher age down the road, society should consider multiplying that higher maximum age by two, in order to arrive at a revised 'earliest release age' before we start considering life termination.

Question 356 (continued)

Is it agreed, then, that we want to try to take some proactive measures to optimize the production and distribution of resources, as opposed to isolationism and economic anarchy?

Happy in the Third Pass (June 2020) that we selected 'optimize' for this Question instead of 'maximize'. It may not have been stated in so many words within the foregoing text, but we have begun to feel more strongly in light of our current economic woes that -- notwithstanding the recommendation in Hailstones of ever-increasing economic output -- we should sometimes reduce our output and our consumption in order to keep everything more sustainable. To 'optimize' is to take this longer-term factor into account, whereas to 'maximize' is to ignore it.

Question 358 (continued)

What are the features of a 'good' or 'healthy' economy?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: Besides, we directly observe that the concentration of large amounts of wealth in the hands of a few individuals is not entirely the result of those people having done the equivalent amount of good in society. Rather, a lot of it appears to stem from tax breaks and other economic practices which are specifically designed to help the rich to become richer, and which have been enacted by rich politicians (or by poorer politicians acting on behalf of parties and other external 'sponsors') in order to further their own economic interests. In other words, they are 'gaming the system', by creating and maintaining artificial conduits which channel wealth away from where it would go under a truly free market.

Following were inserted sometime after Session 198 into our list of factors describing a good-or-healthy economy:

- (3) non-excessive disparity between rich and poor;
- (4) non-excessive allocation of resources to non-beneficial products and activities;
- (5) relative accuracy of wages and prices;
- (6) sustainability of natural resources; and,
- (7) protection of the natural environment.

Question 437.5 (continued)

Do we have any product suggestions to be advanced by American industry?

Fans

Added in June 2020 from personal reflection: Why do fan speeds go down instead of up? Or, as expressed on quora.com, "Why do a fan's speed settings go Off-High-Medium-Low?" It represents an inconvenience for me as a user, because when I go to turn off a fan which has been on a higher setting, I cannot always tell easily whether I have successfully reached the 'off' setting or whether I am still on 'low', especially if it is a ceiling fan where you must pull the chain repeatedly in order to get to any setting, and if it sometimes skips. You must either wait for the blades to come to a complete standstill (who's got time for that??), or else take a chance on pulling the chain an extra time and possibly get it back on 'high', in which case you need to start the process over again, sometimes more than once. Conversely, if the highest speed were last, then you could easily hear and/or feel that you have successfully transitioned from 'high' to 'off', so you definitely could stop there and move on with your life. The above-quoted website lists a few reasons offered by some electrical engineers, which go a bit over this layperson's head, but the gist seems to be that some fans might not successfully turn on if you are merely switching from 'off' directly to 'low'. If that is the case, and if there is nothing that we can do technologically to fix that, then we apparently must endure. If that can somehow be fixed on a permanent basis, then on a low priority that would be nice.

Question 258.7 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the City agencies listed in Answer 135?

Added in June 2020 from personal reflection: Police could help their own image by videorecording more of their encounters with citizen suspects, especially those of different races or religions or nationalities. You won't be able to catch everything, of course (and maybe you won't want to), but the more merit points you can build up for yourself as 'character references' the better your chances are of surviving an accusation of police brutality on a rare exceptional occasion.

Question 386 (continued)

Do we have room to reduce Federal spending from recent levels? If so, then where and how much?

Figured in the Third Pass (June 2020) that our system of cost-center codes for the Federal government should use 1 for the Legislative Branch and 2 for the Executive, instead of the other way around as proposed in Session 210, partly because we allege that the Legislative Branch is politically superior to the Executive, and also in any case because the Branches are discussed in that order within the Constitution.

Question 125

What guiding principles should be observed by government agencies?

We observed in the Third Pass (June 2020) that amending Answer 126 on budget-based bonuses meant that Answer 125 also needed to be amended, for it appeared that we did not specify in the original Answer that government agencies should be seeking to spend according to their budgetary expectations, for we rather assumed it throughout the entire First Pass. Therefore including here a note which we recently logged for Answer 385, that agency managers should keep their expenses to within less than 5% above their budgetary allocations, or else be able to explain any large variances, their jobs being in jeopardy if the explanations are not satisfactory.

Question 392 (continued)

Should special projects be undertaken simply to provide work for people, and hopefully stimulate the economy?

Note handwritten in the 'black book' of preliminary ideas suggested: "If a given sum is allocated for a particular project (such as renovating Libraries), [then] it shouldn't need to [be] expended all at once (such as by closing a bunch of Libraries all at once); instead, allow accounts to be funded up front, and expended over time." In that we apparently did not capture our feelings on this point during Session 217, we treated it afresh in the Third Pass (June 2020). We agreed with the basic concept of stretching out the physical and fiscal impact of any multi-year project, but we had a hangup about the specific element of "allow[ing] accounts to be funded up front", because we now felt that we should not collect revenue now which we are not going to expend until later, and that we instead should be using only current tax dollars to fund both current expenses and the current shares of any multi-year project costs. That way, more money can remain in the hands of private individuals and businesses who can put it to more immediate productive use. We realize that this may mean making a commitment on a big freeway or something without a completion bond or other instrument to guarantee that the project will not be abandoned midstream (as unfortunately happened with the I-710 in Los Angeles County, but that was for non-fiscal reasons), so we noted a provision which we either made earlier or established at this time, that multi-year projects once approved are fixed in every subsequent budget until completion, and that they can be removed only by a significant supermajority, probably the 2/3 which is generally required under *Robert's Rules of Order* for any motion which seeks to Amend Something Previously Adopted.

Question 392.1

Should we continue to fund projects at the Federal level which apparently will benefit only single States or lower jurisdictions?

It came to us as we were reviewing this Subsection during the Third Pass (June 2020) that we apparently had never addressed this problem anywhere, even though it had long been a 'pet peeve' of the author, which he had occasionally expressed on Twitter without satisfactory resolution.

No, we hold that any project which will benefit only a smaller jurisdiction should be financed from only that jurisdiction. Why should California residents need to pay anything for fixing or expanding a local street in Nebraska? Why should Montanans

pay anything to build a new yachting marina in Florida? If a particular project is not in the national interest, then the Nation should not pay anything for it.

Besides, as we noted in Section II-A, one of our big arguments against a Socialist economic system is that it involves most/all wealth to be directed to a central authority for distribution to local districts according to their needs, that such projections will often be unreliable, that the redistribution process is highly wasteful even in optimal conditions, and that it often allows 'skimming' by the redistributors.

Better for local jurisdictions to keep and use more of their own money than to submit so much of it to the Fed in the hope of getting some portion of it back someday. States should pay to the Fed only their fair share of the overhead needed to keep the national government in operation, but otherwise should see to their own needs.

Unfortunately, it has been a long-standing practice to Congress to allow such projects, because the Congressmembers look (or think that they look) better to their constituents for 'bringing home' Federal dollars for local uses, so they naturally are not eager to create or enforce a rule prohibiting them from doing so. They generally vote to approve all such local projects as part of a tacit 'reciprocity agreement', so that their own projects will get approved when proposed.

A simple policy statement will not be enough to end this practice. Legislators will not stop padding appropriation bills with their local pet projects simply because we ask them pretty please not to do so. We hope optimistically that the 'line-item veto' will help to prevent such abuses, but that power would be effective only insofar as the then-current President has the desire and political independence and attention span to use it, which appeared to be a decidedly non-trivial proposition as of June 2020.

Can we rely on the People to make such demands directly somehow? Doubtful, because even those relatively-few who have the time and attention span to locate such inappropriate expenditures might not have the accounting skill to do so. Even if they did, whom would they tell? Who would listen? Better probably to rely on a combination of private watchdog groups such as Common Cause, who (as they have done in the past) could bring formal lawsuits for alleged impropriety, which would be up to the Judicial Branch to evaluate. Trouble there is, no matter what adjustments we make to our selection procedures, nearly all Judges on the Federal bench will be beholden to some combination of Legislative and Executive authorities, and will be hesitant to oppose them by pointing out their budgetary indiscretions. However, if we both allow and require any such judgments to come from outside any of the districts directly impacted by the proposed funding, then hopefully we can have a greater amount of independence in the decision, and any Judges agreeing to order such reductions in excessive Federal spending can hopefully enhance their public profiles, which could help their chances for elevation to positions of higher authority.

Question 393 (continued)

To what extent should we continue to grant consumption-based entitlements?

Slight amendment in Third Pass (June 2020) to third paragraph of original treatment: We actually do not always need to be producing as much as we are consuming, either collectively or individually. For, insofar as we may have produced in a previous fiscal period more than we consumed, we will have produced some amount of excess. If the products are durable (cars, refrigerators, etc.), then we

can carry the excess as net assets into the next fiscal period, allowing us to produce fewer units, so that we can save ourselves some time and physical resources. If the products are perishable (food, milk, etc.), then some of them may be carried forward as 'leftovers' to enable us to reduce production in the following period, such that our overall production is approximately equal to our overall consumption, but we can safely experience some year-to-year fluctuations along the way. If we have more excess perishables than can safely be stored until the producers are ready to consume them, then it is best to divert such excesses to our non-producing populations (through either sale or donation, as applicable), so that they don't go to waste. This is another reason why we state elsewhere in this document that we generally seek to 'optimize' economic production, not necessarily 'maximize' it, because we never want to be producing so much that we burn out ourselves or our Planet through the creation of products which nobody needs or wants.

Question 409.5

If yes to Question 409, then any parameters on maximum debt amount, maximum budget deficit, timeframe on repayment, or any related?

Not really applicable, since we answered a 'No' to Q409, but for sake of completion we added in the Third Pass (June 2020) a note handwritten into the 'black book', that we should note under a Question 409.5 our finding under Paragraph 6 of Session 170, agreeing with Jefferson's statement that the total national debt should never exceed what the current generation can pay off, for we should not penalize future generations by making them pay for decisions in which they did not participate. But, then, we also must have tough incentives for requiring the timely repayment of any government debt, for we don't want governments defaulting on debts simply because they know that unpaid debts will expire within a generation.

Question 40.5 (continued)

By what process should any changes in State boundaries be made?

In response to a note made during consideration of Q413 in Session 220, we added to our profile during the Third Pass (June 2020) that "a very high majority vote" should be required to approve the complete demotion of any State to a Territory.

Question 414 (continued)

Are there any methods other than traditional taxation which might be considered for raising Government revenue?

Added by Third Pass: In addition to revenue sources previously identified, a cursory review of recent Government financials shows that they have come up with more. These include Charges for Services, Operating Grants, and Capital Grants.

Question 418 (continued)

Of these basic types, which is the fairest method of taxation, or is it appropriate for more than one type to be levied at once by a single jurisdiction?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: Further against the idea recorded in the 'black book' on 20-Apr-2012, if we wait until after people have surpassed some

threshold of spending per month or per year before we start collecting sales tax, then the earlier portions of those months and years will see no revenue, whereas under a straight sales-tax system the revenue flows in all year round.

Question 90 (continued)

Should any individual or organization (including press, U.S. Senate, etc.) be permitted to ask such answer-proof questions?

It was expressed in Session 218 that we were not yet sure about whether traffic police should be allowed to ask incriminating questions such as "Do you know why I pulled you over?", "Do you know how fast you were going?", "Have you been drinking?", etc. We confirmed in the Third Pass (June 2020) that we certainly don't want them asking any such questions unless they clarify at the outset of the conversation that the driver has the right to remain silent as to any combination of questions. We understand that the intent of the questions may not always be to encourage self-incrimination, and that at least in some cases the police may simply be trying to get the driver to talk about something, anything, so that they can smell any alcohol on his breath and check for slurred speech. We further understand that explicitly allowing the driver the right to remain silent precludes that possibility, potentially making the police's job harder. However, we claim that it should not be necessary for the police to check whether the driver is intoxicated. As we hope has been established in Section III-D by now (we will go back and fill it in if it is not), any driver who is speeding or swerving in a reckless/near-reckless manner should be stopped as a 'wake-up call', and probably cited, and possibly arrested if the driving behavior appears to be dangerous enough, but all whether the driver is intoxicated or not. If you punish the behavior, then you indirectly punish the condition which facilitated the behavior (whether it is alcohol or text-messaging or 'road rage' or anything else), so you do not need a separate prosecution for the condition.

Question 45 (continued)

Should an exception be made for the District of Columbia?

Specifically, the residential sections of the present District of Columbia should be remanded to the State of Maryland, since they are on the same side of the Potomac.

Question 258.4 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the County agencies listed in Answer 135?

Added in June 2020: Correspondent offered very good suggestion that we should be getting more accustomed to the idea of using unmanned equipment to enter condemned buildings in order to retrieve valuable possessions which are light and compact enough to carry. Our robots are getting more agile and sophisticated all the time, and we imagine that we can set them up (if not now, then eventually) to be operated with only a small amount of training by the homeowner who knows where everything is, as with any RPG-type video game, advance forward, change direction, climb stairs, move or capture objects with your grappling arms and hooks, auto-return to base. Until such time as such robots are as ubiquitous as yesterday's calculators and today's burner phones, we should expect to charge homeowners for their use, partly as an insurance premium against damage or loss from the structural nonintegrity of the building being searched, and largely as an incentive to motivate

them to do as A2E suggests by keeping their most prized possessions wherever they can be gathered most quickly and easily in times of emergency.

However, correspondent also maintained that we still "should let people enter condemned buildings so long as the damage is minimal". Trouble there is, there is no such animal. A building is not "condemned" unless and until the damage is not only extensive, but deemed irreparable, and it's just a matter of waiting for the demolition team to arrive and bring the building down before it falls down. Under those conditions, Moderator continues to have a hard time seeing us recommend to local fire departments and building inspectors that they should allow human homeowners to enter even if they beg. I claim that we need to have trained professionals as either employees or contractors of the local government, telling us on the basis of their expertise which buildings are safe to enter and which ones are not. If we agree with that premise, then I further claim that any untrained individual is foolish to enter a building after the experts (who -- unlike certain other government officials -- have little or no motivation to lie) have determined that to do so would be overly unsafe. If we agree with that, then I finally claim that it would constitute a violation of our core principles (since we are trying to get everyone to do Everything correctly, that's the whole point) to recommend to anyone that they do anything foolish. I understand the libertarian impulse to allow people to do foolish things if they are not endangering anyone else, and that they should especially be allowed (if not encouraged) to do so before they have a chance to reproduce and pass those foolish genes on to another generation. In the end, though, I still feel that we need to err on the side of safety and forbearance, for one of society's big current problems is that we have been a little too reckless in some of our thoughts and statements and actions. Even though Franklin asserted otherwise, I claim that we must balance Freedom with Order if we are to have either.

Question 661.4 (continued)

Any other suggestions to make on punctuation generally?

Added in June 2020 from SIG correspondence, we need to ask ourselves specifically how to manage apostrophe usage on root words and names ending in 's'. Under what conditions should we add an 's' after the apostrophe when making a possessive adjective out of a noun ending in 's', and when should we not? We agree with the correspondent that the previous rules were very awkward, and not easy to remember. On the basis of simplicity alone, we should refine our practice one way or another. Definitely. Yes. So, here we go, starting now:

Previous rules established different standards according to when the noun being possessivized was a singular or a plural when starting out, and according to whether it was a 'common' or 'proper' noun. We offer the following examples of good usage:

My business's profits were down last month.
Our businesses's profits were up last month.
We like Miley Cyrus's latest hit single.
We like John Williams's latest film score.
Each of the Allens' pets is less than ten pounds.
Each of the Roberts' pets is more than ten pounds.

As you see, we are distinguishing here among last names like 'Allen' which do not end in 's' unless they are definitely plural, last names like 'Cyrus' which end in 's'

even when they are not plural, and last names like 'Williams' which are plural at their root even when you are referring to one individual. However, it seems net-easiest and most net-consistent if we do not bother with those subtle distinctions, and if instead we merely add an 's' after the apostrophe for every possessive, except only when the noun is both proper and plural. Reason for the exception is that you don't need an extra 's' when the noun being possessivized is clearly plural, and adding it anyway would make the noun look like a singular individual rather than a family.

We could also leave off the extra 's' for all plural nouns, whether 'proper' or not, in cases such as in the second example above, and maybe we should do so for purposes of eliminating a redundancy, but leaving it on there doesn't make the base noun look singular, so remembering to drop it might be more trouble than it's worth. Still, maybe we could be persuaded on that.

Question 425 (continued)

Given the foregoing conclusions, what are the approximate rates that we can expect to see for the different types of taxes for different levels and functions of government?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: Couple of technical reasons (OK for non-accountants to skip this paragraph) why we decided to switch from [Receipts & Outlays] to [Revenues & Costs/Expenses] as our accounting basis for the purpose of this sample analysis: One reason was that the Federal record for 2016 showed Receipts actually outpacing Outlays, even though we know that there was a significant Federal deficit that year, apparently because some of the Receipts were 'interbudgetary' while others were 'intrabudgetary', such that not all of them actually related to fiscal 2016, whereas the Costs definitely outpaced the Revenues. Other reason was that the available online records for the State of California, the County of Los Angeles, and the City of Pasadena all spoke in terms of Revenues & Costs, so we figured best to keep all the levels using the same accounting basis.

Supplementing our finding in Session 223, we later added a fourth reason to exempt corporations from any Wealth Tax, being that it might be tough enough for corporations to have to pay money to buy back shares from wealthy individuals who need to sell off their excess holdings in order to pay an extra tax bill, and we would not want to compound their misery by requiring them to liquidate their other assets.

Question 455 (continued)

Should employers ever be required to hire union personnel, or to give them any preferential treatment?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: However, this raises the question of why it would be considered okay to picket or otherwise demonstrate against an employer who hires non-union personnel, as partly discussed in Answer 450 for the specific action of boycotting. We have to feel that this should not be considered socially acceptable, even if perhaps it should be legally allowed: If a given employer is able to conduct business to her satisfaction with the use of non-union personnel, then that is a sign that the salary requirements or other demands of the unions have become unnecessarily stringent. Rather than demonstrate against that employer, then, perhaps the more appropriate course would be for the union to reexamine its demands, and to reduce them to more market-tolerant levels if so indicated.

Question 456 (continued)

But, certain trades -- such as acting, trucking, or construction -- require a certain amount of expertise which union membership can guarantee: Is this not a sufficient reason to require union membership at least in certain instances?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: However, for certain other professions like acting and athletics which now are union-dominated, even though there is little or no threat to either public safety or governmental budgets, we feel that we must revert to the core American value (see Answer 38) of maximum personal and economic liberties: Individuals generally should be able to work if they can without any unnecessary administrative requirements, and employers generally should be able to hire whoever will help them to get the job done with a minimum of cost. If workers and businesses can get together to form employment contracts without the involvement of any unions, then we feel that this generally should be allowed in a free-market economy.

Question 664.5

Why the heck is it so hard in America to normalize relations between whites and other races?

Added in June 2020 from personal reflection: We observe that white European-Americans have it in their heritage to conquer and control others, in that they have been doing it for many years now. White America attacked and occupied several Asian nations in the 20th century, conquered and subjugated the Native American population in the 19th century, and initiated a massive African slave trade in the 18th century.

How did we get this way? Did we have some bad collective experience which turned us into pushy greedy bastards, or did we have a bad genetic mixup in some prior generation, or some third thing?

From the combination of years of historical reading and research (including but not limited to the excellent *Connections* television series by James Burke), we are hypothesizing that the big moment when white Europeans became a conquering people was the development of the printing press in Germany in 1453.

For a thousand years prior to that time, Europeans remained divorced from their Roman background, and pretty much stayed not only on their own continent, but within their own little kingdoms and villages, working their lands for their feudal lords and keeping focused on making it from one harvest to the next.

Once the printing press happened, including the resulting introduction of paper money and other financial documents, commerce was able to blossom, the merchant class began to rise, and all Europe enjoyed a 'renaissance' with an increased standard of living everywhere. Once they got a taste of how things could get better, White Europe never went back, and it began a massive multinational campaign to explore the Earth and colonize it. They sailed all around Africa and Asia, and of course eventually stumbled across the Americas.

At this critical point, Europe began to divide, with many of the more conquest-oriented folks sailing over to America to do and get whatever they could, while many of the less conquest-oriented remained at home and built up their beautiful countries from within, although Germany (birthplace of the printing press - coincidence?) still exhibited a certain amount of conquest-affinity in the subsequent centuries.

As the conquest-loving White Europeans settled and expanded in America, their insatiable lust for wealth and power led them to subjugate all the lands and peoples they encountered, and later to reach beyond the American continent to subjugate other lands and peoples, as even the most redneck history books will acknowledge.

As they maintained this lifestyle from the time of their arrival, White Americans continually told all their kids and grandkids that what they were doing was right and just and good and proper, it was our 'manifest destiny', and we were doing a favor to the Earth by developing it as we did. We had to say that to them. The only ways that we could live with ourselves for these years of murder and enslavement and genocide were either to deny that it was taking place at all, or else to convince ourselves that it was somehow the morally superior course. Whichever way we went with ourselves, we had to say the same things to our kids and grandkids in order to reinforce that belief system. The kids and grandkids therefore got programmed with those beliefs before they ever had a chance to consider otherwise, and so they passed the beliefs on to their kids and grandkids as well, down to the present day.

Once you have grown up believing a certain thing, it can be very hard to convince yourself to change your mind about it, because to do so would mean admitting to yourself (and possibly to others) that you had for whatever reason allowed yourself to believe a wrong thing for many years, as well as your parents and grandparents.

The wise will change their minds anyway, because they recognize that increasing knowledge and wisdom is more important than acknowledging one's own human limitations, but the cowardly will stick to their beliefs and 'double down' on them if necessary. This is why we still see so many 'Karens' shouting at the non-whites in their neighborhoods, assaulting them, scratching their cars, calling the cops on them, and doing whatever else they can to insult and victimize them. This also is why we see so many white cops beating up on black suspects, and not so many black cops beating up on white suspects.

It's all part of the programming which some White Americans have, going back over 500 years, to convince themselves continually that 'Blacks' and 'Indians' and 'Arabs' and other races must continually be taught to stay in their place, because they supposedly are inferior to white people, which in turn would justify all our past centuries of conquest and racial horror.

But, this brings up another Question which let's call 664.6 for now:

Question 664.6

Should white Europeans not have settled and colonized the American continent?

Also added in June 2020: Some folks seem to think so, that it would have been net-better if the Buffalo and the Indigenous Humans had been allowed to roam the prairies forever, and if the terrain were allowed to stay in its natural condition.

These folks claim that we sinned when we extracted all the gold and silver and iron and aluminum and other minerals from the Land, because the Land supposedly belongs to the Earth, and we Humans have no right to take from the Earth any more than what She freely gives us.

At this point, we feel that we must diverge from that line of reasoning. To the contrary, even if you do believe that the Land belongs to the Earth (cf. Answer 361a), and that the Earth is our Mother who provides for us, then we reason that the minerals which we dig out of the Earth are parts of Her gifts to us.

For, otherwise, why did Mother Earth go through the massive effort to create these minerals in the first place, or to store them for millions of years after interstellar travel or solar fusion, except to bequeath them to whichever critters could make good use of them? Wouldn't it all be a waste of Mother Earth's bounty if we left all those minerals in the Earth? Wouldn't it be an insult to our generous Mother, to refuse her gift and slam the door in Her face? Wouldn't that be ungrateful of us?

It is okay to be prudent and sustainable in our use of Mother Earth's gifts, because some are more sustainable and renewable than others, but we yet claim that it is net-good to make constructive use of the mineral resources provided by Mother Earth, particularly those in the American continent.

We therefore further claim that any people who are able and willing to mine and process and utilize these resources have a stronger claim over the Land than those who would merely roam over it wastefully, and that it is therefore okay to move at least some of those roamers aside for this purpose. Now, that does not mean that we should completely obliterate any indigenous nomads, nor that we should squeeze them into excessively-small 'reservations', nor that we enslave or otherwise subjugate them. To the contrary, we hold that there is plenty of room for everyone, and that any indigenous peoples who needed to be displaced for our mines and cities and farms should be allowed to be partners in our enterprises, or if they decline then to be granted generous terms of relocation and compensation and ongoing support.

We also should continue to leave certain land areas in their pristine condition for National Parks and Forests, even if there are valuable minerals hiding within, because keeping the Animals and Timber in place will be good for our Ecosystem, and to give us Humans some breathtaking vistas to further stimulate and enhance our miraculous existence.

In sum, we feel that it was appropriate for the Europeans to sail over to America and develop the continent, but we wish that the process had been managed better.

Question 373 (continued)

Given that many goods (particularly food items) are consumed shortly after production, and also given that a large part of the economy comprises human services which cost nothing other than time to provide, shall the total credit amount be a fixed figure, or shall it fluctuate with population, or shall it fluctuate with the total amount of material wealth currently in existence, or shall some other means be used to determine it?

Hailstones stated on p.158 that an increase in credit means an increase in money supply (and an exponential one at that), but from an accounting standpoint we don't

see it: Borrower's account payable offsets the lender's account receivable, and although the borrower can now buy more things the lender can now buy less.

Question 379.1 (continued)

How does the Federal Reserve system currently operate, in comparison with the model described above?

Hailstones stated on p.163 that “[The Fed] is an instrument of the government, yet it is not owned by the government. It is owned by the member banks, but its most important officials are appointed by the government.”

He went on to describe on p.164 that “The FRB is an agency of the federal government, but it has considerable autonomy. It consists of seven members who are appointed by the President of the United States with the consent of the Senate. Each member must be selected from a different Federal Reserve district. Each member is appointed for 14 years and is eligible for reappointment after having served a full term. Appointments are staggered so a new appointee is assigned every two years. The President of the United States selects the chairman and the vice-chairman of the Board. The four-year term of office of the chairman does not run concurrently with the four-year term of office of the President.”

But, per p.168, “The Bank of Canada is wholly owned by the Canadian government and serves as Canada's central bank.”, so it doesn't need to be any one way.

According to p.181, “if the central bank buys \$50,000 of government securities from the banks, it puts the money directly into the banks or credits their reserve accounts. This increases excess reserves and expands the banks' ability to make loans by \$500,000, through the multiple expansion of bank credit”. Although they do not use the term ‘fractional reserve banking’ expressed by Eggelletion, the concept appears to be about the same, that because banks are required to hold only 10% or so of their loan portfolios as a reserve to cover depositor withdrawals, they are basically loaning money which they do not have.

Question 357 (continued)

How shall we proceed to devise the optimal production and distribution of valuable resources?

Per pp.189-190, Gross National Product (GNP) minus Capital Consumption Allowance (depreciation/obsolescence of capital goods) equals Net National Product.

According to p.193, the Department of Commerce then produced quarterly reports on GNP “To keep citizens informed and to have figures available as a guide for the implementation of national economic policies”. Function would be performed in our model by the Bureau of Domestic Trade within the Finance Department.

Hailstones states on p.195: “Frequently the various accounts of the GNP will not balance when checked against each other. This may be because of the fact that information for various tables is collected from different sources. These differences are usually adjusted by writing off the differences as a statistical discrepancy.” This factor accounted for 1/15 of 1% in the hypothetical chart on p.189; obviously, we would seek to eliminate such shenanigans in our model.

Per pp.200-201, Durable Goods enter the GNP on an immediate-not-amortized basis, not accounting for their usage over long periods of expansion or recession, so "the GNP frequently underestimates our standard of living, especially during periods of declining business activity." This may not be a *per se* problem for us to resolve, but if anyone complains about it then yes we can favor some sort of modified calculation.

Question 120 (continued)

Every election for every office in the country is decided by direct popular vote, except for the ticket of U.S. President and Vice-President, which uses the Electoral College established by Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution, and by the 12th Amendment: Should the Electoral College remain in existence any further?

Added in June 2020 from personal reflection: One of the several arguments against the Electoral College is that it makes us look more united and less polarized than we actually are. As one example, when Reagan defeated Mondale in 1984, he had 98% of the Electoral vote, and everyone exclaimed what a 'landslide' it was, when in fact he had won only 59% of the Popular vote, relatively decisive yes, but far from the near-unanimity suggested by the Electoral count. Similarly, when Clinton defeated Dole in 1996, he had 69% of the Electoral vote, but only 50% of the Popular vote.

Question 591.5 (continued)

Should we require or even allow the Pledge of Allegiance to be recited each day in schools?

Added in June 2020 from personal reflection: To those who object to the idea of pledging allegiance to an inanimate object like a Flag, it could be argued that you are in effect obeying the Flag by obeying the laws which the Flag is telling you are in effect there. When private residences and public facilities display the Flag of their Nation, they are sending a signal to all observers that they are recognizing the prevalence of that Nation's current government and legal structure, that they are supporting the same, and that if the Nation is attacked in any way (either internally or externally) then they will undertake some amount and variety of effort to defend it. In this case, the Flag is performing the same function as a Judge or Policeman or Umpire, who communicates a ruling to you under some duly-established authority imposed, and therefore expects you to obey it. Whether you actually do obey it or not is up to you of course, but the point is that the Flag and the Judge and the Policeman and the Umpire are all doing the same thing, in representing the applicable civil authority by telling you what that authority expects you to do. If you can pledge allegiance to a human representative of a particular government, then perhaps you can also pledge allegiance to an unconscious representative as well.

Question 585 (continued)

What shall we designate as the 6 or 7 main disciplines to be taught in primary school in the modern environment?

Added in June 2020: We have felt for some time that Accounting should be included at least as a Math elective in secondary school, with possibly at least the basics ("What The Heck Is A 'Debit', Anyway?") taught in the Math track of primary school, to give students at least a taste of how the Arithmetic skills which they learned

earlier can be put to practical use. We also read this month an article in the *Mensa Bulletin* (June 2020, pp.22-24), titled "Universal Business Education", written by Steve Kmeco, and arguing that Business education should be part of the compulsory curriculum, and that it "should start no later than the fifth grade", since "addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division are the only math needed for many essential business functions." If true, then this tangentially argues for each of those four basic forms of Arithmetic to be emphasized successively in the first four grades of primary school. We agree with the arguments in the article. On both individual and national levels, more Americans need a better sense of how to manage their lives and their businesses with greater fiscal efficiency, and with longer-term goals in mind, especially as more GenXers join the Boomers in retirement, and now that nations like China and India are creating a much more competitive global marketplace. Families and all of America will suffer further if we continue to live on debt and government handouts, so we need our entire population better educated in Business.

Question 6.5 (continued)

How shall we reference the different kinds of rights for this discussion?

Same issue of the *Mensa Bulletin* (June 2020, pp.25-27) contained a lovely article titled "Do Nonhuman Animals Have Rights?", written by Elliott R. Crozat. In the course of the article, the writer introduced definitions for the two basic types of Rights, as follows: "A *moral right* is a privilege to perform an activity or to access a benefit; the privilege is held by a person in virtue of existing as a person (i.e., a rational moral agent). A *legal right* is also a privilege to perform an activity or to access a benefit; but the privilege is possessed in virtue of its being granted by state authority." We quibble about the undefined use of the ambiguous term 'privilege', and about its duplicated use when trying to distinguish different concepts. However, we note happily that these definitions very closely mirror what we had written over 20 years earlier as to the expressions 'right', 'natural right', and 'civil right'.

Question 13.5 (continued)

What about animal rights?

Same article presents both arguments of the debate over whether animals have "objective moral rights". However, both sides appeared to rely on unsubstantiated premises, including whether or not animals are "moral agents", which according to his definition are creatures which have objective moral rights, so the reasoning looks circular. Neither side is logically supported to any real degree of satisfaction, so there really are no conclusions to be drawn as to Q13.5, beyond corroboration of some of our previous definitions. However, the article does at least highlight that this is a non-trivial topic, and shows why it is important to resolve, such as for purposes of using animals as food sources and for medical experimentation.

Question 485 (continued)

Any other suggestions as to probate, inheritance tax, or anything else on personal/family economics?

Hailstones alleged on p.207 that "Savings of money constitutes [*sic*] the biggest leakage factor from the income stream", exemplifying a theme suggested throughout

this area that to save is bad, because it reduces economic activity, which allegedly is an *ipso facto* bad thing.

It did not occur to us to ask ourselves whether saving money generally is a good thing, because it seemed trivially obvious by inspection, but clearly we will need to break this out into a separate Question during the latter stages of this Project. Until then, we are making a general statement for Section II-G that saving money generally is a good thing, notwithstanding the Hailstones book.

At the individual/family level, it is helpful to know that you have a reserve amount of credit which you can use to facilitate continued spending if you suffer a job loss or other interruption of income. Further, when you have saved up enough money over a period of time, you know that you can safely treat yourselves to a nice vacation or other major purchase, which you will never be able to do if you routinely spend as much as you take in. Finally, saving up enough (after vacations and other treats) will allow you to take retirement at some point, which might otherwise (see Answer 406) be problematic depending on what types of eldercare programs (if any) your government may be maintaining at any given point.

At the national level, a high level of consumer savings tells us that people are refraining from spending and consuming recklessly, and that we are therefore striking a good balance between living for today and preparing for tomorrow. If that means that consumer spending lowers, and that industrial production reduces in response, then maybe that's a good thing. If we are able to content ourselves with what we have, and not continually crave growth or 'newness', then we will have more leisure time to enjoy our lives and current possessions, we will make sure to have resources available to help our later selves and our future generations, and we will make less of a 'footprint' on this our Planet Earth.

If that also means a certain amount of price deflation, then that also may be a good thing. For, as we described in Answers 368 and 441, it might be very nice if we can get back to Henry Ford's five-dollar-a-day basic wage, with consumer prices low enough to make that a comfortable standard for everyone, including with one dollar per day going to food. Once we get there, let's please stay there.

Question 368 (continued)

How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

This is another point which we probably will need to roll out into a separate Question later on in the process. Hailstones made a long discourse on pp.206-219 to show that increased investment will stimulate economic activity, leading to greater income for all. But, the discussion appears to assume (if not demand) that this additional investment be new money from outside the current circle of economic activity. We don't see that this needs to be the case, or should, because it creates an increase in the money supply before you know that it will have a direct impact on our total real wealth. Even if you ignore that, then it still is not trivial that we should always be seeking to increase our economic output on even a per-capita basis, let alone in aggregate. Besides, it also hinted that the "additional investment" might need to be a government stimulus, and apparently not caring that this would [at least according to the pre-Kelton worldview] increase the budget deficit and the national debt.

Question 485 (continued)

Any other suggestions as to probate, inheritance tax, or anything else on personal/family economics?

We dispute the description of classical economic theory on p.227 of Hailstones, particularly that "the adherents of classical theory maintain ... that all income will be spent" and that "If anything is saved, it will be borrowed by others and spent in various ways, especially for capital goods investment." He apparently ignores the prudent reality of saving up for college or unemployment or retirement or legacy, some money thus possibly remaining unspent for multiple generations if not forever.

Question 383 (continued)

But, what about the economic theory which has it that continued government spending is good, to stimulate the economy?

Hailstones claimed on p.248 that "Government revenues and expenditures may be adjusted in a manner that will bolster the economy during a recession, combat inflation when the economy is overheating, and promote economic growth in the long run." We had always disagreed heavily with this model, and continue to do so upon the present re-reading in June 2020. We felt that government should be doing whatever it needs to do in order to serve its basic functions of rights protection, infrastructure maintenance, economic management, and other essential public services, but that it should never be receiving or spending so much that its activity has a noticeable impact on a free nation's overall economy. We should be able to incentivize reduction in government activity (and retention of more resources by private entities) without worrying about the impact on the overall economy.

Question 375 (continued)

Once we decide how we are allocating credit, shall some portion of it (or all of it) be distributed in the form of physical currency?

According to p.250 of Hailstones: "Some economists ... reason that printed money is just as substantial as bank credit. Since the government has the right to coin and print money and to regulate its value, they think that it is wise to bypass the banks and print the money directly when it is needed for federal government expenditures to generate economic activity." At this point, we began to agree that printing more Monopoly money is incrementally better than the 'fractional-reserve banking' which is so dependent upon everyone borrowing from everyone else, but feared that both approaches could lead to an excessive increase in money supply and a reduction in the purchasing power of your basic currency unit. In any case, Hailstones basically ignored this possibility afterward, and began the remainder of the book with "Once it has been decided to use government spending as a means of raising effective demand to increase the level of employment...", a far from trivial proposition.

Question 380 (continued)

To recapitulate, what is the basic form of our preferred economic structure?

Most of the Hailstones material after p.250 was based on the undersubstantiated premises that we should always be increasing our economic output, that we should

always seek 'full employment' (including through busy work) instead of spreading out our existing workload, and that increased government borrowing and spending and deficit-budgeting are often helpful to advance these objectives. It was thus pretty easy to skim through much of the remaining crap with little further comment.

Question 383 (continued)

But, what about the economic theory which has it that continued government spending is good, to stimulate the economy?

Hailstones claimed the following on p.263: "If the government is going to use fiscal policy to bolster the level of business activity, [then] more efficient results will be obtained if fiscal policy is accompanied by a deficit budget." Dude, how can you say that?? The very idea of the government borrowing continually means that it is incurring debts which it will never repay, undermining the confidence of any lender or bondholder to advance any funds to the government, let alone the inflationary impact on the dollar. Fie and Phooey on All Dat. [Reconsidered later.]

Question 368 (continued)

How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

We actually like much of Chapter 16, which appears to do a pretty good job of showing how recession and depression are typical phases of an ongoing and inevitable series of business cycles, where forces at either end step into play to reverse the pendulum, although the waves tend around a straight trendline.

Specifically, per p.273, one reason that we will always pull out of a depression eventually is that "costs generally lag behind prices in their movements during the cycle", meaning that prices drop first in face of reduced consumer demand, such that businesses don't want to maintain or increase production because their profit margins will be reduced, but eventually costs will catch up with prices, and it will become profitable for businesses to increase production again.

According to p.274, recovery will also spur itself when accumulated inventories get so low that companies are required to order new stock, and also when old machinery and equipment eventually wear out, so we do not need to rely on the interest-rate argument appearing on the same page.

Ill effects listed on p.276 for prosperity included "inflation, shortages of goods, and reckless spending", but did not include environmental impact through excessive mining/harvesting and/or excessive trash generation.

Question 418 (continued)

Of these basic types, which is the fairest method of taxation, or is it appropriate for more than one type to be levied at once by a single jurisdiction?

Hailstones discusses regressive taxation on p.293 by using the expression 'equality-of-sacrifice doctrine' instead of 'regressive' or 'regressivity', although he uses 'regressive' on p.296 for a 'callback' discussion, including specific reference to the widely-acknowledged regressivity of Sales Tax.

In the actual p.296 discussion on regressive tax rates (which discussion appears to contain a key computation error), Hailstones claims that "it is incorrect to call the sales tax regressive, since the base of the tax is sales (purchases), not income.", so again we get to look better than he does by defending the more popular perception, even though his definitions may or may not be technically correct.

Question 419.5 (continued)

How can we make sure that businesses report sales figures accurately for tax purposes?

When he speaks on p.297 about "shifting taxes", reminds me that we should make sure at some point that our discussion of Sales Tax includes a provision that in our new world the listed price is what the customer actually pays, and that we will levy some percentage of that retail income as the sales tax. That way, the consumer never needs to worry about doing any extra math, retailers don't need to bother making extra notations such as 'plus tax' in their price announcements, and we don't need to concern ourselves with the perception or reality of false advertising.

Question 383 (continued)

But, what about the economic theory which has it that continued government spending is good, to stimulate the economy?

Hailstones summarized on p.299: "Therefore, the level of economic activity will increase if the economy is at less than full employment, and inflation will occur if the economy is at full employment." Moderator flagged this note with blue ink in the original reading from 30 years earlier, but it appears to be satisfactorily explained in the preceding chapters, except for the key ambiguity in the expression 'full employment', which Hailstones apparently takes to mean the entire labor force working as many hours as they practically can, so 'maximum employment', such that it is impossible to increase productivity without procedural or technological advances.

Question 409 (continued)

Is there any constructive purpose to maintaining an ongoing national debt, or similar debt for smaller governmental jurisdictions?

Hailstones claimed on p.301: "When a federal government borrows money, it borrows primarily from individuals, businesses, and banks within the economy." This claim was unsubstantiated in terms of either philosophy or recent data, and it seems intuitively obvious that at least some debtor nations will borrow at least some of their cash from foreign banks and businesses and governments and individual bondholders. However, while you could at least extend the argument to the global economy, what would that really tell us, especially if governments can continue to modify the aggregate money supply out of proportion with the World's real wealth?

Question 411 (continued)

Over what time frame should we plan on paying down the national debt?

According to pp.301-302 of Hailstones: "Theoretically, the government could tax a sufficient amount of pay its debt off in the course of one year, [but] it would not in

any way reduce the total income or assets of the nation as a whole [and] would merely cause a redistribution of income, or cash assets, inside the economy." Even if you accept the highly-dubious premise that all lenders to the government are intranational, the takeaway of this passage is that it would not do us much good to repay the debt, but this clearly ignores the huge impact of exponential interest accumulation, which is an extra burden on the taxpayers which goes straight into the pockets of the already-ultra-rich.

Question 409 (continued)

Is there any constructive purpose to maintaining an ongoing national debt, or similar debt for smaller governmental jurisdictions?

Hailstones finally acknowledged on p.302, as if through belated coercion, that "Some allowance would have to be made for the fact that, for both Canada and the United States, foreigners hold a portion of the national debt."

Laughable claim appears on p.303: "If we are considering the total economy, it is impossible to pass the real cost of the debt on to future generations." Then, why the heck have we inherited a large debt from our great-grandparents in the F.D. Roosevelt administration?

Question 411 (continued)

Over what time frame should we plan on paying down the national debt?

When finally getting around on p.308 to discussing the impact of interest liabilities on accumulated debt, Hailstones makes the funny statement that "It is a matter of judgment whether individuals and firms would prefer the hardship either of paying off the debt in a relatively short period of time or of giving up more of total income but spreading the hardship or inconvenience in smaller doses over a longer period of time." Here's our judgment: We don't want to pay huge interest amounts to the already-ultra-rich loan sharks, let's save enough as a government and as a nation that we do not need to borrow anything from anyone, and use our existing capital (or additional taxation of wealthier stakeholders, in the case of the federal government) to finance equipment replacement or inventory expansion or other goals which may ever be needed or desired.

Per p.311, "the longer the debts are held the easier it will be to repay them". We don't accept this claim, either. The longer the debts are held, the less likely it is that anyone will ever bother about repaying them. For, if the creditors have gone this long without repayment, and if the federal budget (whether surplus or balanced or deficit) has sustained the interest accumulations without getting overridden by the Mongol Hordes, then why should we do anything about it now, or ever?

Question 181 (continued)

What regulatory steps -- if any -- do we need to have in place with respect to import or export of goods?

Hailstones finally started making sense again on p.315: "Tariffs disturb and restrict the free movement of goods and services, eliminate the advantages of specialization and exchange, and prevent the optimum use of scarce resources."

He continues on pp.317-318: "Even if it is granted that the wage cost per unit may be lower in some foreign industries, it is still a disservice to domestic consumers in the long run to subsidize the less efficient domestic producer with a tariff."

Brief discussion on p.320 of the Export-Import Bank.

Brief discussion on p.322-323 of the World Bank.

According to p.324: "some nations end up with a so-called **favorable balance of trade**, in which exports exceed imports, or an **unfavorable balance**, in which imports exceed exports. The term "favorable balance" is a misnomer, however. It is a holdover from the 18th and 19th centuries, when it was stressed that a nation with an excess of exports over imports was in a favorable position because it could force its debtor nations to pay the differences in gold and silver." [Bolding theirs.]

Question 370 (continued)

Given that we will not attempt to carry a single currency for the entire world, should there still be such a thing as an International Monetary Fund, and if so then why?

Hailstones discussed the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on pp.334-336, including that "it has met with only modest success".

Question 181 (continued)

What regulatory steps -- if any -- do we need to have in place with respect to import or export of goods?

Hailstones asserted on p.336: "Nations of the world are not completely independent. Consequently, they engage in trade with one another and numerous commodities are transferred among them." Yeah, we guess, but it still seems to our empirical observation that the trade is actually happening among companies not among nations.

Question 32.1 (continued)

Do we want to discuss specific potential policies, and/or specific remedies that the I.O.O. would allow?

Added in June 2020 from personal reflection: We previously noted that we should have No War, and that certain nationalities (we can now specify Israel and Palestine and America and Germany and Britain and Russia, and specifically exclude nations like Switzerland and Australia, who whether by design or geography tend to stay out of most international conflicts) have kept going through War on a cyclical basis, because each new generation wants to prove that it is as tough as the preceding generation. Now elaborating that any generation which does that is merely adding itself to a long list of previous generations which did the same thing, but that the generation which really wants to stand out in history will be the generation which decides that they will stop forever the dreadful and deadly cycle of War, and that they will finally use their brains to resolve all their international issues peacefully.

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We interrupted our manuscript work in June 2020 to begin reading "The Deficit Myth" (2020) by Stephanie Kelton, making notes to be transcribed into this 'blue report' for the Third Pass. We did so because conversation on the new book was happening immediately on Twitter and elsewhere, and we needed to be in on it.

Inside front cover of the book teased us that "Kelton busts through myths such as [that the] federal government should budget like a household". We therefore needed to prepare ourselves to challenge some of our previous paradigms.

Inside front cover specifically referred to "the critical role of deficit spending". Wow, we reacted, we might not enjoy this book as much as we originally thought.

Question 662 (continued)

Is it better for footnotes to be placed at the bottom of the page, or at the end of the chapter, or at the end of the book/article?

Kelton's p.2 was the first instance of a footnote requiring me to navigate to another part of the book. Whatever economic credentials the author had, we still claim that any footnote should be on the same page as the text to which it refers, so that we do not need to flip pages if reading a physical book. As we noted in Session 281, if any footnote (like Kelton's first) is too long to fit neatly on an original text page, then the text should be rearranged to include at least some of that text in the main discourse.

Question 385 (continued)

Are there any additional mechanisms or incentives which we can concoct to allow or encourage governments to regulate spending?

When we took up Questions 385 and 386 in Session 209, we apparently assumed that we would want to have at least a balanced budget at the Federal level, and possibly a surplus budget in order to pay down our National Debt. Hailstones failed to convince us that a deficit budget would be at all useful. However, Kelton referred on p.2 to "the misguided goal of a balanced budget", so we needed to re-evaluate.

She claimed that it is for the bigger purpose of broadening the distribution of our wealth. We agreed with the purpose, but felt that it would need to be demonstrated either (1) that this 'Modern Monetary Theory' (or 'MMT') approach is going to keep the Dollar at a fixed real value, or (2) that it will not do so but that we can somehow have valid long-term financial instruments like pensions and mortgages anyway.

At least she acknowledged on p.3 that she initially opposed and resisted the MMT approach, and eventually changed her mind, so that's good, that may help us. It is what we want of everyone, the open willingness to change your mind, but wow this one was going to be tough.

Question 662.1 (continued)

Is it better to use "op. cit." and "Ibid." as standard footnote abbreviations, or some more modern notation?

First footnote leading to an "Ibid." occurred on p.6 of Kelton, so that still happens. Still don't see why we can't simply reuse the same footnote number (as described in

the August 2019 amendment), so that we can avoid footnote clutter when (as recommended in Answer 662) we bring footnotes back to the text pages.

Question 383 (continued)

But, what about the economic theory which has it that continued government spending is good, to stimulate the economy?

Kelton's p.6 contained her first footnote referencing 'Business Insider', which we have always taken to be a parody site like 'The Onion'.

Question 385 (continued)

Are there any additional mechanisms or incentives which we can concoct to allow or encourage governments to regulate spending?

Kelton describes on p.7 the financial crisis of 2008, which she claims was exacerbated by "the deficit myth". As we read this, we were reminded that we would want some alternative measure of when the government is spending too much, if we can no longer rely on the singularity of a balanced budget: How will we know that 15.4 trillion is okay, but 16.4 trillion is not?

She provided a proposed Answer on p.9: "MMT demonstrates that ... the most important constraint on government spending is inflation." This may not be trivially obvious, but it certainly is highly possible. And, if it's not most important, then it certainly is high up there, because again we want that stable Dollar, and the ability to buy long-term securities, and a future without a brazillion zeroes after everything.

Question 409 (continued)

Is there any constructive purpose to maintaining an ongoing national debt, or similar debt for smaller governmental jurisdictions?

According to p.9 of Kelton: "Uncle Sam's deficit creates a *surplus* for someone else." This was largely consistent with the Hailstones model (so it was good that we re-read that entire book again immediately prior to the current exercise), that all borrowed funds remain within the economy, so it is a zero-sum. But, as with Hailstones, we have the two big bugs that some of those funds are going to foreign lenders, and that even if we globalize the economy we still need to deal with interest payments to people who are doing nothing to help the economy except lend their money, as though they somehow deserved to be in that position.

Question 442 (continued)

In this case, won't many wage ranges go down?

We agreed immediately with most of the alleged 'crises' which Kelton listed on p.11, other than the national deficit, but we needed to think for a moment about where she claimed that "The fact that the typical American worker has seen virtually no real wage growth since the 1970s is a crisis." First, the "fact" needed to be shown, because it is not trivial considering the increased standard of living many of us now enjoy. Second, we needed a moment to convince ourselves that this is a theoretically-worthy goal, and we guessed that we could. For, even though we

sometimes may need to drag down the economy in order to improve our sustainability and protect the environment, yet it is also true that we generally would like our society to improve technologically over time. We do not want simply to exist from one generation to the next, getting by from one harvest to the next without any kind of change or improvement. Rather, we want a goal to be working toward, a better level that we can look forward to and successfully achieve. It therefore follows (doesn't it?) that the average worker will want to experience a growth in real wealth over time, which becomes an exponential challenge if the workforce is increasing as it typically does these days. But then, what does that imply? For, any worker who consistently earns a steady income in excess of steady expenses will experience a gradual increase in real wealth if the Dollar remains flat, so it should be possible to achieve improved standard of living without increasing real wages.

Question 425 (continued)

Given the foregoing conclusions, what are the approximate rates that we can expect to see for the different types of taxes for different levels and functions of government?

It was good to see on p.12 of Kelton that "We should tax billionaires to rebalance the distribution of wealth and income and to protect the health of our democracy." But, not sure that "we don't need to crack open their piggy banks to eradicate poverty".

Question 409.5 (continued)

If yes to Question 409, then any parameters on maximum debt amount, maximum budget deficit, timeframe on repayment, or any related?

As we read Kelton wrap up her Introduction on p.14, we also began to wonder how she was going to settle the matter of whether we need to bother tracking the accumulated national debt any further, not just for interest calculations but to set a theoretical goal and schedule of repayment. For, if it doesn't matter then it doesn't matter, yea?

Question 369 (continued)

Shall one aggregate credit amount be determined for the entire world, or shall separate amounts be determined for individual nations, or some third thing?

Notes on Kelton's p.19 and in footnote #4 of Chapter 1 stated that the US Dollar is the "global reserve currency", which we didn't get from Hailstones or Eggelletion.

Question 416 (continued)

With other methods of revenue generation not to be depended upon, and with Government not having the power to generate currency beyond the level needed to keep the base unit stable, shall we agree to chip in a certain amount of our collective resources, to be paid out to those individuals who provide various forms of civic service to us?

Key thesis appears on p.23 of Kelton: "Your taxes don't actually pay for anything, at least not at the federal level. The government doesn't need *our* money. We need *their* money. We've got the whole thing backward!" She continued to describe how

the Fed spends money first, and then taxes and borrows after to pretend to pay for everything. So far, we were in substantive agreement here.

Question 415 (continued)

What would happen if, instead of traditional taxation, we gave to the Federal government the power to print money for itself?

Footnote #9 of Kelton's Chapter 1 described our current model that printing 'Monopoly money' is possible but immediately dismissible as being inflationary.

Question 416 (continued)

With other methods of revenue generation not to be depended upon, and with Government not having the power to generate currency beyond the level needed to keep the base unit stable, shall we agree to chip in a certain amount of our collective resources, to be paid out to those individuals who provide various forms of civic service to us?

Kelton referenced investor Warren Mosler on p.25 as alleging that taxes are there to get people to work for the State, because they must work in order to earn the sole currency which can pay the taxes, so we give them the money in wages and make them pay some of it back in taxes. Mosler illustrated the point with a story of how he unsuccessfully motivated his kids to do household chores by paying them worthless business cards, and how the motivation became successful when he once required a certain number of business cards being returned to him by the kids in order to qualify for privileges.

Question 367 (continued)

But, where does the local dropoff center of the chosen network get the power to issue credit?

Kelton on her p.27 repeated the perception from Hailstones (so perhaps it is accurate after all, although we previously undercredited it) that money basically comes from people doing work for the State, and only after initial payment does it get circulated within the economy for a medium of exchange.

Question 380 (continued)

To recapitulate, what is the basic form of our preferred economic structure?

Delighted that Kelton introduced on pp.27-28 the well-known parallel of the Monopoly game, with cash issued from the Bank to all players at the start, their universal income for remaining in the game long enough to pass GO again, the ability to go broke if their debts surpass their savings, and most importantly the ability of the Bank to produce as much additional fiat currency as may be needed.

Kelton began on p.31 to introduce our key Question, of why tax and borrow if you the government can create all the money that you need trivially. When we read this in June 2020, we noted that we had thought that this was an explicit Question in the A2E outline, but we did not find it at this time, nor even an obvious reference to it in the text of any of the II-A discussions, although it may have been buried in there

somewhere. Noted that we would need to look for it at some point, and to make sure that it got rolled out into a separate Question if it was not one already. [We did look more closely later in the Third Pass, as shown below.]

Question 416 (continued)

With other methods of revenue generation not to be depended upon, and with Government not having the power to generate currency beyond the level needed to keep the base unit stable, shall we agree to chip in a certain amount of our collective resources, to be paid out to those individuals who provide various forms of civic service to us?

Kelton asserted on p.33 that Taxation is a means of limiting Inflation, by removing enough Dollars from the economy to keep things stable, still okay so far.

Question 358 (continued)

What are the features of a 'good' or 'healthy' economy?

Pursuant to our #3 of "non-excessive disparity between rich and poor", Kelton cited on p.33 that "just three families own more wealth than the bottom half of America."

Question 379.1 (continued)

How does the Federal Reserve system currently operate, in comparison with the model described above?

Kelton makes the following points on p.39: Debt ceiling was established in 1917, and has been raised "some one hundred times since the limit was enacted", but it has still been invoked largely for political reasons, so that "lawmakers can feign empathy with their constituents while claiming their hands are tied because of the deficit. ... It helps to have a bad cop."

Question 358 (continued)

What are the features of a 'good' or 'healthy' economy?

Good general note on p.40 of Kelton: "MMT is ... about replacing our current approach, one obsessed with budget outcomes, with one that prioritizes human outcomes while at the same time recognizing and respecting our economy's real resource constraints." Again, so far so good, but it's what's coming up later that concerns me, but again we'll see how it goes.

Question 385 (continued)

Are there any additional mechanisms or incentives which we can concoct to allow or encourage governments to regulate spending?

From p.40 of Kelton: "We are a nation rich with real resources We are blessed to have enough of what matters. We can build an economy that provides a good life for all. We just need to budget our real resources." So that's good, budgeting is still a thing in the MMT model, as is recognition of the dependency and impact of any economic model on the community's real resources.

Question 167.5 (continued)

Are there any additional ways that we can improve conservation efforts, particularly of paper goods?

Language added in June 2020 from personal reflection to support resource conservation, notwithstanding the desire of some to consume and spend lots in order to spur further economic activity and employment:

Assuming that Answer 3 is correct, we live in a physical world. We cannot expect any new deliveries of mineral or agricultural goods from outside our planet, the way that we so routinely get them now from Amazon and similar services. Even if we did, a meteor big enough to deliver sizable new resources for us could by its impact do more harm than good to the Planet, so we would not recommend that approach. Instead, except for the precious sunlight which helps so critically to maintain life on this Planet, we must rely forever on the resources which we have here.

Which is basically a long way of saying, It's possible to run out of stuff.

Given that it's possible to run out of stuff, those of us running this Planet (whoever those may be at any given time in evolutionary history) have a responsibility to make sure that we do not.

If we agree this far, then we must next consider how we make sure. That question breaks down further between renewable and non-renewable resources. As for renewable resources such as agricultural products and livestock, we must always make sure that we do not overharvest, so that the Land and the Water will continue to support further harvests indefinitely. As for non-renewable resources like metal and plastics, we should make sure not to mine too quickly, and also not to use so much in 'gag gifts' and other products which get ignored or discarded.

It therefore follows that -- for both renewable and non-renewable resources -- it makes sense for us to place limits on what we take out of the Earth. This implies that we should be maintaining upper limits on our economic production. This further implies that we should be maintaining upper limits on our economic consumption.

Therefore, even if you feel (and however correctly) that consumption is key to economic activity and full employment, we yet must agree that too much of a good thing can be bad, and that we should not be producing as much as we possibly can. This also means that we should not be working as much as we can, so we actually should not have 'full employment', not in the sense where every person everywhere is working 16 hours a day 7 days a week. We should figure out -- and adjust over time, according to evolving conditions -- what lesser amount of work is appropriate to give us what we need and want without burning out the Earth, and spread that workload evenly among our entire workforce.

Question 476 (continued)

Does every individual have a responsibility to continue participating in such a contract?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass:

It certainly is tempting for many humans to relax as much as they can, and to work as little as they can get away with. And, if we've got five million other people working actively within my city, what difference if my buddies and I fritter away our years in quiet laziness, and live 'off the grid' of corporate labor?

Well, that may work if you want to live out in the wilderness with the other animals, without trespassing on any lands which have been duly designated for particular public or private purposes. And, if you prefer to be homeless within an urban environment, there may possibly be some less-traveled areas where you might be allowed to hang out, if you can somehow subsist without either begging or stealing.

Thing of it is, though, many people who do not wish to participate in our 'social contract' choose to resort to either begging and/or stealing in order to survive, and we don't want either one of those things ever happening in our ideal society. Further, during those hours when those folks are not actively begging or stealing, they often are hanging around on heavily-traveled public streets, tacitly intimidating innocent pedestrians, blocking paths with their tents and shopping carts, scattering trash on the sidewalks, excreting in the open areas, and generally stinking up the joint, causing eventual reductions in business activity and property values. If we want to have an ideal society, then we can no longer tolerate this.

In sum, then, you are not required to participate in our 'social contract' if you are willing to leave our society completely. However, if you insist on hanging around in the same cities and towns as the rest of us, then you must forever refrain from either begging or stealing, and you must never encamp on our public rights of way. If you can manage to hang out while fulfilling these two key conditions, then our blessings upon you. If not, then we will need to escort you to our 'orientation [help] centers', so that you can eat and sleep and shower and urinate in a clean and protected environment provided by society, but we will be encouraging you on an ongoing basis to perform some work in exchange for the public accommodation, so at the end of the day you will be participating in our social contract.

Question 477 (continued)

Does this principle apply in the specific case of suicide?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass:

The natural right of Non-Injurious Self-Determination implies that you generally may terminate your own life if you wish to. On a moral basis, it could be argued that your life is your own, and that you should not be expected to remain alive if you somehow find the experience too net-distasteful to endure. On an economic basis, your suicide means that you will no longer be able to produce, but you also will no longer be able to consume, apart from the small final expense required to clean up your remains and update the public records, which expense may be less than what we would need to incur by keeping you alive against your will.

Yes therefore, on both a moral basis and an economic basis, we claim that you generally have the right to exit the 'social contract' by way of suicide. Asking that you please kindly do us a favor by not making the act overly messy.

Question 478 (continued)

But, what about the loss to society of an individual's ability to produce for the common good? Does that not give society a voice in whether a person may or may not bail from the social contract?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: As addressed above, true that you are not producing, but you are also not consuming, and you might not have been producing all that much in the first place, if you are so despondent about life that you have been actively contemplating suicide. We therefore probably would not suffer a very big economic impact by your suicide, and may actually come out ahead. So no, society does not have an economic hold over your decision as to whether to remain alive. It is your call.

Question 479 (continued)

If a loved one does not want an individual to voluntarily end his life, is she empowered to try to dissuade said individual?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: Then, there is also the criminal defendant who prefers to commit suicide rather than face the ordeal of prison life, or even the humiliation of a public trial (like the Nazi leaders who committed or attempted suicide before and during the Nuremberg tribunals). It beats us why we would want to place these folks on 'suicide watch', and not allow them any means to kill themselves. Can't be because we hope to extract some useful information from them during the trial, because if they really are suicidal then they would have little or no motivation to cooperate truthfully with our questioning. Maybe because we want to punish them further by forcing them to stay alive to witness our judgments and experience our tortures, but even if such action is morally defensible (by no means a given), there could be a significant economic impact in keeping a person alive for purposes of torture. Best let them commit suicide if they wish, and let's the rest of us all move forward.

Question 480 (continued)

Does the right to end one's own life extend to the case of a hospitalized individual who orders the attending physician to arrange for the termination of life support?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: One reason is simply to give those individuals what they want. Another reason is that we are all participating in a 'social contract', in which we will give those other individuals what they want now if we can have our wishes respected when it is our turn to make similar decisions.

Question 481 (continued)

Shall an infirm patient be permitted to take an experimental drug?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: Our lawyers and bureaucrats may prefer that every drug be duly tested and approved before it is ingested by any human with an actual medical condition. However, the goal of medicine is to save people's lives, and we cannot always wait around for all the regulations of testing and approval to run their full course, so we should get our patients what they need when they need it, if we are to fulfill our primary goal of saving people's lives.

Whether such drugs should be covered by insurance is another question. For that, we are reminded of the last episode of the fifth season of 'L.A. Law', in which an AIDS patient wanted to take a certain non-approved drug, and the insurance company was refusing coverage. Insurer's lawyer argued in court that they simply could not afford to cover all experimental drugs which people might ever want to take, but the patient's lawyer (played by Jimmy Smits) countered that in this particular instance all the approved drugs were shown to be ineffective, and that this other drug was the patient's only hope. Court sided with the patient, conceding that insurers generally need not be liable for all experimental drugs, but should be liable if the attending physicians affirm that the particular drug in question constituted the patient's only hope of survival. This makes intuitive sense to us, so we concur with the fictional court's position.

Question 481.3 (continued)

If people may donate spare kidneys and other non-essential organs during their lifetime, then why may they not sell them?

Added in Third Pass: When comparing kidneys with hearts and stomachs and livers, one potentially material difference is that Nature (or perhaps our Intelligent Designer, if there is or ever was such an entity) figured out that kidneys are so meta-essential that people generally should have two of them. Doesn't change our position, that people are the owners of their lives and bodies and organs, to be dispatched as they wish if not injuring or threatening others. However, when potential kidney donors and sellers are considering their alternatives, they should consider carefully what Nature is trying to tell them. We wanted you to have two.

Question 605.5

Is it acceptable to have 'strip clubs' in our cities?

Added in July 2020 from personal reflection: It occurred to us that we refer to 'strip clubs' (although not with that exact phrasing) in both Answer 375 (regarding Cash) and Answer 482 (regarding Tipping), but we should not merely assume for these discussions that strip clubs will exist, because some people currently don't feel that they should. (One of them was then-Councilman Paul Little of Pasadena, who spoke against them when the City Council was considering whether to allow one to operate on the east side of town.) This way, we can reference them in the other discussions as "...strip clubs (which are okay to have according to Answer ###)".

The objection seems to be that we are 'purveying flesh' and 'promoting smut', which some cities feel would be a bad look for them. Pending cogent counterargument, we concur that cities should have the option to allow or disallow such businesses, for we generally allowed cities to enact zoning restrictions in Subsection I-D-4, and because yes a city's image can be either helped or harmed by certain storefront operations.

However, while we allow that cities should have the option, we generally recommend that they do allow strip clubs to operate within their borders, zoned as appropriate, especially if the city's population is large or diverse. We can see where smaller cities might want to maintain more of a 'family-friendly' atmosphere, and that's fine for them. But, as your population gets larger or more diverse, the chance goes up that some of your people are going to want to have that kind of entertainment available. If they cannot get it within your borders, then many of them will go outside for it, so

your local dollars are escaping to outside economies. You also are requiring your citizens to drive longer distances at night, which increases a variety of risks.

Besides, if you are a growing town which is eager to attract businesses and residents by showing that you have 'something for everyone', then it actually would be a bad look for you to make a big deal about prohibiting certain activities and businesses within your borders. In short, if your people want a strip club, then let them have it.

Some folks feel that strip clubs objectify and demean women, but we do not place a whole lot of stock in this argument, because clubs also exist with male dancers, for those customers who have that preference. Not a valid reason to exclude all.

Here, however, may be an exception to our standard paradigm (expressed in Answer 487 and elsewhere) that the minimum requirements for participation should be a combination of physical puberty and mental education, without reference to chronological age. That paradigm may work well for actual sex, where reaching a certain chronological age is no guarantee that you can handle the action responsibly or take care of any resulting children. But, it may not be needed for mere entry into a strip club. Even if you are a young adult who is still developing in terms of sexual maturity (kind of like the guys in "Wayne's World"), it probably does not hurt things too much to allow you to sit inside the club, although please try not to be too embarrassing. In contrast, if we were to allow attendance by middle-teenagers who may have the puberty and the diploma but not the emotional maturity (kind of like the kids in "Beavis and Butthead"), then they are likely to giggle and convulse and otherwise spoil things for the other patrons who are trying to enjoy an 'adult' experience, chasing those other customers away, and reducing business for the club owners and the dancers. In this exceptional instance, the acquisition of a certain number of years of chronological age is usually a fairly reliable indicator of how well you can look and act like an 'adult' in an adult club, so we find it okay to allow club owners to designate their own age cutoffs for entry. These cutoffs can vary among different communities, can be different within a given community, and can change over time according to evolving conditions. (For example, once we complete our Education reconstruction to get all essential knowledge communicated by the end of primary school, and make certain other modifications to our social structures, will male youths tend to grow out of their sex-giggling earlier or later in life?) We therefore suggest that governments should not be setting any such minimum ages.

Of course, it is a different equation if any form of alcohol is being served in such establishments. In this case, in addition to any entry requirements which club owners may establish internally, we should continue to restrict access according to whatever rules have been most recently imposed by the applicable governments, presumably following the guidelines established in our Answer 580.

Question 605.3

Is it acceptable to have houses of prostitution in our communities?

Also added in July 2020: If we need to ask about 'strip clubs', then we also need to ask about 'houses of ill repute'.

Same principle applies here when it comes to the presence of alcoholic beverages being served on the premises as in Answer 605.5 for strip clubs: Even if we take successful steps to prevent underage patrons from consuming alcohol, the fact that

alcohol is being consumed by other adults in a small space may lead easily to a variety of problems, so the same civic standards should apply as to anyone who would like to go inside any regular bar, for which we refer to A580 [as amended].

If alcohol is not being served, then we still must observe the same restrictions for the sex aspect as we recorded in A487. House managers may impose additional restrictions, but may not be more permissive than the applicable local government.

That leaves the main Question of whether such establishments should be allowed at all, and if so then under what conditions. We are reminded of the classic 'Simpsons' episode, where the townspeople of Springfield initially opposed the presence of the "Maison Derrière", but in a big production number managed to convince themselves that it was better to have it than not have it. The stated objection was the house's "total lack of morals", but the winning argument was that the house was providing an important public service, and doing no harm.

As with many of the previous discussions on Sex, we recognize that some folks (especially as a result of indoctrination by their churches and private schools) possess a more 'puritan' attitude, that Sex should occur only within a married heterosexual couple, that it should happen only for the purpose of procreation, and that any other actual or simulated expression of Sex is 'dirty' and 'profane' and 'obscene' and 'evil', even though the underlying impulses and desires come from either Nature or God (depending on your personal belief system), and even though a simulated or condom-protected experience often produces far less social blight than driving people 'underground' to do their things in more dangerous settings.

We claim that any such folks need to "lighten up, Francis". Individual prostitutes and houses of prostitution have existed in many cultures for many millennia, whether the local governments tried to restrict them or not, and they likely will continue to do so. Whoever would fight against their general existence will be fighting a losing battle, same as with alcohol prohibition or the so-called 'war on drugs'.

Even if you somehow were successful in eradicating all cathouses everywhere forever (yeah right), what will you really have accomplished? Many people like to live in a more 'libertarian' environment, where they generally may do as they wish if not harming or threatening others (per our Answer 12), and you are unduly restricting their actions and human experience by seeking to impose your morality upon them.

However, although you probably cannot eradicate all cathouses everywhere forever, and although we claim that you should not do so even if you somehow could, it certainly is appropriate for an individual city to declare 'not within our borders', same as we allowed in Answer 605.5 for strip clubs. You probably do want to allow it in certain business zones if you want to attract tourism and other commerce, but you yet may elect not to do so. In this case, the businesses should still be allowed to operate outside any city limits, like Nevada's famous 'chicken ranch'. Let it go.

Question 491 (continued)

Shall we establish as either socially or legally unacceptable for certain sexual positions to be used?

Added in Third Pass (July 2020): Actually, some of the harder-core religious types might believe and claim that the 'good' positions came from God, and that the 'evil'

positions came from Satan. What's their evidence? Why, the Bible, of course. But, we hopefully will have established by this point of the Agenda that not all Bible references are to be accepted as facts in evidence, and that Everything in that anthology is open to question and debate. In order to convince the rest of us that these other positions are 'evil' and/or arose through Satanic intervention, you will need some further evidentiary support beyond a few passing references written multiple millennia ago by a bunch of undereducated shepherds and fishermen. Until that happens, we will defer to the reasonings contained in the rest of this Answer.

Question 497 (continued)

Should any of these paradigms be different for males and females?

Added in Third Pass (July 2020): Within the two years after Session 244, an increased awareness sprang up in the social media about various varieties of 'trans' people, along with a push to minimize gender distinctions about anything to the extent that we practically can. We therefore extend the Question and Answer to accommodate all gender identities.

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We began in July 2020 to participate in a weekly webinar hosted by the *New York Times* as a book-review club for Kelton's "The Deficit Myth", the author herself appearing as 'economic guest' during the initial episode. Club was set to discuss one of the eight chapters each week, so we rationed out our reading accordingly.

Question 526 (continued)

In a case of unplanned pregnancy, during the period after conception and before any decision is made to keep the baby, under what conditions (if any) would aborting the embryo/fetus be either specifically acceptable or specifically unacceptable?

Added in Third Pass (July 2020): We can keep Question 526 if we rephrase it to something like 'Are there any conditions which clearly justify or unjustify abortion?', and then basically say no it's a case-by-case basis, although maybe we can add some general parameters like saving the mother's life as a definite, and passing on genetic deficiencies or maternal substance abuse as possibles. No such addition would change our later Answers.

Question 531 (continued)

What should happen if a financially-incapable parent or couple continues to crank out kids, placing a growing drain on the resources of The State?

Added in Third Pass (July 2020): Thinking again about the Turpins of Perris with their 17 kids (limited to that number only because we finally heard about their abuses and arrested them), we can see that the mother might have been thinking that -- if Nature was allowing her body to continue conceiving and bearing children -- she was in no position to argue or deny or thwart Nature's obvious purpose that she generate as many kids as she could. If this reasoning is valid, then how could our society be in any moral position to substitute our judgment for that of Nature, by stopping her from having any more kids? Answer is because the gift from Nature allowing women to bear more than two living children generated from a time when

Humans were still a growing species, with plenty of room upon the Earth to explore and settle, and when higher numbers of births were often needed in order to offset the higher rates of child mortality. Now that we have several billion Humans on the planet, with many of them crowded together in unsanitary cities or shunted off to arid 'reservations', our need to reproduce is not nearly so urgent as it was long ago, so we do not need to use nearly as often the power provided by Nature for creating large families. In particular, we do not need it in the case of any abusive parents. That's how.

Question 537 (continued)

To what extent does a parent or other 'responsible party' have authority over what a child in his/her care does or does not do, prior to majority?

Added in Third Pass (July 2020): We saw a note handwritten in the 'black book' which we did not consider during Session 253, so adding it here, although it is not expected to make a difference to Answer 537, although it may help elsewhere. Note was from a correspondent who told us on 25-Jul-2005 about a special-ed kid under her care acting fine around her, but freaking out when his grandparents showed up, with the grandfather coming on to her and the grandmother smothering the kid, both of them yammering non-stop, often critically about the kid as if he were not there; a very frenetic scene. What can we do about this? Some adults are just not cut out to be parents, but do we do more good by shipping all kids off to boarding school? They probably still need some kind of familial connection, at least in most cases. Maybe require some sort of compulsory Parenting class for every schoolchild, particularly with role-playing exercises which will give the facilitator an idea of where some specific problem may reside which indicates immediate correction. As of the Third Pass, we had decided long since that we definitely should have a Parenting course in our standard curriculum, although it is open to debate whether such instruction should be offered in primary school or secondary school or both.

Question 542 (continued)

What should happen when it is discovered that a parent or other responsible party has attempted to force a child to write with her unpreferred hand?

Added in Third Pass (July 2020): Lesson which was suggested in Session 253 about lefthandedness being okay may actually end up in the Grade 2 curriculum, if we continue to teach basic writing in current Grade 1, and if we redefine current Kindergarten to be the new Grade 1 as recommended later in Section III-C. For this reason, we will position that discussion ahead of this one in the final packaging.

Question 385 (continued)

Are there any additional mechanisms or incentives which we can concoct to allow or encourage governments to regulate spending?

Chapter Two of Stephanie Kelton's book "The Deficit Myth" is where the Moderator began to have some real problems in terms of challenging some sacred paradigms.

First of these was on p.43, where she asserts that "the government's budget isn't supposed to balance." Here is where we began to disagree, or at least question. We have some collective real resources, whether we are a Village or a Nation or a World.

Instead of all people holding and trading all property as individuals with nothing ever getting done for the community, we agree to pitch in some combination of our collective resources as contributions to the team which performs various public services for us, and maybe also some more for redistribution to different sectors if your community is into that sort of thing. In any case, we should be contributing this season only what the team needs this season, and maybe a modest reserve against adverse agricultural conditions, but otherwise people get to keep and trade and use their private resources. If the team wants to do more than that now, then they should extract more resources from the rest of us now while we have them, instead of letting us use our resources but promise to pay later when we may not have them, which is what happens [doesn't it?] with deficit spending in government.

Question 373 (continued)

Given that many goods (particularly food items) are consumed shortly after production, and also given that a large part of the economy comprises human services which cost nothing other than time to provide, shall the total credit amount be a fixed figure, or shall it fluctuate with population, or shall it fluctuate with the total amount of material wealth currently in existence, or shall some other means be used to determine it?

Our second big problem with Chapter Two of Kelton's book occurred on p.46, where she pointed out that "economists worry because when there's little or no inflation, it's usually considered a reflection of weakness in the broader economy." I don't give a flip-flop what economists consider or worry about. I want my Dollar to have the same purchasing power 30 years from now as of today, so that I can measure my income growth in real terms, so that we can be confident about buying annuities and other long-term financial instruments, so that we are not misleading ourselves with a higher stock index or minimum wage or GDP or other economic indicator, and other reasons. Produce more Goods if you are eager for more Dollars, but keep it sustainable and don't overtax the Earth. [We still believe this in Third Pass.]

Kelton corroborated on p.47 the Hailstones model of economic cycles of Recession until bottom-out, then Recovery until hitting full employment, then Inflation triggering a pullback of production. But, nothing here seemed to require a permanently-changing Dollar value. [Added in Third Pass: If anything, this model would seem to recommend a stable Dollar, because in all this cycling it's easier to hit a stationary target than a moving one.]

Milton Friedman was referenced on p.48 as championing "the economic doctrine of monetarism" in the 1970's, paraphrased by Kelton as "If prices weren't stable, it was because the central bank was trying to force the economy to create too many jobs by allowing the money supply to increase too rapidly." That certainly sounded correct to us, and we guessed that we were going to hear why it actually is not.

Question 443 (continued)

How do we solve the problem of unemployment in America?

Our third big problem with Chapter Two of Kelton's book occurred on pp.48-49, where she further described the Friedman model as theorizing that a certain "natural rate of unemployment" "is basically impossible to eliminate". Here is where the Moderator begins to diverge from Friedman and all similar, because they all seem to

be hung up on the paradigm that a laborer either has a 40-hour-per-week job or else is completely unemployed, and then we track what percentage are completely unemployed, instead of recognizing that aggregate workload may rise and fall over the course of the economic cycle, or trend over time, and that it should still always be shared with the entire workforce approximately evenly, such that individual hours per week may go up and down over time, but everybody will always have a job.

Question 373 (continued)

Given that many goods (particularly food items) are consumed shortly after production, and also given that a large part of the economy comprises human services which cost nothing other than time to provide, shall the total credit amount be a fixed figure, or shall it fluctuate with population, or shall it fluctuate with the total amount of material wealth currently in existence, or shall some other means be used to determine it?

Footnote #7 to Chapter Two of Kelton's book (referenced on p.49) further described the Friedman approach, that "the money supply (M) should be permitted to grow only as fast as the real economy (Y); that way, prices (P) would remain stable given ... the assumption of constant income velocity of money." Again, this would have been (and was) my intuitive impression, back to as a kid reading COINage Magazine and other sources, which showed (sometimes in cartoon form) that Dollars must be balanced against Goods in order to keep things stable.

Question 379.1 (continued)

How does the Federal Reserve system currently operate, in comparison with the model described above?

According to p.49 of Kelton: "The central bank is treated as independent in the sense that it gets to ... decide for itself what maximum employment means." Good if so. We were glad that somebody in our reading was finally coming up with a definition, even if it must change over time.

Question 443 (continued)

How do we solve the problem of unemployment in America?

The above note for Question 379.1 is also relevant for this Question, which previously looked at the fact that Hailstones had given a very fuzzy definition of 'full employment', so we repeat the note here for future sorting, viz.:

According to p.49 of Kelton: "The central bank is treated as independent in the sense that it gets to ... decide for itself what maximum employment means." Good if so. We were glad that somebody in our reading was finally coming up with a definition, even if it must change over time.

Kelton embellished this definition on p.55, viz.: "For [the Fed], maximum employment is defined as the level of unemployment it believes is necessary to hit its inflation target."

Our fourth big problem with Chapter Two of Kelton's book occurred on p.57, where it was asserted that "the best [that central banks] can do to promote employment is to

try to establish financial conditions that will give rise to more borrowing and spending.” We are finding just the opposite, that we want to get away from a debt-based society, in which workers may never get the opportunity to earn enough to repay all their borrowing, and in which bankers and other lenders make out like bandits while performing little or no actual productive work.

Question 377 (continued)

Shall banks be owned and operated by a governmental entity, or by private interests?

Although we had found in Session 205 that we should continue to allow individuals and corporations and governments to carry debt, by the time that we got to reading Chapter Two of Kelton’s book in July 2020 we had begun to feel pretty strongly that we generally should shift away from being a debt-based society. For, as we have by now articulated for Answer 443, and as may eventually need to be extruded for a separate Question, workers in a debt-based society may never get the opportunity to earn enough to repay all their borrowing, whereas bankers and other lenders make out like bandits while performing little or no actual productive work.

We thus were pleased to read the note on Kelton’s p.59: “MMT recommends a shift away from current reliance on central banks to deliver on the twin goals of full employment and price stability.” We’re for that.

Question 383 (continued)

But, what about the economic theory which has it that continued government spending is good, to stimulate the economy?

On her p.60, Kelton referenced 1940’s economist Abba P. Lerner as advocating the philosophy which we saw in Hailstones, that government spending should be tied to private spending such that the total would “maintain prosperity by holding the economy at full potential”. We continued in July 2020 to non-dig this approach.

Question 385 (continued)

Are there any additional mechanisms or incentives which we can concoct to allow or encourage governments to regulate spending?

According to p.61 of Kelton, Lerner also postulated that it is “perfectly responsible” for governments to deficit-spend “As long as any resulting deficits didn’t push inflation higher”. We did concur as of July 2020 that controlling inflation is more important than balancing the budget, if for any reason we cannot achieve both.

Question 562 (continued)

Since public education is essentially a state-run monopoly, and not subject to all of the normal free-market elements which determine appropriate wage levels, how shall we make sure that teachers are adequately compensated?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: As a result of our previous finding (to adjust teacher compensation according to student performance), even though free-market competition may not exist so much between Education and the other sectors

of our economy, yet we can still make sure that competition happens internally, so that all teachers are motivated by their wallets as well as their hearts to provide high-quality education to all their students. Then, when we know that all present teachers are actively trying their best to deliver, the State Legislatures will be in a much better position to evaluate whether the aggregate funding of teacher salaries is high enough to attract the best available performers.

Question 572 (continued)

Is there any benefit to segregating students by chronological age?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: Besides, when the kids become adults and begin professional work, they often will need to work alongside employees of different chronological ages, and sometimes they'll even have bosses who are significantly younger than they are. Best therefore to get used to that reality as part of the general process of Education, and learn that important lesson: Different people (both kids and adults) have different talents and aptitudes, and may be able to accelerate in certain areas while they may need some more time and assistance in others. The earlier that we teach that lesson to all our kids, and the more often that we reinforce it throughout their educational careers, the less of a problem that we will be likely to encounter with any kids feeling uncomfortable over the chronological ages of any of their classmates.

Question 579 (continued)

What criteria should be used to determine when individuals may begin working: age, education, or both?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: Certain employers may wish to impose additional requirements for their employees, such as graduation from secondary school (which we imagine that most young people will be earning between Age 13 and Age 16), if they feel that a broader grounding in different subjects will help them to do their jobs better and to be eligible for growth within those companies.

Question 584 (continued)

What is the optimum number of classes to be held in primary school in an ordinary day? How long should they last? Should either the number or length of classes depend at all upon grade level? Any suggestions for what time to begin and/or conclude the standard school day?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: For most students at most times of the year, we are generally looking at a schoolday lasting from 8:30 in the morning to 3:30 in the afternoon. That's 7 hours of schooltime per day, 5 days per week, 12 weeks per term, 3 terms per year, and 8 years per primary-school program, for a total of 1,260 school hours per year, and 10,080 hours for the entire primary-school curriculum. We did not intend for the total number of primary-school hours to be so close to such a round number, but as long as it happens to turn out that way, everybody may as well be clear starting out that we are looking at an average of 10,000 hours being budgeted to provide your child with her basic primary education, and now you know it.

Question 585 (continued)

What shall we designate as the 6 or 7 main disciplines to be taught in primary school in the modern environment?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: Arrangement derived above means 50 minutes per class, 6 classes per day, 5 days per week, 12 weeks per term, 3 terms per year, and 8 years per primary-school program, for a total of 7,200 hours of actual classtime. That breaks down to 1,200 hours for each track, or 150 hours in each subject each year, or 50 hours in each subject each term. Hopefully, these figures will help you to construct your lesson plans, according to the further factors presented in Section III-C.

Question 589 (continued)

What facts and/or skills and/or values will we want to teach in each of the subjects in each of the disciplines at the primary level, and how much time do we expect the teaching to take under ordinary conditions?

Science - Biology - added sometime before or during Third Pass

They need to know enough about Bacteria to know that they exist naturally inside everyone's mouth, and can interact with food sugars to produce a destructive acid unless the sugars are first cleaned out of the mouth by brushing.

Also added sometime before or during Third Pass: While there certainly are some facts and skills and values which we can probably all agree ought to be possessed by all American adults as requirements for voting and generally communing peacefully and productively within our society, there also may be some room for variation when it comes to certain other facts and skills and values. Perhaps we therefore should simply confine this Question to certain elements which we want to make sure are included by all school districts, and then allow States and/or localities to modify the basic curriculum according to their different projections of which elements ought to have the highest priorities. Then, we can see which approaches tend to work better than which others, in terms of test scores or college placements or professional salaries or any other measure which anyone may wish to prescribe.

Besides, although Answer 585 projected 1,200 hours being devoted to each subject track, that figure may possibly turn out to be only an average. We may end up not requiring 1,200 hours to teach everything which we want in the Art track, whereas we might need more than 1,200 hours in order to teach everything which we want in Civics. Further, any time breakdown which we might calculate now might need to be changed down the road as we modify our delivery systems. We therefore probably would not be able to make those kinds of projections reliably here in our 'virtual laboratory', and probably instead should be devolving the challenge to States and localities to determine on an ongoing basis through experimentation and experience.

Question 71 (continued)

Who should be permitted to register to vote?

While cleaning up the notes in the Third Pass (July 2020) from Session 264, we observed that our reconciliation of requirements for voter registration may not have

included the finding which we almost certainly reached at some point in our deliberation, that a testing requirement should serve in place of a primary-school diploma, so that we may be able to attract some even younger voters, as well as those older individuals who for some reason have not been able to complete the entire primary-school curriculum by the normal chronological age.

Question 589.2

What subjects might/should be included in the standard secondary-school curriculum for the foreseeable future?

Observed in the Third Pass (July 2020) that we had written a note in Session 265, reading: "If not already listed, list sample subjects for secondary school" The note was assigned number 589.2, which did not appear when we searched this report as it had been compiled up to this point, so we treated it at this time as a new exercise.

Our approach here is predicated upon the conclusions previously established, that 'primary school' (typically for Ages 5 to 13) is intended to cover the basic facts and skills and values which we expect every adult American citizen to possess, and that 'secondary school' (typically for Ages 13 to 16) is intended to provide a sampling of supplemental knowledge in a wide variety of different subjects, both to provide a generally more well-rounded education for those citizens who have higher-than-primary aspirations in life, and to provide glimpses into different specific subjects which the student may end up wanting to pursue further as professions or hobbies.

We are making a few other assumptions here, which may have been established in previous Answers (though not immediately recalling so as of the Third Pass), and which we are officially establishing here if they were not, to be rolled out as separate Questions later as applicable.

First assumption is that we are not requiring each student to pass -- or even take -- every course in the secondary-school curriculum in order to graduate. We recognize that some courses will require certain physical or mental talents which some students simply do not possess; in such cases, it would be a drag for the student and a drudge for the teacher to make the student sit through the course anyway. We also recognize that selecting a certain number of courses out of the full curriculum range works toward the principal purpose of secondary school, which is to help the student to determine what paths she wants to follow in life. Instead, all graduates must have passed enough courses in the curriculum to show that they have a sufficiently well-rounded general education to be eligible for higher stations in life.

Second assumption is that it may not be necessary for the student to have displayed competence in a given course in order to pass it. He may not have made the desired score on the final exam, but if it can be compellingly demonstrated that he diligently studied, truly tried, then that may yet be sufficient. For, one of the key goals which we are trying to achieve with secondary school is to expose the student to a wide variety of different subjects, and the exposure may be happening even if the student flunks the exam. Also, another key goal of secondary school is help the student to narrow down his life choices, and a failed final helps with that process too. This is what we might use a 'D' grade for, to show that the student does not have enough lasting knowledge in that course to be reliable as a source of information or employment, but that he at least had enough exposure to it to contribute toward a well-rounded educational experience. Students would get an 'F' who don't even try.

Third assumption is that a given course may not need to take up an entire trimester or semester or school year. It may be that some courses would require only a portion of a term, and then could be piggybacked with similar short courses to complete the student's annual calendar. This would greatly increase the range of course options which we can make available to the student. Downside is that a given school might not have enough teachers on their full-time staff to present all such courses adequately, but if this happens then they may be able to arrange with neighboring schools for a 'regional teacher' to rotate a given course among different schools, same as how we recommended for student counseling in Answer 569.

That all said, here is a freeform alpha listing of the 112 courses which we came up with in early July 2020, to be supplemented as needed over time, any of which can be divided into multiple levels (I, II, III) according to current needs and resources:

Accounting, Acting, Agriculture, Algebra, American Literature, Anthropology, Archaeology, Architecture, Astronomy, Auditing, Auto Mechanics, Band, Baseball, Basketball, Biology, Business, Calculus, Calligraphy, Carpentry, Chemistry, Child Care, Chinese, Cinematography, Climatology, Computer Science, Cooking, Cosmetology, Counseling, Criminology, Cryptography, Culture, Current Events, Dancing, Designing, Drafting, Drawing, Drivers Ed, Drivers Training, Economics, Education, Electronics, Engineering, English Lit, Environmental Science, Ethics, Firefighting, Fishing, Football, French, Geography, Geology, Geometry, German, Grammar, Gymnastics, Horticulture, Insurance, Italian, Japanese, Journalism, Law, Literary Composition, Machinery, Management, Marketing, Masonry, Medicine, Meteorology, Military Science, Musical Composition, Navigation, Nursing, Oceanography, Painting, Paleontology, Parenting, Personal Defense, Personal Finance, Philosophy, Photography, Physics, Piano, Poetry, Political Science, Pottery, Psychology, Public Relations, Real Estate, Relationships, Religion, Russian, Sailing, Sculpting, Singing, Soccer, Sociology, Spanish, Speech, Stagecraft, Statistics, Stenography, Telecommunications, Textiles, Track & Field, Trigonometry, Typing, Vocabulary, Woodworking, World History, Wrestling, Zoology [amended later]

Seems to us that any student who takes 60% of these courses, and applies herself diligently to them, can be truthfully said to possess a sufficiently well-rounded background to be eligible for advanced employment and other life opportunities, and probably will come away with a pretty good idea of where she wants to progress further in life, and so should be eligible for graduation from secondary school.

We are recommending that the following courses *not* be included in the standard secondary-school curriculum, as being either too dangerous or too possibly-silly: Astrology, Ballooning, Boxing, Diving, Flying, Parapsychology, Scientology, Skiing, Skydiving, Speedboating, Surfing

Question 589 (continued)

What facts and/or skills and/or values will we want to teach in each of the subjects in each of the disciplines at the primary level, and how much time do we expect the teaching to take under ordinary conditions?

Added in Third Pass (July 2020): Alternative approach to student participation in group puzzle-solving is to accept partial answers from any student who has not recently participated, so that they will be 'safe' for a while, until everyone in the

class has produced an advancement in the puzzle, and then you start the cycle again as needed. This way, there is a bit less pressure on the students, who can come forward only when they feel comfortable, instead of being put on the spot at any moment by random selection.

Question 594 (continued)

Should public schools provide lunch and/or snacks to the student population for free, or for a price, or not at all?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: When determining what general price levels are appropriate for providing the fancier foods to students, we are suggesting that a good datasource is the relative numbers of students going for the different food varieties, which you can tell very easily by just looking at how long the lines are. If all the kids are going for the fancy stuff, and nobody is going for the cheaper (and often healthier) options, then the prices for the fancy stuff probably are too low. Conversely, if all the kids are going for the cheap stuff, making it a waste for the school to provide the fancier options at all, then the prices for the fancier options probably are too high. When the consumer numbers are approximately even between the cheaper options and fancier options (understanding that some students may want to switch off during the course of the week), the price levels probably are close to appropriate.

Question 598 (continued)

Whatever prohibitive laws we end up still having after going through the list, shall we be prepared to allow exceptions on the claim of 'freedom of religion'?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: Contrary to what some people may think, the First Amendment does not state that people can do anything that they want and claim that such actions are protected forms of religious expression. What the First Amendment actually says about religion is this:

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;..."

What this tells us is that there is to be no official State religion adopted by Congress, and that Congress shall not enact any laws which specifically prohibit religious expression. This provision does not prohibit Congress (or the governments of States and Localities) from enacting other laws which generally protect the people from various dangers. If you violate any of those general laws, then you must be subject to the same remedial responses as any other guilty party, even if you believe that the actions were religious in nature, or if you don't believe it but you are trying to pretend so in order to escape penalty.

Question 601.5

To what extent (if any) should we respect the privacy of individuals?

While reviewing our writeups in the Third Pass (July 2020), we came across a certain note handwritten into our 'black book' of preliminary ideas. Note asked whether we wanted to include 'anything about protecting privacy that [was] not addressed ... anywhere else'. We searched around at this time, and did not immediately locate

anything in our previous findings as to a general Right to Privacy, other than specific mentions as to medical and religious privacy.

We therefore decided to take up the topic afresh at this time with a new Question, although the number and language probably will need to be changed later on, so that we can more easily evaluate the matter in the context of individual rights.

Seemed to us at this time that in order to address this Question properly we must first consider whether an individual has any 'right to privacy' at all, and if so whether that right is a 'natural' or 'civil' right.

It further seemed to us that the Right to Privacy is probably not a 'natural right', not merely because we did not include it in our list of six natural rights in Answer 7, but for two independent reasons: First, the Right to Privacy does not seem to exist throughout Nature, if it exists anywhere at all. Critters both from within your colony and from outside can often see where you're going and what you're doing, so unless you can secrete yourself through camouflage (and even then you usually cannot do very much because you often must remain completely still until the predator passes) you generally do not get to keep any secrets from the outside world.

Second, within the context of Humans, we have seen in history (and in some fiction, including Orwell's classic *1984* and the TV series *The Prisoner*) that different societies have chosen different levels of individual privacy and state surveillance. Even within modern America, individual privacy took a big hit with the passage of the Patriot Act after the terrorist attacks of 11-Sep-2001, and we never went back. Why should we? If we have the technology to spy on all our citizens (including the phone numbers that they call, the Internet sites that they look up, the products that they buy, the books that they check out of any remaining physical libraries, etc.), and if the Earth has managed to keep spinning as we do so, then what would prompt us to turn off some of those technologies in order to allow citizens to do more in secret?

With different levels of privacy possible, both among different societies and even over time within a single society like America, it appears that Privacy is a 'civil right' if it is a right at all, meaning (to paraphrase Answer 6.3 slightly) that it is granted by a given civil society on an optional basis.

If we are agreed that far, then the Question reduces to what level of privacy (if any) we want to observe going forward within America, and within any other Nations which may like to mirror some of the institutions and values which America once represented to the outside world. For this, we rely heavily on our Answer 38, which established that we generally 'want to stick with the basic ideals of maximum personal freedoms'. Let other Nations which want to maintain Fascist or Communist or other authoritarian systems try things their own way, and see how it works out for them. By contrast, we want America to stand out, to be different, to have its own 'brand', to be the one place in the World where people can go if they are getting hassled in any way in their home countries, and where people can enjoy Liberty.

If we do want to maintain Liberty within America, then it follows (doesn't it?) that people generally may observe their peaceful personal pursuits not only without any actual hindrance by The State, but also without the fear of hindrance. If we even suspect that Big Brother is watching us with their hidden cameras, and listening to us with their hidden microphones, then we may feel the need to restrict or hide our actions, meaning that we do not have real Liberty.

We therefore feel that -- at least for America -- we generally should respect people's privacy, because it would be a pretty lousy place if we did not.

But, you may counter, if anyone is allowed to do anything without any government oversight, then terrorists and other evil people will be able to buy and do all kinds of evil things, and we would be leaving ourselves open and vulnerable. This is not far wrong. Even if we do once adopt and implement all the improvements proposed in this Project, the reality is that America has managed to piss off enough other Nations (especially in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East) that we may yet remain a terrorist target for some years to come, so we still need a level of defense against that threat.

We therefore need to balance these two objectives somehow. Our proposed solution is to allow individuals a civil Right to Privacy, unless and until any such individual effectively waives that right by committing some sufficiently harmful or threatening act. Mind you, it is not sufficient that the individual in question possesses a certain surname or facial appearance or national origin or other such passive characteristic. It also is not sufficient to take away someone's Right to Privacy permanently just because he jaywalked or narrowly exceeded the posted speed limit. He must have done something really bad, as duly determined in a court of law, such that the Judge in the case assesses that a temporary or permanent suspension of Privacy rights is indicated for the public protection, with any such suspension being subject to Appeal.

That all said, we yet can see some specific exceptions, where state surveillance can happen without any real threat to Liberty. One is in the TV shows that we watch, where we established elsewhere that real-time monitoring would help us far better than a handwritten log to determine which shows and which moments are the most popular, but that viewers should be allowed to 'opt in' to such participation. Another is in the products which we buy, for we have heard some individual citizens complain about the government knowing their individual buying habits, but for this we counter that -- unless you're trying to buy AR-15's or some other dangerous weapons over the Internet -- we generally don't care what you as an individual buy, but (as we also have established elsewhere) we do care about the country's aggregate spending habits so that we know better where to emphasize our agriculture and industry.

Question 604 (continued)

If one of the parties in a sex-for-money 'specific performance' contract is bound under a pre-existing marriage contract prohibiting such activity with a third party, then may he/she bear a civil liability to the other party of the previous contract?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: Further to our previous finding, if the terms of the previous marriage contract are ambiguous, and if the defendant can make a compelling case in court that he thought that he was remaining within the terms of his marriage contract even while engaging in sex with a prostitute, then maybe he can be shielded from having to pay any civil damages. In many ordinary cases, however, this would be a pretty hard sell, and so a civil liability for violating the previous contract can often be expected.

But, you might argue, why should any civil liabilities be payable to the spouse? The jerk husband may have cheated, but the wife endured no physical trauma from the encounter, in fact she wasn't even there, and she can still do everything afterward that she was physically and legally able to do before, and therefore did not sustain

any 'injury' under our definition. Answer is, because she actually did sustain an 'injury', because one of the things that she was able to do before was to enjoy the affection of her husband, and she also might have been able to conceive a child by him. If his sexual energies are directed elsewhere, then this lessens the wife's ability to become pregnant or simply to enjoy her husband's sexual company. Same goes for a male 'cheatee' except for the pregnancy part. So yes, the spouse who gets cheated on may have damages coming if her marriage contract clearly prohibited such activities with a third party, whether the third party was a sex worker or not.

Question 503.5

Must married partners remain monogamous?

Observed while reviewing our Answer 604 for the Third Pass (July 2020) that we had never really established any paradigm as to whether or not married partners must confine their sexual activities to one another. Can't believe that we dropped that ball too, but that's part of what these multiple Passes are all about, to find the holes.

Notwithstanding any Bible passages or Church rules or Social customs to the contrary, we contend that married partners generally get to establish any terms that they wish for their contract, provided as always that no other persons are harmed or threatened against their will. Under our definition of Marriage according to Answer 500, the partners may "live together in a committed emotional or sexual bond" while still allowing sex with other individuals, if no expectations are violated in the process.

We can accept monogamy as a default for married couples, on the following grounds: If someone agrees to "live together in a committed emotional or sexual bond" with a second party, it's probably safe to guess that he has had his fill of 'wolfing around' and that he is ready to settle down to a more ordered lifestyle. More specifically, it probably is also safe to guess that he is ready to confine himself sexually to one partner. Most guys are not interested in getting married if they are still interested in dating. Okay therefore to expect monogamy as a default condition of marriage, at least when only two partners are involved.

Anyone who wishes to create an 'open marriage' had best make sure that you select a partner who is eager or at least willing to abide in that sort of environment. If she does not consent, then your engaging in a one-sided 'open marriage' without her knowledge is equivalent to cheating on her, a bad thing. It sometimes also happens that couples who start out in a 'closed marriage' agree later on to 'open things up' more, which again is fine as long as all partners know and agree.

Question 609.9

Should there be a social or legal prohibition on tattoos, either generally or for a particular gender identity?

Added sometime after Session 271:

We say No. While the author of this document is not personally a fan (seems like an article of clothing which you can never take off, can be distracting when you are trying to enjoy some intimate time with a partner), yet Tattoos should be a matter of personal choice.

Question 610 (continued)

Shall there continue to be such a thing as 'indecent exposure', either in person or over photographic media?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: For frontyard nudity on private property, we suppose that it's best to go with local preference and local ordinance. Maybe certain residential 'zones' can allow it while others in the same city do not, so that residents have a choice. We generally want to be sensitive to people's hangups, especially those which resulted from years of social programming which is not always so easy to overwrite, but at the same time we want to encourage people to let go of certain hangups if possible, especially all those regarding a neighbor's actions which do not harm or threaten any other persons. Therefore okay temporarily to still have some localities where non-threatening frontyard nudity is disallowed, but we are asking everybody to psych yourselves up for gradually evolving away from such excessive restrictions, particularly if you still wish to refer to America as being the 'Land of Liberty'.

Question 612.5 (continued)

Should it be considered acceptable for consenting adults to have sex in public, provided that they clean up and generally do not present a health hazard?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: Notwithstanding the laws which some communities have enacted against having sex in a parked car, we feel that such laws should be dropped from the books, and that they should be non-enforced until the community legislatures get around to completing the formal removal. Most of the activity in a parked car is shielded from the view of children, as long as they are not walking directly past the participants, for whom the vehicle may sometimes be the only convenient venue currently available. Other spots should likewise be okay which may technically be public but which are still shielded from most passersby.

Question 633.4 (continued)

What decorum (if any) should players and spectators exhibit when an anthem is played before a professional sports event?

It occurred to us in the Third Pass (July 2020) that the easier solution to the problem of special pre-game formations is to have your community anthem before the starting players are asked to step on the field for introductions. [Later: Good!]

Question 636 (continued)

Do we want to continue to allow professional teams to somehow take turns designating which collegiate/amateur athletes they will consider for hiring, or shall we allow the young players to make their own choices about where they will try out?

Observed in July 2020 during the Third Pass compilation that our 'black book' had a handwritten note which we apparently did not address during the debate panels. It reads as follows: "On the other hand, may be good to have system whereby players pick their own teams for which to try out: If they want to get picked, they may choose to try out for a team where fewer other players are trying out; if not knowing immediately, all teams can publish lists of numbers of wannabes already signed up

for tryouts, so that individual player can gauge his own abilities *vis-a-vis* other signups, and guess how good a chance he has to get picked on that team before the deadline." Note added later reads: "But, how would we determine the order in which players would make these selections, randomly?"

In that this paragraph asks an open-ended question which the SIG may not ever have resolved, and because we now have partial-Answer elements scattered throughout this Third Pass document, which we did not wish to search at this time for whether the point expressed had ever been addressed substantively with different language, we decided at this time to leave this element to be gathered together with any others developed by this panel or any other, to be harmonized into a collective response for the Fourth Pass. [Actually addressed later in Third Pass.]

Question 661.4 (continued)

Any other suggestions to make on punctuation generally?

Decided in July 2020 while entering the term *vis-a-vis* in the A636 element immediately preceding that we do not want to take the time anymore to insert the special accent character in that word or 'fiancee' or any other, not in this doc and not anywhere, not just because it may translate into a wingding during transmission as discussed earlier, but also because during the typing process it's a big pain which we don't need for a word that is still unambiguous without the mark. We therefore made that our personal policy and SIG policy effective this date. We therefore will make sure that this Question precedes any Answer which contains any such term.

One possible exception is the French-imported word *résumé*, meaning a summary listing of your employment qualifications, because without the accent marks it looks like the English word *resume*, meaning to start again. We could continue to use the marks for this word alone, and for any others which may suffer the same problem, but we don't like that option, for we want to be done with those marks in the English language. We could make a point of always italicizing it for a foreign expression, but that formatting also sometimes gets lost during electronic transmission, so we had better not rely on it. We could leave it all alone, and hope that the context of the sentence will make it clear which meaning we intend to use; that's a maybe, and some folks already do that, but it can sometimes look pretty dumb and silly to use a word which doesn't look as though it belongs there. Best solution may be to come up with some different word which unambiguously means the same thing (the Latin expression *curriculum vitae* is too long and cumbersome, and its abbreviation "CV" is too underdescriptive, so not recommending either), but which does not require any special marking or special character.

Question 643.1 (continued)

Do we have continuing problems with any particular Team names, logos, colors, or other similar attributes?

We had previously recommended that the Washington Redskins change their team name, and behold they announced in July 2020 that they finally were doing so. See? Change is possible. Adjustments were still recommended for the Indians [also changed later], Braves, Chiefs, and Angels.

Question 378 (continued)

Shall banks have sole authority to issue loans, or shall other private firms do it, shall government do it, or some combination?

Kelton refers on p.82 to Footnote 4 of Chapter Three, that "In June 2018, foreign governments and investors held \$6.2 trillion or about one-third of the US government bonds."

Question 367 (continued)

But, where does the local dropoff center of the chosen network get the power to issue credit?

Kelton's p.87 contains a deficient example of how government financing works. Premise is "Suppose ... that the government spends \$100 into the economy." I already don't know what she means: Are they spending \$100 out of a bank account containing previous tax revenue, or are they writing checks using new money? In other words, is the Money Supply remaining the same following these transactions, or is it growing by \$100?

Question 379.1 (continued)

How does the Federal Reserve system currently operate, in comparison with the model described above?

Chapter Three of Kelton contains much discussion about interest rates, on who sets them and how and for what, but this is of little interest to our group, because we wish that government didn't sell bonds at all.

Question 385 (continued)

Are there any additional mechanisms or incentives which we can concoct to allow or encourage governments to regulate spending?

According to Kelton's p.96: "As long as they're not excessive, [fiscal] deficits can help to maintain a good economy by supporting incomes, sales, and profits." Again echoing Hailstones, but as of this reading in July 2020 we still were not convinced.

Question 660 (continued)

With three or more items in a series, should a comma be placed before the last item?

Although we had some misgivings about some of the premises appearing in the Kelton book, yet we do love her use (on p.96 and elsewhere) of the Oxford Comma.

Question 410 (continued)

The current national debt is enormous: Even if we do balance the budget, should we take on the chore to pay down the debt until it is eliminated?

Referring on p.96 to a chart of six depressions allegedly following debt reductions, Kelton concluded "Each and every time the government substantially reduced the

national debt, the economy fell into depression.” Three concerns here: One is that the chart may not have been telling the whole story; two is that even if it is then the depressions may have been (at least partially) associated with the normal economic cycles discussed earlier; three is that these all dated from before elimination of our gold standard and so may not be applicable in our current fiat environment.

Kelton also noted on p.97 that “White House officials ... were worried about [debt elimination] wiping out the entire US Treasury market.” We are not nearly so concerned; we still would see the government neither a borrower nor a lender be.

Question 378 (continued)

Shall banks have sole authority to issue loans, or shall other private firms do it, shall government do it, or some combination?

Kelton alleged on p.100: “What matters is not the size of the debt (or who holds it) but whether we can look back with pride, knowing that our stockpile of Treasuries exists because of the many (mostly) positive interventions that were taken on behalf of our democracy.” That was still a stretch for us on first reading in July 2020, and a rather jingoistic one at that, and we were still not sold.

Question 409 (continued)

Is there any constructive purpose to maintaining an ongoing national debt, or similar debt for smaller governmental jurisdictions?

According to Kelton’s p.100: “The national debt is nothing like household debt, so using the word *debt* just leads to confusion and unnecessary angst. ... It's time to come up with a new name for these interest-bearing dollars.” We guess that we’re for that, if we really don't want to track these amounts as government liabilities any further, even though we still owe (don't we?) the principal and some interest to the bondholders.

Question 643.1 (continued)

Do we have continuing problems with any particular Team names, logos, colors, or other similar attributes?

Arizona Cardinals

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: We’re okay with this one. We realize that there is a large Cardinal population in the Missouri area, which is why the St. Louis Cardinals were a franchise for many years in the NFL before they moved to Arizona, and why the St. Louis Cardinals still are a franchise in Major League Baseball. We might therefore ordinarily suggest that the team adopt some other mascot if they were going to move to a whole different area of the Nation.

In this particular instance, however, that logo of theirs is way too handsome and cool to give up, so we can let the mismatch go.

Besides, now that the Rams have retrolocated to Los Angeles, maybe someday the NFL Cardinals will retrolocate to St. Louis, and then everybody can be happy.

Question 643.42

When should the Pro Bowl of football be played?

Added before or during Third Pass: As an exception to our general statement about Football ending in January, we feel that it is okay and recommended to have the Pro Bowl two weeks after the Super Bowl, to allow everyone participating in both games a week to recover from the first contest and another week to work out with the All-Pro teams before the second contest, which is better than doing it on the Sunday before the Super Bowl, because then the participating teams feel that they should not risk their players in an exhibition contest before the Big Game, so we do not get to see the best players play, which is what the Pro Bowl is supposed to be about.

Question 644 (continued)

Shall we allow/encourage or prohibit/discourage the 'designated hitter' rule?

Added in the Third Pass (July 2020) that MLB was making noises at the time about allowing/requiring the National League to observe the DH Rule, ostensibly because the season was being shortened as a result of the Corona Virus. It was still looking less likely that any portion of a season could be played at all, so it might have been academic at that point. If they ever do play again at all, then we still do not see why either a virus or a shortened season would have anything to do with the DH Rule being observed in the National League. If they insist on going forward with such a change, then our SIG recommends that we boycott the National League, and all of Baseball, until they restore conditions to their rightful conditions. #NoDHinNL

Question 644.1 (continued)

Should we allow umpires to be influenced by 'instant replay'?

Added before or during Third Pass: It does slow things down somewhat while the footage is being reviewed, but many incorrect calls have been getting overturned routinely, and so it seems to be doing much more good for the game than harm.

Question 646.4a

Shall we continue to encourage Thursday-night Football?

Added sometime after Session 278: We don't think so. Making an exception for Thanksgiving is one thing, but doing it on a routine basis takes away from the special nature of Sunday being Professional Football Day (although Monday night is still okay, as kind of like 'dessert' or just the 'extra-late game'). Besides, it mucks up the player's exercise and practice schedules, and we have heard and read several of them complaining about it during press interviews in recent years.

Question 378 (continued)

Shall banks have sole authority to issue loans, or shall other private firms do it, shall government do it, or some combination?

As part of the weekly bookclub series described earlier, we listened in July 2020 to a 1-hour video by author Stephanie Kelton addressing additional questions from

Chapters One and Two. She repeated here that the US Government could stop issuing interest-bearing securities if it politically wanted to.

Question 643.2 (continued)

To what extent shall we either allow/encourage or prohibit/discourage the use of 'performance-enhancing drugs' (PED's) in professional or amateur Sports?

During the Third Pass (July 2020) we modified the 3rd sentence of the 9th paragraph of our writeup from Session 279: In addition to whatever other steps we are taking to spot-check baseball hitters for PED's, we might add a step that all players should be tested automatically and on same day whenever they hit a home run exceeding a certain length. For, someone who is actually guilty of PED use probably is not going to hit homers of only 375 feet, so we probably don't need to deal with them. Conversely, anyone who hits a ball much longer may be suspect in this modern technological age, even (or especially?) if he hits only a few homers in the season, so may be better to rely on length instead of (or in addition to) volume. We might start with a nice round number of 450 feet to trigger automatic checking, and then adjust the threshold up if we are getting all negatives and can therefore reduce the number of invasive and inconvenient checks, or adjust it down if we are getting numerous positives and observing that the problem is more widespread. Either way, clean players have little to lose with the new system, but the guilty ones might have a motivation to avoid hitting the really big homer so that they can come in under the testing threshold. Not only would this capture more guilty players, but we might also retroshift the strategy from Fenceball back to regular Baseball, in which case the big swatters might have less motivation to continue using any PED's at all, so this would be another one of those solutions which fix two problems at once.

Question 658.3 (continued)

What other words/expressions in our vocabulary do we feel should be either modified or at least clarified?

Different from/than

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: People sometimes say that A "is different than" B, but that is not correct, or if it is then it shouldn't be.

We never say that A "differs than" B, but instead always say that A "**differs from**" B. If for any reason we want to expand the expression with another inflection of the infinitive 'differ', then we should not be changing the preposition which it customarily takes. Thus, we should be saying that A "**is different from**" B, not "different than".

Question 659.3

How do we feel about the fact that Americans have words spelled like 'honor' and 'neighbor', but Britons and Canadians use 'honour' and 'neighbour' instead?

Added sometime before or during Third Pass: A shorter and simpler system is better both for our own convenience and space efficiency, and also for making our language easier for people to learn.

We do not presume to suggest that the Britons and Canadians do anything differently from their current practice, although they might find it net-easier to drop the superfluous 'u' from these words which end with '-or' in America. In any case, it's easier for us to stick with the shorter spellings, so that is what we shall do.

Question 661.4

Any other suggestions to make on punctuation generally?

Added sometime after Session 281: Some words (like 'cliché' and 'façade') are imported into English from other languages with their original accent marks intact, and it can sometimes present a problem. It's not so bad if you're simply writing something out by hand, but any letter containing what they call a 'diacritical mark' or 'accent mark' is viewed as a separate character by the computer. We have done better with computer technology in recent years, but some of the more basic programs may still be unable to recognize and reproduce those special characters. Even those which do may still have trouble translating them to other programs, such as when you copy a passage into an e-mail, and the recipient sees some random wingding instead of the intended special character.

Sure, we could make our technology even better than it already is, so that all communication protocols will correctly identify and reproduce all these special characters, but we feel that we can solve the problem much more easily.

The easier fix is if we simply ignore all such letter markings in all our English-language correspondence. We have already accomplished this with the 'dieresis' on words like 'coöperate' and 'reëntry', designating a second consecutive vowel which is to be pronounced in a separate syllable. Society found that we can easily recognize these words without the extra markings, and so dropped them some time ago. We are asking only to do the same thing with all other such special markings, so that both our computers and our people can deal with smaller alphabets.

Question 666 (continued)

What penalties should apply to an individual guilty of unfair discrimination?

While reviewing our writings for the Third Pass (July 2020), we found a handwritten note in the 'black book' which we apparently had never addressed, being the possibility of reparations being levied on past slaveholders. Took it up at this time.

This obviously is a very divisive issue, and there are potent arguments on both sides.

Argument against reparations is that all past slaves and slaveholders are now long dead, and that it is unfair for descendants who never were held as slaves to receive reparations from other descendants who never owned slaves. Moderator confesses to having previously accepted this line of reasoning, the accountant in me I guess.

Argument for reparations is that many descendants of slaveowners are continuing to benefit from the wealth and social status of their ancestors, and that descendants of slaves are continuing to suffer widespread social and economic privation.

Whereas we previously felt that newer generations should not suffer punishment for the sins of their forefathers, yet we now must place a lot of faith in this latter

argument. It is not enough to say "we're very sorry" that our ancestors held your ancestors as slaves, not when so much wealth and power are still concentrated among white bankers and white politicians and white landlords, and not when 'people of color' (PoC's) are still struggling to find decent jobs and getting harassed by various 'Karens' on video for allegedly being inferior and needing (even in the case of Indigenous Americans) to 'go back where they came from'.

Just as colonists who put in enough years of effort developing their colonies accumulate an ownership interest which eventually outweighs that of the original imperial investors (see the "Civics - History - American" passage from Answer 589, which will be rolled out later as a separate Question), and just as workers have justly acquired numerous new rights and privileges through the intercession of various labor unions, so too did the generations of American slaves earn a lasting stake in America's economic prosperity. It can be argued compellingly that we have not paid them off for the entirety of their stake, and that the slave descendants are still suffering as a result, while the slaveholder descendants are still partying in Orlando.

Actually, it turns out that slavery reparations will largely take care of themselves as a result of the Wealth Tax which we introduced in Answer 425. Most of the richer people paying any portion of that tax are White, and many of the poorer people benefitting from the redistribution are Black. As long as we are going down that road anyway, it might not be that much of a further stretch to impose if still needed an added 'surtax' upon individuals or businesses having clearly-documented roots in human slavery, to be redistributed specifically among slave descendants. We can work out the actuarial details after we get the main concepts publicly adopted.

Question 168.7

What qualifications should the head of the Department of Science possess?

Added in July 2020 from personal reflection: Just as we typically require a Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree for the head of the Department of Justice, it seems logical to us that we should require a Ph.D. degree in some Science discipline for anyone seeking to head the Science Department. Without it, the incumbent could easily be a political lackey who denies Science and hurts the Environment and sacrifices our People if ordered or otherwise influenced by a corrupt and evil President. Chances of our ever again having a corrupt and evil President go way down if we implement the improvements of the Election Process which are proposed in Section I-C, but it still could happen someday, so we must be ready.

Question 675.6 (continued)

Where should the 'first' Time Zone of the Western Hemisphere begin and end?

Added in July 2020 from personal reflection during Third Pass: Another argument for measuring Time Zones exactly from the Prime Meridian (instead of from 7.5 degrees to the side) is that it makes things funny when crossing the International Date Line. Instead of changing your clock every 15 degrees of longitudinal travel as normal, you need to change the hour when you are 7.5 degrees away from the Date Line, change the day when you cross the Date Line, and then change the hour again another 7.5 degrees later. Is it really worth it?

On the other hand, the whole idea of crossing the Date Line is that you are setting your clock ahead or behind by a full day. If we make the Time Zone boundary coincident with the Date Line, then you would be changing your clock only 23 hours instead of 24, so if the timing is right you could actually retain the same date.

Even if that were not the case, though, we feel for now that we should not get so hung up on what people need to do with their clocks when actually crossing the Date Line, because it will all get sorted out whenever they reach their actual travel destinations, and meanwhile there's a good chance that they probably will be sleeping when their ship or airplane crosses the Date Line.

In sum, while we would not be strenuously opposed to changing things up if there ever is a strong enough demand from the People, for the present we are continuing to hold with the present arrangement, again if only to keep Western Europe together in a single Time Zone, and secondarily not to cut off New England.

Question 368 (continued)

How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

Our one big problem with Chapter Four of Kelton, and our fifth overall, was in the formula on p.106 representing Wynne Godley's 'bucket' model, where government financial balance plus non-government financial balance equals zero. That may be true for just the Liability portion, but does not account for the gross Assets which people and governments and banks and other entities hold. It also does not appear to allow for the fractional-reserve banking which adds dollars to the money supply.

Deficient example appears on pp.106-107, of the Government spending \$100 on new fleet vehicles, and collecting \$90 in taxes to cover it, but not counting the book value of the capital asset which it gets back, nor the value of the human labor needed to create it.

Bucket example is further deficient because on p.107 author Kelton calls the non-government bucket "our bucket", even though a lot of the cash paid out by government goes to banks and bondholders and corporate contractors. Maybe we need a third bucket for the actual middle-class taxpayers.

Question 443 (continued)

How do we solve the problem of unemployment in America?

Kelton asserted on p.108 that "good overall conditions in our economy" comprise "full employment and price stability". We agree with the second but not the first. We want everyone to be employed, but not necessarily at full capacity, if doing so will exhaust our real resources, wear out our equipment, and burn out our bodies.

Question 358 (continued)

What are the features of a 'good' or 'healthy' economy?

Repeating under a separate Q heading for cross-reference: Kelton asserted on p.108 that "good overall conditions in our economy" comprise "full employment and price stability", and apparently only those. We agree with the second but not the first.

We want everyone to be employed, but not necessarily at full capacity, if doing so will exhaust our real resources, wear out our equipment, and burn out our bodies.

Question 368 (continued)

How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

Kelton asserted on p.111 that "fiscal surpluses rip financial wealth away from the rest of us, leaving us with less purchasing power to support the spending that keeps our economy going". This again highlights some fundamental concerns, including the latter that we need increased spending instead of conserving and recycling, and the former that we pay for a fiscal surplus. We have a certain amount of real resources in the country, some of which have been allocated to the public pool. We also have a certain number of dollars, which represent shares of our combined assets. If the Fed is spending less than it is taking in, then we do not need to pay in as much in taxes, and that is what increases our purchasing power as individuals.

Question 485 (continued)

Any other suggestions as to probate, inheritance tax, or anything else on personal/family economics?

Kelton asserted on p.113 that "Savers make those funds available to borrowers, but only at a price." Phooey, my savings are not available for anyone to borrow. I put them there so that they will be able for my use as a reserve if my income goes down or I have unforeseen expenses, as a down-payment on capital goods and/or retirement base if possible, and as a legacy if there is anything leftover. In any case, I do not care (anymore?) to risk letting any of it out of my sight.

Question 377 (continued)

Shall banks be owned and operated by a governmental entity, or by private interests?

Kelton asserted on p.113 that an excess of personal saving means that "some companies are left without financing for their projects". Maybe they should have saved up more, too.

Question 379.1 (continued)

How does the Federal Reserve system currently operate, in comparison with the model described above?

Big discussion in Chapter Four of Kelton on how US Treasuries operate, but we still don't see why we need them at all, and the author admitted that we don't need them, so seems superfluous, may help investors but not the public.

Question 368 (continued)

How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

Kelton asserted on p.126 that "Uncle Sam's deficits feed dollars into our bucket." This is the central thesis of her Chapter Four, but to us it still seems oversimplified,

because they aren't real dollars, they are future dollars, and again the money is going to the investors not the taxpayers.

Question 589.2

What subjects might/should be included in the standard secondary-school curriculum for the foreseeable future?

Added later in July 2020 for inclusion where local resources permit: Farsi, Government, Hebrew [more added later]

Question 704.4

To what extent (if at all) should we require television networks and stations to devote portions of their broadcast to public-service purposes?

Added during the Third Pass, because we referenced the topic in Subsection I-C-3 but never formally treated it. We do feel now as then that it is an appropriate measure if not abused. If we do not require a certain amount of time for public uses as directed by government, then at some point government will require a state-run channel to reach the public, and that way lies madness. Also, we generally have a happier society when even a free and independent press is willing to partner with the government for the public good. We also feel now as then that one particular use of such time should be to broadcast a certain minimum number of debates for various public offices. Also probably okay to require (or at least request) airtime for Presidential speeches, again if the privilege does not get abused, and certainly good to use it for emergency notifications.

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This completed the 'First Pass of the Third Pass'. We had by now reviewed this entire document, and now had bolded all initial question introductions. However, only some of the session numbers were referenced within the text, some of the original notes still had not gotten transcribed at all, and only some subsequent additions were placed in their actual chronological context. We therefore started again from the beginning to get that all cleaned up, and then we would have a final polishing, and then that would about wrap up the Third Pass. [Or, so we thought.]

Question 0.8 (continued)

Do we want to be happy?

Although this particular Question may seem trivially obvious, it may not actually be. Numerous filmed works (including the 1956 feature *It Conquered The World*, the "A Nice Place to Visit" episode of the original *Twilight Zone* series, and the "This Side of Paradise" episode of original *Star Trek*) make the case that a society where all our needs are freely provided is actually net-unhealthy for humans, and that a certain amount of stress and struggling is necessary in order for us to be truly happy.

Beyond this, the author of this present document was personally acquainted with someone who seemed to be happy only when he was complaining about something. When he finally reached a stage of life when all his needs were satisfied, he was so net-distressed over the condition that he violently took his own life.

However, we have faith that this incident was an outlier, and we observe that the vast majority of individuals who meet their financial goals enjoy very happy retirements, while those individuals who acquired their fortunes through inheritance also don't seem to be complaining very loudly.

It does therefore seem to be a nearly-universal phenomenon that humans (and probably other critters as well) have certain conditions which they will tend to preserve if they are already present, and which they will attempt to achieve if not. However, those various 'goals' seem to vary widely among different individuals.

Question 10 (continued)

Which rights require that the individual accept certain responsibilities, as well?

Generalizing from Answer 7, it appears that all natural rights contain some natural restrictions, in that none of us gets to enjoy any of those natural benefits forever.

Added sometime during or before July 2020: The existence of natural rights does not imply a responsibility on the part of all observers to intervene during an alleged violation. Protection against violation of natural rights is something which creatures can perform voluntarily, either out of simple compassion and/or in hopes that our own rights will likewise be recognized and protected when needed, but intervention is not morally required in every particular instance (if it ever is), particularly when a risk exposure is involved.

Question 345.1

Specifically, how do/should we feel about the 'three strikes' rule?

Added in July 2020 from personal reflection: We previously opposed the idea (where the punishment goes way up if one is convicted of a given offense for a third time), partly because it was never clearly explained to all of us, but mostly because it seemed like an arbitrary and overly-generic approach to sentencing which may overlook various extenuating circumstances, and also largely because it seemed to be a cutesy spinoff of a familiar sports reference, sacrificing fair and accurate sentencing for Madison Avenue branding. However, upon further reflection, it makes more sense: First offense may be because you legitimately didn't know the rule or how to keep yourself from breaking it. Second offense may be because you thought that you could try one more time to get away with it, if you thought that the previous incident was a fluke. But, by the third offense, you clearly know that it's wrong, and that we are eager and able to stop you, so all that we have left is to apply deterrence by imposing increasingly-stringent penalties.

Question 458.8 (continued)

Do we actually have any problems with Trade?

Opener to Chapter Five of Stephanie Kelton's book "The Deficit Myth" says it all about Trade, that what many people call a 'trade deficit' is actually a 'stuff surplus'. We've been saying that all along, and the economists which we previously researched all agreed.

Question 368 (continued)

How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

It was good that in her p.131 Kelton introduced a third bucket into the previous model, which we had felt was woefully deficient. Previous non-government bucket was now separated into domestic and foreign entities.

However, it appeared from p.132 that the bucket model still seemed to focus on liabilities, even as it pretended to focus on overall "financial balance", repeating Godley's line that "Everything must come from somewhere, and then go somewhere." This principle does not apply to a bucket which creates wealth for itself, by applying human labor to create more food or more products than the Earth would have produced on its own.

Question 460.5 (continued)

What about the argument that enacting/maintaining tariffs would help protect American jobs, particularly in the automobile industry?

Kelton acknowledges on p.136 that the 'stuff surplus' does imply loss of American jobs to foreign manufacturers, but seeks to remedy that problem with a 'jobs guarantee' of public work at decent wages. We guess if there's no other way, but we still want us to do be doing the important stuff whether or not we have a trade deficit or budget deficit, and we still want us to avoid doing unnecessary stuff again regardless of any deficits.

Question 458.8 (continued)

Do we actually have any problems with Trade?

Kelton tells the story on p.139 that we have read and written ourselves, that what we now call a 'trade deficit' stems from the pre-1971 'gold standard', where nations were eager to maintain gold reserves in order to back up their currencies, and so were reluctant to send gold to other nations in exchange for finished products.

Question 369 (continued)

Shall one aggregate credit amount be determined for the entire world, or shall separate amounts be determined for individual nations, or some third thing?

According to p.141 of Kelton, "Nearly 90 percent of currency trading involves the US dollar."

She goes on to describe on p.144 that "The global hunger for dollars is largely why we've been running a trade deficit nonstop for decades. In this regard, the United States does sit in a powerful position compared to the rest of the world--for both good and ill." This may raise a separate economic Question of whether we want to be the dominating currency in an increasingly-global economy, with the probable Answer that we appear to want to have that amount of influence over the rest of the World, and that the rest of the World (according to the preceding pages) is heavily dependent upon the US Dollar, so it would appear to be a lose-lose to break up that paradigm now. However, it also would appear to make it even more important that

we settle upon a fixed meaning for what a Dollar is. If it is no longer to represent a certain amount of gold or other physical commodity, then it can be tied to a certain amount of purchasing power, such as how much it costs in retail to feed one person for one day, as we have described in Answer 368.

Question 370 (continued)

Given that we will not attempt to carry a single currency for the entire world, should there still be such a thing as an International Monetary Fund, and if so then why?

Good basic discussion appears on Kelton's p.146 *et seq.*, of the problems faced by developing countries who need to export raw materials and cheap labor in order to import industrial equipment and retail products.

Specifically, she records on p.148 that "Back when Bretton Woods was still in effect [referring to the agreement formed shortly after World War II, where all other currencies were tied to the US Dollar, which in turn was tied to the price of gold], the system established a host of international organizations, including the IMF, the World Bank, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (now the World Trade Organization or WTO). Within the Bretton Woods system, these organizations focused on actively governing the conditions of trade among countries. This involved a variety of tools, like tariffs and capital controls, aimed at keeping trade flows stable and national economies at least somewhat insulated from one another." This goes to our existing Question on the IMF.

Kelton alleges on p.150 that "...international Western elites have told poorer countries they should /not/ indulge in development strategies that focus on job creation, energy independence, or any goals aside from specialized production. In effect, it's a recommendation that keeps developing countries forever 'developing,' never achieving the kind of advanced, diversified economies of the modern West." That figures, effectively keeping them as colonists and slaves.

Question 461 (continued)

Having concluded that tariffs are bad, can we agree on the best way to manage trade on a day-to-day basis? Does it need to be coordinated entirely through the Fed, or can States and Localities administer, or can private 'distribution centers' get involved without government oversight?

Kelton asserts on p.150 that "To reform the global trade order, the US must take the largest strides in making it happen." We were not entirely convinced as of July 2020 that this is a valid assertion. Even if it is valid, we are not sure that it ought to be so, for we previously concluded that Trade generally should be conducted by corporations within a one-world economic structure.

Question 460.5 (continued)

What about the argument that enacting/maintaining tariffs would help protect American jobs, particularly in the automobile industry?

Kelton expands her previous statement on p.152, finding that "Ultimately, ... we'll need something like a global job guarantee." We were not so sure about that as of July 2020, but found that it's a possibility to consider, if not in our current generation

then maybe later, although we do want poverty cured everywhere, and people everywhere [at least generally] need to be contributing something to our global economy in order to deserve whatever benefits they may derive from it.

Question 368 (continued)

How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

According to Kelton's p.155, "Foreign investors should be limited in the ways they can invest in domestic assets and in their ability to sell out and create downward pressure on the exchange rate market."

Question 461 (continued)

Having concluded that tariffs are bad, can we agree on the best way to manage trade on a day-to-day basis? Does it need to be coordinated entirely through the Fed, or can States and Localities administer, or can private 'distribution centers' get involved without government oversight?

More in line with our previous thinking was Kelton's quote on p.155: "We share only one planet. Our current trade system is not up to the task of meeting the social and economic challenges of global poverty and joblessness. Meanwhile, we need a global all-hands-on-deck effort to deal with climate change. Trade peace isn't simply something we can achieve; it's something we can't afford not to achieve."

Question 666 (continued)

What penalties should apply to an individual guilty of unfair discrimination?

Fadhel Kaboub was referenced in the text of Kelton's Chapter Five, and appeared at the NYT book-club session on 7/30/2020, where he made the supplemental case for colonial reparations, and generally transferring 2 trillion per year from Global North back to Global South in order to create equity and sustainable independence.

Question 447.1

Do we have any recommendations as to the provision of salaries or benefits to workers?

Added in August 2020 in reaction to the latest annual filing: It has long bugged us that employers who provide 401(k) benefits to their employees* [*For the unfamiliar, these are retirement plans organized under Section 401(k) of the Internal Revenue Code, allowing employees to contribute portions of their income to individual savings accounts on a tax-deferred basis, with employers often adding some amount of matching to those funds as an incentive in the labor market.] have been required to file a Form 5500 to the Department of Labor every year. Filing process has been long and messy, and has required the provision of certain information (such as the year-end asset balances for each group plan) which only the third-party administrator has.

If the third-party administrators who handle payroll can file all the necessary forms for government (such as the Form 941 which has been required on a quarterly basis within the State of California for reporting the payment of wages), then it seems to

us that they can/should do so for all other types of employee benefits, whether it is retirement plans or healthcare or anything else.

To rephrase, businesses should not need to file forms for 401(k) or payroll tax (even while in an income-tax environment) or anything else, but should instead be allowed to focus on their businesses, while the third-party administrators manage their specialties, which include any government reporting of salaries and benefits.

Question 707.6

Do we have any other recommendations re Advertising?

Added in August 2020 from personal reflection: It has long bugged us that the banner advertisements which appear on our Internet screens sometimes carry the faces of individuals who have clearly been selected for display because they would generally be considered as highly unattractive, often contorted into a posture of screaming or some other stressed condition. The advertisers must know that I am not going to be sufficiently attracted to the ad to click on it, even if I happen to be wanting to refinance my mortgage or whatever else they want me to do.

Why do they do it, then? Clue may be found in the fact that when we refresh the screen in order to bring up some different ad, the same ad often reappears, even though I clearly am trying to get rid of it. Is it therefore a form of coercion or even extortion? We will keep showing you this ugly picture until you once click on it?

If so, then we probably cannot legally require them to show only beautiful people in their advertising, not only because it might be excessively restrictive in a semi-free society, but primarily because it would be very difficult to come up with objective standards as to who is 'beautiful' or 'ugly' for purposes of legal enforcement. We therefore must apply the same coercion or extortion back upon them: We will not click on your ugly ads, we will not purchase whatever product or service you are advertising, and if you persist with that ugly tactic then we will turn our ad blockers back on until you stop. At some point, it is easier on our lives to deal with the occasional reminder that we still have the ad blocker on, than to suffer by being forced to look at any ugliness, however we may individually make that assessment.

But, this brings up a larger issue, that of the fact that they apparently are expecting us to 'click through' some portion of their banner advertising in order to reach the websites where we can directly purchase their products or services, or at least find out more about them. This might not be so much of a problem by itself, might even be a net-good thing, except for the fact that clicking on these ads sometimes creates a problem for us. We suddenly can get besieged by numerous pop-up ads for related products and services, and we can contract viruses which mess up our computers permanently. This seems to happen more often when the ads feature beautiful and sexy models, instead of the screaming rednecks discussed above.

For that, we recommend that advertisers pursue one of two strategic courses: Either measure the success of your advertising by increased sales revenue instead of click-through counts, or else make sure that our clicking on your ads will never produce any kind of pop-ups or viruses or any other such problems on our computers.

Also added in August 2020 from recent observation: For the preceding few years, the outfield side of the pitcher's mound in baseball featured a team logo which could

be seen by the TV camera positioned in center field to observe each pitch, and we had peace, more or less. Actually helped us when we were surfing among multiple games to know which ballpark we were observing at any particular moment. During the present virus-shortened season, we observed the team logos being replaced by corporate logos. Is this just a temporary measure because advertisers have a harder time recouping their overhead without the usual full season of exposure from other ads in the stadium which are seen by fans actually coming to the ballpark? Or, has it been intended right off that this will be the new 'thing'? Or, is it one of those situations (like the Patriot Act) which starts out as being only temporary (at least in all the official pronouncements), and then becomes permanent afterward because nobody is willing or able to change it back?

This has not been universally observed as a problem. We recently asked around, and heard the counterargument that advertisers basically get to display wherever they practically can, because they are the ones putting up the funds to allow us to watch that athletic contest on TV. If they can't conduct their exposure by large billboards posted in filled arenas, then we must allow them whatever they can get through televising games played in empty arenas. Maybe, but we still are seeing other exposures during these games, including when the camera pans around the empty stadium between pitches, and we get to see some of the original billboards, along with the extra-large logos on the tarps which they use to cover large sections of the empty seating, along with the promos which are still announced on the air and the commercials which still run between innings.

While we therefore may not yet have consensus that this is a problem to be solved, we yet are hoping that advertisers can be 'persuaded' (whatever that means in this context) to keep their advertising off of the actual field of play. At least a portion of the viewing audience considers this to be 'sacred ground', and that even under pandemic conditions you still have ample other opportunities to plug your products.

Question 394 (continued)

Should the Government continue to manage state-run Health Insurance programs?

Chapter Six of Stephanie Kelton's book "The Deficit Myth" focused on 'entitlement' programs such as Social Security and Medicare. She notes on p.162 that "In 1965, a broader vision for health care began to take shape with the passage of Medicare for the elderly and disabled and Medicaid for lower-income people."

Question 405 (continued)

How shall we deal with the Social Security program?

In discussing the fact that payroll contributions are not really needed in order to build a Social Security Trust Fund, Kelton notes on p.163 that "Roosevelt ... wanted people to see that they were paying into [Social Security] so that they would feel entitled to the benefits they'd eventually receive." But, if Social Security can keep paying out of an empty or negative Trust Fund, then do we really need the FICA payroll deductions at all, or do we still want it for purposes of optics, or can we safely dump it? It's better than the straight Income Tax, but it still creates the perception that we are penalizing workers for working, making them pay for their own retirement when perhaps it is the wealthy who really need to be providing us with

pensions for our lifetimes of service which resulted in you wealthy people becoming or remaining wealthy. [Discussed further later.]

Kelton suggests on p.167 that "Means testing [that is, "reducing or eliminating benefits for people with higher incomes"] would undermine support by turning [Social Security] into a welfare program that provides benefits only to a subset of the population deemed "needy" of public assistance." Well, isn't it? She mentioned earlier in the paragraph that "FDR established Social Security as a universal program [which] helped to sustain broad public support", but it still makes intuitive sense in a semicapitalistic economy to redistribute only to those in need, not 'robbing from the rich to give to the rich'.

Question 393 (continued)

To what extent should we continue to grant consumption-based entitlements?

According to p.168 of Kelton: "Social Security's programs and Medicare's Hospital Insurance are considered fiscally unsustainable because the government isn't committed to making payments, while Medicare Parts B and D get a clean bill of health because Congress has granted the legal authority to make the payments no matter what else happens."

Question 406 (continued)

But, can people be trusted to plan effectively for their own retirement?

According to p.170 of Kelton: "Corporations around the country have cut costs by reducing pension benefits." Being less able to rely on employers to provide pension benefits shifts the burden upon workers to make their own retirement arrangements, and thus makes it harder and less likely that they will do so adequately on their own.

Question 393 (continued)

To what extent should we continue to grant consumption-based entitlements?

According to p.179 of Kelton: "The anti-entitlement crowd loves to congratulate itself on its courage. But there's nothing brave about attacking programs for the elderly, disabled, and poor, especially when there are rich campaign donors and billionaire-funded think tanks willing to reward them for their "bravery.""

She goes on to assert on p.180 that "Funding ever more generous entitlement programs could push the economy beyond its real resource constraint (i.e., full employment), fueling inflation, which is harmful to all." We agree with that!

She makes an especially good note on p.183: "When we think about entitlements, we should be thinking about how to make sure our economy will remain productive enough to supply the material goods--health care and consumption goods--that it will take to provide for the needs of future beneficiaries." And also, "When we talk about whether entitlements are *sustainable*, we need to think in terms of our economy's *real* productive capacity."

Summing up on p.189: "That's the way the debate should work--by making real-world decisions based on real-world resources." Definitely with you on that.

Question 380 (continued)

To recapitulate, what is the basic form of our preferred economic structure?

By the time that we reached the end of Chapter Six in August 2020, we found that we were generally agreeing with most of what is in Kelton's book, at least in terms of not needing to be hung up so much on deficits and debt as long as we (1) control inflation, and (2) provide useful and valuable work for everyone, and (3) provide everyone with the shares of our real resources which they deserve. Coming around that it's not so much the aggregate money supply which drives inflation, but rather the amount of money in active circulation, such that we need to adjust the velocity formula according to the portion of aggregate credit dollars which are tucked away into long-term savings.

Question 405 (continued)

How shall we deal with the Social Security program?

We participated in August 2020 in the sixth of eight webinars on the eight chapters of Kelton's book "The Deficit Myth", and we found that we agreed with the argument by the panelist and attendees that means testing should be kept out of Social Security, on grounds that it's easier to apply benefits for all and then to tax back from the wealthy to offset. [However, as we discuss further down, ease of administration is not the only factor to consider.]

Question 272.7 (continued)

What votes shall be required to overturn an ordinary Executive action?

Added in August 2020 from personal reflection that the simple majority needed to override a unilateral presidential action can be of any house in the legislature, since all houses should consent if any new action is to proceed, so it does not need to be of the house which typically covers that type of action.

Question 419.5 (continued)

How can we make sure that businesses report sales figures accurately for tax purposes?

As an addendum to the note which we recorded earlier as to p.297 of the Hailstones book, we figured in August 2020 that if online orders can be listed as base rate going to vendor + tax rate going to recipient's governments, then maybe in-store pricing can be displayed the same way for consistency. Then again, it is only the online engines which will need to access every locality's current tax rate, whereas in-store retailers need track only their local tax rates. And, the previous argument continues to be relevant, that an in-store shopper might need to do a certain amount of in-store math in order to make sure that he is within budget or securing a good value (whereas the online shopper usually will have less math to do and more time to do it in), and again we make that math process easier if the shopper does not need to worry about sales taxes on top of everything else.

Question 119 (continued)

What role -- if any -- should the Internet play in voting, either now or in the future?

Added in August 2020, possibly to be rolled out into separate Q: What if you find that your vote is not listed on the government website, or is listed incorrectly? Then, initiate a hearing before a judge of competent authority and show online how the official record is incorrect. Judge can then suspend election pending investigation.

Question 2.9

Where should we start?

Added in August 2020 that we should establish as a numbered Answer, or at least part of one, that we should go back to some basic point of universal agreement, so that we can see where and why we first begin to disagree. Then, when we ask why we are here and take the expected laugh break, we then can reference the previous Answer as the first reason of why we ask the present Question.

We already had the following language as an introduction to Section I-A, directly before introducing Question 3: "In order to be able later to achieve consensus on any complex or controversial topic, we needed to start with a point of common ground, on which everyone could be expected to agree. To do this, we found it necessary to go all the way back to some very basic philosophical questions..." We are now simply rolling this finding into a separate numbered Answer.

Question 649.2 (continued)

Which types of words should be allowed, and which disallowed?

Stephanie Kelton referenced a 'webster' dictionary and misused 'literally' in the same sentence on p.192 of her book "The Deficit Myth", contrary to our recommendations.

Question 654 (continued)

In what sorts of circumstances is the use of the word 'literally' appropriate?

Stephanie Kelton referenced a 'webster' dictionary and misused 'literally' in the same sentence on p.192 of her book "The Deficit Myth", contrary to our recommendations.

Question 38 (continued)

What sort of nation do we want to have in America?

Stephanie Kelton wrote on p.193: "Fortunately, Senator Sanders [and Kelton] both believed that, rather than a nation of rugged and atomized [what does that mean??] individualists, Americans shared an interconnected destiny; that we all rise or fall together as a people [and used] that spirit as our shared foundation..." Two problems here are that the general phrase can apply to any nation or community, and that America has been an exception on many levels with the current standard national model. It IS a country of rugged individualists, so trying to nationalize them can be either difficult or dangerous, as the 2017-2021 period showed.

Question 662 (continued)

Is it better for footnotes to be placed at the bottom of the page, or at the end of the chapter, or at the end of the book/article?

Kelton claimed on p.198 that "These deaths [referring to a reported "rise in mortality among middle-aged white Americans since 1999 [largely from] suicide, drugs, and alcoholism"] were driven primarily by economic anxiety." There are 87 footnotes in Chapter Seven, but not for the one statement which I wanted to be able to trace.

Question 445 (continued)

Many people's lives revolve principally around their work, and they derive enormous satisfaction and personal fulfillment out of doing a job that takes eight or more hours per day: If the average workday is reduced, then won't there be a negative impact on such people?

May need to be rolled into a new Question, but in any case Kelton asserts on p.199 (and, we have no reason to disbelieve her here) that "as a group, US workers get little more than one-fourth the vacation time of workers in Britain, France, or Spain." We are curious why a chapter which promotes a jobs guarantee is so concerned about workers having more time off. Is that the goal? To give everybody jobs with lots of vacation time? Maybe we work more in America because we have more natural resources to work with, and/or because we have more customers with more money who can buy the services which we internally provide. Increasing time off may not be a good way of stimulating our economic growth and spending.

Question 460.5 (continued)

What about the argument that enacting/maintaining tariffs would help protect American jobs, particularly in the automobile industry?

Kelton asserts on p.199: "There's no reason every job ... can't be a good job, with dignified pay, hours, security, and benefits." Well, there's one possible reason, that introducing so many new dollars into the middle-class economy could spur inflation, which we all don't want. There does need to be some level of restraint somewhere, so we need to find a way to achieve the good goal without the adverse side effects.

Question 418 (continued)

Of these basic types, which is the fairest method of taxation, or is it appropriate for more than one type to be levied at once by a single jurisdiction?

Kelton asserts on p.208: "At the K-12 level, most funding for schools comes from local property taxes." If true, this would mean that our model of having property taxes pay for education would constitute a change, not that we expected otherwise.

Question 368 (continued)

How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

Kelton on her p.213 cited a Gowan/Cooper study which defined "burdened renters" as those "paying 30 percent of their income or more on rent". This is consistent with

the five-dollar-per-day model which we proposed in June 2019, in which rent typically would cost around 20 percent of one's take-home pay.

Question 434 (continued)

How shall we deal with the fact that industry is currently using up a tremendous amount of physical resources, such as steel and timber?

Kelton asserts on p.214 that "there's no reason to think American [*sic*] is on the verge of running out of concrete, steel, wood, or metals." We are not so sure about that. At the very least, our timber management is a matter of some question.

Question 242 (continued)

How shall we deal with the problem of homelessness in America?

According to p.214 of Kelton: "In fact, when it comes to housing, we actually have far more empty homes than we have homeless Americans." We seemed to recall seeing this assertion somewhere recently as of August 2020, maybe earlier in this book, maybe on Twitter. In any case, it fortunately is attributed here. And again, if true, it is less of an infrastructural problem and more one of economic distribution. But, in this case, the houses can't move, so as Sam Kinison suggested we need to move the people to where the resources are.

Question 2 (continued)

Should we look only at isolated topics, or should we construct a 'whole agenda' covering everything?

Added in August 2020: According to p.221 of Stephanie Kelton's book "The Deficit Myth": "The economic realm is not separable from the social realm and the political realm." That's what we've been saying all along.

Question 358 (continued)

What are the features of a 'good' or 'healthy' economy?

Kelton went on to cite on p.222: "As of 2016, the wealthiest 10 percent of US households commanded more than 70 percent of all wealth in the country. Meanwhile, the top 1 percent controlled almost 40 percent--a larger share than they've posted at any point since 1929, just before the Great Depression."

Question 385 (continued)

Are there any additional mechanisms or incentives which we can concoct to allow or encourage governments to regulate spending?

Kelton asserts on p.224: "MMT does not take the Robin Hood approach of taxing the rich to give to the poor." Sure has seemed a lot like it, so we are trying to make sure that we do not misquote or misattribute or misinterpret, although it does yet seem to be possible as of our August 2020 reading that MMT actually does take this approach but doesn't know it.

Question 358 (continued)

What are the features of a 'good' or 'healthy' economy?

Kelton p.225: "To restore a more balanced distribution of wealth and income, we need policies to prevent a tiny handful of people at the very top from taking so much more than their fair share in the first place." We've been saying that right along too.

In another citation of our current rich-poor disparity, Kelton notes on p.227 that "Twenty-five people have as much wealth as 56 percent of the country's population."

Question 380 (continued)

To recapitulate, what is the basic form of our preferred economic structure?

We generally liked Chapter Seven of Kelton's book, on "The Deficits That Matter", namely Good Jobs, Savings, Health-Care, Education, Infrastructure, Climate, and Democracy. Budget deficit and national debt are indeed subordinate to these real-world problems, and we can live with the former if it means that we are solving the latter, although we continue to hope that we can maintain currency stability and generally allow wages and prices to locate and occupy their true relative levels.

Question 460.5 (continued)

What about the argument that enacting/maintaining tariffs would help protect American jobs, particularly in the automobile industry?

In the *NYT* webinar on Chapter Seven, Fadhel Kaboub spoke about a jobs guarantee.

Question 245 (continued)

What services would be included in such 'orientation centers'?

In the *NYT* webinar on Chapter Seven of Kelton's book, Fadhel Kaboub focused on providing the social services which people need in order to be able to show up at 9am for their new jobs, if they have been struggling with addiction or mental illness or other problems with which we can help. He didn't specifically mention our 'help centers' but spoke along similar lines for what the government can do.

Question 405 (continued)

How shall we deal with the Social Security program?

In the *NYT* webinar on Kelton's Chapter Seven, Fadhel Kaboub encouraged dropping FICA deductions by small businesses in order to improve their ability to provide direct employee benefits, but allowed continued taxation of larger businesses.

Question 380 (continued)

To recapitulate, what is the basic form of our preferred economic structure?

In the *NYT* webinar on Kelton's Chapter Seven, panelist Fadhel Kaboub added that we may have an "imagination deficit" in addition to those listed in the chapter, in

terms of what we can do if we give ourselves a blank government check to help our communities however we want.

Question 258.4 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the County agencies listed in Answer 135?

We had spoken before about Animal Regulation generally, and about Service Animals in particular, but we are not finding any notes about dog owners keeping their pets away from innocent pedestrians. Moderator was reminded of this in August 2020 when on one of his Sunday walks which took him down a long mountain road, where he encountered a big unrestrained dog barking in a severely threatening manner, such that he needed to retrace his entire path. Phooey, ya gotta restrain all those animals in a crowded environment!! Do what you will at your farms and ranches.

Question 394 (continued)

Should the Government continue to manage state-run Health Insurance programs?

We attended a webinar in August 2020 on health-care reform, conducted by Carolyn McClanahan, who had been hosting the book club sponsored by the *New York Times* for Stephanie Kelton's book "The Deficit Myth". She had some very interesting and constructive points, as follows:

- nice recap of how healthcare evolved since Truman's time (Ford didn't do much of anything except play golf), even Nixon made some advances
- we currently need to deal with several healthcare systems in America, whereas other countries need to deal with only one or two
- Carolyn described herself as a centrist, who had received hate mail from both sides of the healthcare debate
- she yet now agreed that we should have universal healthcare, and that we should separate healthcare from employment, because it's a big additional burden which would be better for them not to deal with, agreed
- DT had by then promised four times that he would roll out a beautiful healthcare plan within 'two weeks', and of course never did
- high-risk pools tend to be overloaded and underfunded, so maybe we shouldn't be relying on those so much
- all the recent 'executive orders' were unlikely to get effected anytime soon, because they ran only 1-2 pages, and the Executive departments needed to flesh out the extensive details, many of which were going to be subject to legal challenge
- lobbyists negatively influence a lot of potentially-good legislation, nothing new in all this
- drug advertising adds a lot to costs
- Medicare For all (M4A) would improve efficiency but reduce competition
- 9 different M4A plans had been submitted to congress
- we spend 25-30% of costs in overhead, other countries are in 5-10% range
- \$496b spent on insurance and billing costs, about half of which is wasted, we should standardize forms and centralize claims clearance, there also is much overhead wastage in other areas of the process
- we need price transparency and better legislation in order to prevent doctors and hospitals from charging whatever fees they feel like
- better system would cost about \$350b per year, which is much less than total current wastage, so system would pay for itself

Question 46 (continued)

Given that some functions are devolved to States, what role -- if any -- should Counties and Cities serve in the desired environment?

We objected in the Third Pass (August 2020) to the finding from Session 45 that the adoption or non-adoption by Cities of laws on topics such as "indecent exposure" must not conflict with higher levels. Not only did we later generally adopt a rather libertarian attitude toward specific acts like Nudity and Profanity and even Tobacco, but as a general structural matter we now feel that we should not have higher levels enacting any laws which affect only local levels. To do so would not allow for the fact that different Localities may want to live in different ways, and even the Fed can't be everywhere at once to enforce its policies. Generally best to leave to the judgment of Localities any issues which affect only those Localities. Exception can be made for issues like Slavery or Segregation, where individual rights are being abridged or threatened by local authorities in violation of national policy.

Question 707.6 (continued)

Do we have any other recommendations re Advertising?

Added in August 2020 that online ads should always include a refresh button, so that we can show that we do not like the type currently shown and will never click on it.

Question 53 (continued)

Which of these methods is to be recommended for each type of office?

We objected in the Third Pass (August 2020) to the favorable reception which the panel accorded in Session 46 to the idea of using Peer Panels to recommend candidates for subsequent election or appointment. In retrospect, that seemed too much like a 'party central committee' deciding who gets nominated, an *infamia*.

Question 2.8 (continued)

How do we know anything?

Added in August 2020: Stephanie Kelton made a good general note in her book "The Deficit Myth" which relates not only to the general Question of how we know anything, but also to the specific Question of what makes our group think that we are qualified to treat the matters which are covered in this Outline, although our various participants over the years have had diverse backgrounds and varying levels of formal education. We probably will need to peel this off as an actual Q later.

According to Kelton's p.234: "The problem we have today is that economic policy is often prescribed by people who, despite holding advanced degrees in economics, possess no real understanding of how our monetary system works."

We enthusiastically applaud this observation of hers, her willingness to state it in book form, and its applicability to our entire model: We likewise have observed over the years a lot of degreed 'experts' making statements in their supposed specialties which appear either negligently or deliberately ridiculous. It appears that having a

degree is not a guarantee that one's specialty-oriented statements will necessarily be correct, although we certainly do hope that it at least increases the likelihood.

We also feel in this instance that we can validly infer the converse: Not having a degree is not a guarantee that one's statements will necessarily be incorrect.

For, if there is a Knowledge out there which we are seeking to acquire, and if some people fail to acquire it even through our formal programs of higher education, then perhaps it can be acquired by some other avenue. Perhaps in some instances it therefore might benefit us to listen to those without the formal degrees, because maybe just maybe in some instances they might actually be right.

This goes to a general conclusion which we stated in our new website sometime before this, but which apparently had never been articulated before in this document, so we are doing so now: In general, the validity of any argument is independent of the identity and credentials of the arguer. That is, as long as the Answer is correct, doesn't matter who is stating it. Let your premises be correct, let your reasonings be valid, and we will inexorably accept your conclusions.

Question 357 (continued)

How shall we proceed to devise the optimal production and distribution of valuable resources?

This also may fit best under either another Q in our current list or some new one, but in any case we read in August 2020 the following funny note on Kelton's p.235: "The point is that we run our economy like a six-foot-tall guy who wanders around perpetually hunched over in a house with eight-foot ceilings because someone convinced him that if he tries to stand up tall he'll suffer a massive head trauma."

Question 381 (continued)

Is it better for a larger portion of our collective resources to be devoted to government operations, or for government operations to require the minimum amount of resources; or, does it even matter?

According to p.242 of Kelton: "Somewhere between excessive spending and unwarranted fiscal restraint lies a better economy for all. To build that economy, we need a new plan." This sounds intuitively sensible to us. Ideal lies in the middle.

Question 460.5 (continued)

What about the argument that enacting/maintaining tariffs would help protect American jobs, particularly in the automobile industry?

This also will need to be rolled out into a separate Question unrelated to tariffs. In any case, Kelton makes the following note on pp.243-4: "To better protect our economy--and more importantly, the people, families, and communities in it--MMT recommends the addition of a powerful new automatic stabilizer, known as a federal job guarantee." Again, we like the concept of a jobs guarantee if it can be made to work right, meaning that we are neither issuing 'busy work' nor delaying important public projects, but as of August 2020 we still are not sure that it can, but maybe.

We do concur with Kelton's note on p.254 that there are many people who want to work more than they are, and that there is much work to be done in the public sector, so that we do generally want some way of connecting available workers with available work. However, we may have some hangups about specific details.

Question 1 (continued)

Do we need to review our existing order at all?

Added in August 2020: Stephanie Kelton made a good note on p.260 of her book "The Deficit Myth" which relates not only to the general Question of whether it's worthwhile to examine what we do and how we do it, but also to the specific Question of what we are trying to accomplish with this exercise. Her note reads: "Transformational moments in human history have come about when someone or some group of people were able to imagine a world that the rest of us couldn't see."

That is what we have been up to this whole time. Over the decades before this SIG began its Monday meetings in 1997, the Moderator personally accumulated diverse reform elements into a partial vision of what an ideal modern society would look like. The SIG panelists and correspondents helped tremendously to modify and augment that vision into a model which is broader and deeper than any which we have ever seen. We now hope that this New Thing will transform our society in that direction.

Question 380 (continued)

To recapitulate, what is the basic form of our preferred economic structure?

Kelton sums up her thesis on p.263: "In the United States, where we have an abundance of resources and labor, there is no reason we cannot embark on a policy agenda that results in provisioning our entire population with quality health services, providing each worker with adequate and appropriate advanced education and job training, upgrading our infrastructure to meet the demands of a low-carbon world, and ensuring adequate housing for everyone while redesigning our cities to be clean, beautiful, and nurturing of community spirit." She might indeed be right about that.

Question 69 (continued)

What rules -- if any -- should be imposed on the drawing committees?

Observed in the Third Pass (August 2020) that we apparently never did get around to conducting the research exercise which had been planned back in Session 47, "to carve out X districts in a real-life area (probably So. Calif.), using real Census data". Noted that we should plan to complete this exercise before we finalize the present report, using the 600 delegates now planned for the U.S. House of Representatives, but to hold until closer to the end, so that we can see whether we have any reliable data available from the 2020 Census, the integrity of which was then in some doubt.

Question 220.5 (continued)

Should there be an 'international language', and what should it be if so?

Added in Third Pass (August 2020) that an 'international language' might be helpful for diplomatic and other purposes, and that English has largely assumed that role

(whereas French previously was the *lingua franca*, while Greek and Latin served the role in earlier times), but that English is not as flexible as certain other languages, so a change might be indicated, although we are not offering a specific recommendation at this time. As with most issues involving language, may be best to remain organic.

Question 645.2 (continued)

What can we do about 'pace of play'?

Added in August 2020 from recent observation: In the abbreviated 2020 schedule resulting from early-season lockdowns pursuant to the Corona Virus (COVID), and in consideration of fans not being allowed to attend games in person, Major League Baseball decided that they would go a little more 'Little League', and begin any extra inning with a runner already on second base, being the player who was retired last in the previous inning. We object to this practice on numerous grounds.

First, we see the argument that games were scheduled more densely to help make up for the lockdown period, but players got all that extra rest from the lockdown, and so should be in sufficient condition to play extra innings the normal way.

Second, we hold that Baseball is largely (if not fundamentally) a game of endurance. It is why play has been untimed (unlike Football and Basketball and Hockey and Soccer), and why games are typically extended to an indefinite number of extra innings until a winner is clearly decided, and why seasons have typically been lasting 162 games. Big part of the game is managing your resources to be ready to compete in a game of any length, and to remain competitive all the way to the end of the season. We care less about the standings in April, and more about the standings in September, because those show which teams have endured the best.

Third, all our past statistics and records of Runs Scored and Runs Batted In, on both individual and team levels, have been based on the practice that all extra innings begin with zero runners on base. We feel that it constitutes too much of a change to make it easier to generate Runs and RBI's during extra innings.

Fourth, it makes the players look bad, at a time when there already is widespread resentment over the multi-million-dollar contracts which many players get, while millions of Americans don't know where their next meal is coming from. We are not taking the position that these guys are a bunch of prancing weenies who are too delicate to be bothered with playing the game in the same way that their fathers and grandfathers did, but we can see how some folks might develop that impression.

Fifth, it makes the result more random, almost like tossing a coin. Scoring a Run is a big deal, because unless you're smacking the ball over the fence it requires getting a runner on base as a condition precedent to someone else knocking him in. If a runner is already on base, then scoring becomes too easy, it is not as meaningful, and it doesn't describe as compellingly who actually was the better team that day.

Sixth, it adds to the perception that we need to hurry up and get the games overwith, which to our perception actually mitigates against fan interest. We see all too well how the numerous lengthy pitching changes take away from the experience, but apart from that Baseball is a fun game to watch, and we should be enjoying the journey at least as well as the outcome. 'Bonus Baseball' should be considered as just that, a bonus, not a drudgery which must be endured. When you cut the play

short artificially, you are sending the message that fans are not or should not be interested in seeing the games played in the traditional way. When you send that message, how can you expect fans not to feel that way? Anyone (either player or fan or league official) who is in a hurry to wind things up and move on to the next thing should not be involved with Baseball, which is one of the relatively-few sports where we can just kick back and relax and not need to worry about how much time is left on any clock. Hurrying means Stress, and we want the opposite of that.

Question 40 (continued)

Any reason to change State boundaries as currently defined?

We looked up in August 2020 why the Dakotas were admitted as separate States, when they previously were a single Territory. According to mentalfloss.com, two reasons were (1) that the northern territory was unhappy with the previous capital of Yankton being in the southeastern area so they wanted a separate government (move the capital more to the center, duh), and (2) that partisan lawmakers wanted to increase their representation in the Senate. We don't see these as particularly compelling reasons to keep the Dakotas separate, although neither do we have any strenuous objection if they both want to stay that way, and if it's not severely messing up things for the rest of the country. Thus, we are good with either a 51-State union after the admission of Puerto Rico, or a recombining of Dakota in order to retain the round number of 50 States and the current American Flag.

Question 277.5

What should happen in case of a tie vote?

Added in August 2020: Standard parliamentary procedure according to *Robert's Rules of Order* is that current conditions (the '*status quo*') should continue to exist in any assembly or society, until at least a simple majority is in favor of changing it. It therefore is standard procedure that any motion which receives a tie vote is considered to have failed, because it did not have support of the (50%+1) needed for a simple majority. We therefore do not actually need a 'tiebreaking vote' in the U.S. Senate, or in any other deliberative assembly, public or private.

We therefore recommend to remove the U.S. Vice-President from the previous function of acting as a tiebreaker in the U.S. Senate. That individual is not an elected legislator, and was selected in order to help administer the Executive Branch. Previous function may have resulted partly from giving the Vice-President something constructive to do at least occasionally, because otherwise with the Cabinet members effectively reporting directly to the President, the Vice-President gets to do little other than wait for the President to die. As it is in our model, though, the Vice-President is to be acting as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the Executive Branch, and is to be focused continually on overseeing all the Departments for operational quality and fiscal efficiency, leaving the President freer to focus on policy issues and acting as the Head of State.

There is an argument that the Vice-President should have at least some involvement with the legislative process, since the President has some amount of veto authority over new legislation, and since the Vice-President might need to assume that role someday. This is not a problem, though: We presume that the President is consulting with the Vice-President on any veto under consideration, as with any

other major policy decision, because if he fails to do so then he is cutting out a potentially-significant source of valuable input, risking a lousy decision as a result, and damaging his own legacy by not grooming a successor to follow his policies.

Question 124.4 (continued)

In general, what Voting Method is best for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies?

In case our note from November 2019 was not clear, one big reason why we felt stronger than ever as of the second stage of the Third Pass (August 2020) that the net-approval margin under Method E1 need not surpass any given quantity or percentage in order to count for victory is that we are now allowing onto the ballot only those candidates with the most signatures on their petitions, so we already know that all candidates will be widely known and widely regarded.

Also, in case not previously established, contrary to our note from November 2019, by now we had begun to reference it the method as #YesNoAbstain rather than "Approval With Abstention Option", for being catchier and especially for describing more succinctly what would actually be happening on the ballot.

We also now observe another benefit of #YesNoAbstain, that it will tell you the score of any Civil War before it happens, so candidates will have a better idea of whether they should challenge the election or pursue any further political ambitions at all.

Question 124.6 (continued)

What are the benefits and/or detriments of including a "None Of The Above" (NOTA) option on election ballots?

Contrary to the discussion from Session 67, we see as of the Third Pass (August 2020) that there is a definite benefit in a voter disapproving all candidates on the ballot. It may not change any of the algebra in terms of who achieves the highest net-approval, but it does send a statement that the voter is unhappy with the entire slate. This could end up contributing to a situation where all candidates receive negative approval margins, perhaps significantly negative. The more negative the margins are across the board, the more of a statement we can infer from the voters that they are unhappy with everyone being produced by 'The System', and the more likely it is that someone will soon come forward who is outside of that paradigm.

Question 105.5 (continued)

Should we be having jurisdictions set a fixed number of candidates on each ballot, or instead allow any number of candidates to appear who have fulfilled the signature requirement?

Whereas we were only tempted during the early part of Third Pass to overrule our finding from Session 68, that "the number of signatures acquired by any candidate should not be disclosed until after the deadline for submitting them to the Elections Office", we were convinced to overrule it by the latter part (August 2020). We are now set on the vision of a system where all nominees are listed on the government website in descending order by signatures collected so far, to make it easier for signers to find serious candidates. We have by now added a few further reasons why

this is a good approach: One is that it would improve transparency for the signer to be able to see on screen that the nominee's total increased by one as a result of her signing. Another is that it would constitute a more effective use of the technology, in that we would not simply be replicating the in-person petition experience, but would instead be giving ourselves some real-time information which we did not have before, which might make a bigger selling point for the whole concept. #OpenBallot

Main added reason relates to our original objection to the idea, which was that we wanted "nobody's actions [to be] dictated by anyone else's actions". Upon further reflection, we have come to feel that this factor is more relevant to the actual election than to the petition process. If some people have already voted, and some polling places have already closed, then it is unfair for later voters to use any early results to inform their choices, because the previous voters did not have access to that same information at the time of their voting, and are not able to change their votes after they once become aware of it (at least not as long as we continue to rely on paper ballots instead of an electronic format). In contrast, our vision for an online petition process allows any signer to change her selections up until the moment of final cutoff, which naturally should be the same real-time moment in all time zones. All signers would thus have equal access to all available information.

But, would this yet lead to the problem of 'strategic signing', in which a signer's choices are influenced by the numbers of signatures already collected? It would lead to the phenomenon, but at this stage we are not convinced that it is a problem. To the contrary, we now see it as a potential big benefit: For, when you see that one candidate has 49 million signatures, and that no other candidate has any more than 16 million, you probably are not going to waste one of your N/3 signatures on the leading candidate, even if you actively like her, because you probably will want to try to get as many similar candidates on the ballot as you can, in order to maximize the likelihood that one of them will win. But, if most/all signers think in the same terms (and why shouldn't they? -- we just now brought it to their attention!), then it is unlikely that the other candidate would amass such a huge lead in the first place.

This would mean that the entire petition process would be a close and interesting 'horserace' from beginning to end, because the goal would not be to win but rather to finish in the Top 15 (or whatever other N has been pre-selected as the ballot size for that race). The stronger contenders will continue to gather signatures as other contenders do, because their supporters will want to keep them competitive, meanwhile the 'mediocre jokers' would begin to fall behind and drop out, as they do during the current 'primary season', and the game can be decided largely by whom those nominees endorse as they leave. In this manner, the strongest candidates will be left for ballot access, which is the whole objective of the entire petition process.

Question 16.9 (continued)

How shall we define 'government' for the purpose of this discussion?

Noted during Third Pass (August 2020) that a competing definition of 'government' had been suggested while we were considering Question 3.7 in Session 70, being that a 'government' is any organization which a society creates to fix its own problems. We now object to this definition as being inferior to the one which we proposed in June 2019, because our long history has shown that many governments were imposed upon their societies, not created by them.

Also noting for the record that the renewed Q17 discussion in Session 70 referenced the *American Heritage* definition of 'government' as a body which administers public policy, which definition we found at that time to be consistent with our Session 14 definition of one or more people who make decisions for the rest of society.

Question 328.2 (continued)

Are there any other specifications which we wish to make as to opening statements, introduction of evidence, questioning of witnesses, closing arguments, instruction of the jury on the law, presence of cameras in court, jury deliberation, and/or anything else about the trial proceeding?

Ideated in August 2020 from personal reflection: Maybe we should do away with making a witness swear to tell "the whole truth". Apart from the general issue of swearing to a god in whom the witness may not believe, it is part of our model (and our current environment, in theory) that we should not be required to testify against ourselves, nor be asked any incriminating or embarrassing questions by any interviewer. Besides, even if I am not seeking to conceal anything, you as the attorney who called me as a witness still probably don't want me to tell everything that I know, only the relevant stuff, and sometimes not even all of that.

Question 2.8 (continued)

How do we know anything?

Shortly before September 2020, we discovered an undated black-ink note in the left pocket of the 'black book' about Epistemology, and at this time responded to our undated red-ink note on that page that we should 'apply it to areas of philosophical thought'. There were a few red-ink annotations on the page, suggesting that it must have been written long ago enough that the Wednesday general-public group (which always used red ink) had occasion to reference it sometime back while it was still meeting actively. Regardless of when it was written, we now find that it is relevant for our 'blue' Outline because numerous preachers and politicians and civilian activists and others claim to 'know' that so-and-so was a good President or a lousy President, or that some God wants them to wage war against their neighbors, or that some Race is superior to some other Race, or that Masks will or will not help you to survive during a pandemic, or some other potentially-dangerous assertion. When two or more people claim to 'know' certain propositions which are contrary to one another, then some bad decisions can result, and we can experience some bitter fighting and anger and stress during the decision-making process.

Here is the text of the original essay, whenever it was written:

How do we know anything? Some combination of:
- Direct observation (sensory and/or extra-sensory)
- Communication (tradition, textbooks, church teaching, etc.)
- Logic

[We] will show that each of these is faulty:

- Direct observation can be misleading because we sense only a part of the overall. For many years, people thought the Earth was flat, and that the Sun,

Stars, and other Planets revolved around the Earth. [Also, senses may deceive us, as in case of mirage or optical illusion.]

- Communication is faulty when our conclusions are based on misleading direct observation, or when there is a problem with the verbal [*sic*] or written communication. Further, certain authoritative bodies may be unwilling to recant their position, even in the face of compelling evidence; e.g., the Church only a few years ago acknowledged that they were in error when they took the position that Galileo's theories were incorrect; currently, most people in the Church and elsewhere acknowledge that the Universe is closer to 15 billion years old than 6 thousand years old, but they still will not change their official position, and continue to teach Creationism to their kids and to adult churchgoers. Also, we have to trust that what is written in history books and encyclopedias is truthful and accurate [, though it is possible that the information is untrue, either from mistakes or from willful deception].

- Logic is often our best bet to conclude something with a high degree of confidence. However, logic can still present us with flaws, because it depends on the accuracy of two elements: your initial premises and your reasoning process. In general, if we acknowledge that your premises are correct, and that your reasoning process is sound, then we consider that we have to acknowledge that [your] conclusion is valid, and to be accepted as fact, and that it can be used as a premise to reach other conclusions. However, it's possible for either the premise or the rationale, or both, to be incorrect: It's easy for the premise to be incorrect, if based on faulty observation, faulty communication, or faulty logic; reasoning processes may also be invalid that seem to be valid, as when the argument contains a paradox, or when it makes use of multiple meanings of the same word, or when some other such device is used. Examples: [Ham sandwich is better than perfect happiness in life, because nothing is better than perfect happiness in life, and a ham sandwich is better than nothing. God can't be omnipotent because He can't make a stone so big that He can't lift it.] These are known as 'specious' arguments, meaning that they appear valid and correct on the outside, but contain flaws within. All three of the basic paths to 'knowledge' are fraught with possibilities for misinterpretation and deception.

How, then, can we 'know' anything? I claim that we really can't, not really. However, we can have varying degrees of confidence about the truth and accuracy of a particular assertion. With some assertions, our degree of confidence can be so high that we can say loosely that we 'know' it to be true, but we can never be really 100% certain, and we must allow for the possibility [however slim] that our assertion may be incorrect.

The challenge, then, really becomes to maximize the degree of confidence of any premise that we want to use to try to figure out other things. How do we do this? We start with direct observation of phenomena that appear to be self-evident, such as that [we] exist, that gravity is consistent, that parallel lines don't intersect, that a body in relative motion or rest tends to retain its state of relative motion or rest until acted on by an external force, that most objects will retain their form and color so that we can recognize them later, that we will all die eventually, that the Earth will continue to rotate and revolve around the Sun [to create] days and seasons, that the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter is constant, etc., etc.

In sum, then, none of us should claim to 'know' any proposition involving what some God wants, or what some President's qualifications or intentions are, or what Everyone thinks or feels about some given topic. It is all opinion and conjecture, so we all should be open and receptive to the input of others, so that working and communicating together we can collectively come as close as we practically can to a group 'knowledge' about things, even if we can never get all the way there.

Question 38 (continued)

What sort of nation do we want to have in America?

Ideated in September 2020 that we should include phrasing that we presume (or must we ask it for a Q?) that we want America to be unique in one or more respects. Or, do we want it to be just another place? ("What's to tell about the Bronx? It's uptown and to the right.") Segue then into our history of immigrant havenhood.

Question 176 (continued)

What restrictions -- if any -- should be placed on what material is broadcast on radio, television, the Internet, and other media?

Moderator overrode in the Third Pass (September 2020) his own suggestion from Session 103, that we should not require periodic announcements on what radio programming is coming up. Upon further reflection, we now observe that it would be a short and simple matter to use each hourly station-identification to note that you're broadcasting News or Music or Sports or whatever you're doing, as many stations already do routinely. If you have a Talk format in which the use of 'stronger' language might happen, then the simple and brief insertion of the word 'uncensored' in your hourly slate will alert listeners appropriately.

Question 300 (continued)

Should judges be elected, appointed, or some of each?

Added in September 2020, following the death of Justice Ginsberg: In support of our decision not to have lifetime tenures for any judges at any level, we offer that the original supportive argument of 'judicial independence' ain't makin' it. It is not judicial independence if we have this debate during each SCOTUS vacancy of which President gets to nominate and which Senate party gets to consider the nomination.

Question 7 (continued)

What rights (if any) are inherent in all human beings, regardless of where or how they choose to live, and which rights are only optionally agreed to by members of a civil society?

In the second part of the Third Pass (September 2020), we figured out the more basic Question which had been hanging in front of us as recently as four months earlier. Question was: If any two people disagree on whether XYZ is a Natural Right, then is it even possible for it to be a Natural Right at all? If something is a Natural Right, then isn't it going to be trivially obvious to everyone, in all generations as we said? In other words, if any two people disagree on whether something is a

Natural Right, then doesn't that disagreement automatically disqualify the quantity in question from possibly being a Natural Right? Yes, it must be possible! For, if it were not possible, then any criminal or his lawyer could simply claim that XYZ is not a Natural Right, and by his very statement make it so, and thereby escape any extra penalties which might accrue to Natural Right violations over Civil Right violations. The whole reason why we talk about Rights at all is because there will be some people who claim that you do not deserve to have or do some particular thing, and you want to be able to demonstrate to those people that yes you do deserve it. If you really do have a particular Right (whether Natural or Civil), then the mere word of an adversary (who, because he is your adversary, will be motivated to contradict anything that you say, whether accurately or not) is not going to be sufficient to wipe that Right out of existence. This point does not certify by itself that Natural Rights definitely do exist, but at least it makes them still hypothetically possible notwithstanding the claim by some people that some or all of them do not exist.

Question 298.5 (continued)

Any other procedural specifications as to filing and processing appeals?

To clarify or possibly correct our statement from Session 166, that the processing fee to be assessed upon filing of each appeal is to be forfeited if the appeal is denied, we specify in the Third Pass (September 2020) that the fee is to be returned if the appellate court rules that no further appeal is to be entertained for that case. For, otherwise, the court could simply keep the money and do no work. Fee is payable only when work is performed, so the court would get to keep the fee only if an appellate proceeding is actually undertaken. Then, if the appellant loses again, that is when the fee is forfeited, for having taken up the court's time with an untenable claim. If the appellant prevails, then all previous court costs are to be returned, and laid upon the losing party instead, as established elsewhere in this document.

Question 666 (continued)

What penalties should apply to an individual guilty of unfair discrimination?

Added in September 2020 to the discussion on Slavery Reparations: What if someone like 'Chicken George' has roots in both slaves and slaveholders? Should he be a payor or payee, or perhaps somehow both? There is a mathematical temptation to assess his liability for reparations according to the proportion of his genetic heritage, such that someone exactly 50% white and 50% black would come out 'even', whereas someone who is 25% white and 75% black would get half of the reparation amount which would be going to slave descendants who are 100% black. However, there is more to this game than mere genetics. For, the children and grandchildren of 'Chicken George' were treated as slaves all the way until the final Emancipation. Millions of other slaves were likewise treated as slaves even though they had varying degrees of 'white blood' in their genetic heritage. Thus, it is not really your genetic background which makes you eligible or liable for reparations, but rather the reality of whether your most immediate ancestors were slaves or slaveholders, because it is from them that you are most likely to have a present social status of either 'white privilege' or 'black subjugation'. We must therefore rely upon the judges in these cases (whoever they may end up being, and good luck finding some objectivity on those panels) assessing not only a subject's genealogy but also what really happened in his/her family's real life.

Question 707.6 (continued)

Do we have any other recommendations re Advertising?

Added in September 2020: Further on the 'banner ads' which we see while doing things on the Internet, we claim that banner ads should have limited if any movement, for we are trying to focus on other stuff and don't need excess distraction. We 'get it' that you are trying to attract our attention with your ad, whether it contains any movement or not. However, you should also remember that you are presenting us with an advertisement in exchange for our being able to do things on the Internet which would otherwise be costing somebody some money. You are not really providing that service if your ads are so distracting that we cannot practically do on the Internet whatever we are trying to do, so you need to maintain a proper balance between visibility for your sponsoring product/service and allowance for us to do our thing. As with the 'ugly people' discussed before, and as with the disgusting 'ear wax' ads which we have observed more recently, we will rotate your ads out if they are too net-distractive, or else we will turn our ad blockers back on, or else we will restrict our Internet activity. Or, perhaps we can seek other remedies in the future, such as imposing government sanctions upon advertisers who are the subjects of a sufficient number of consumer complaints.

Question 124.75 (continued)

Who should replace the person being recalled?

Added in October 2020 on general 'order of succession', in the context of the then-current incumbent of the U.S. Presidency having recently been diagnosed with the Corona Virus: Our finding from Session 70 appears to have been that the Vice-President should succeed the President in case of any vacancy, but that afterward the offices should be filled by the ticket which performed next-best in the preceding election and which is still willing and able to serve. Now giving ourselves another chance to see how we feel about that upon further reflection. Current procedure appears to have been that the Speaker of the House is next in line after the Vice-President, and then the President *Pro Tempore* of the Senate after that, but we do not find this provision in the current Constitution. In any case, it seems illogical to us that any Legislator should assume automatically the leadership of the Executive Branch under any conditions, largely because it is not a given that he/she would have the qualifications to serve in such a different job, and also because under the current 25th Amendment the Congress must act as arbiter if the current President disputes the contention of the Cabinet that he is no longer fit to continue in office, and so all officers of Congress should remain independent and objective, which they would not be if any of them has a chance to become President merely by declaring the current incumbent unfit. It similarly would not make sense for anyone from the Supreme Court to switch Branches automatically under any conditions. If we need someone to succeed other than candidates from the previous election, then it seems to us that we should 'promote from within', and name someone from the existing Cabinet, who would at least have sat in on enough Cabinet meetings to have a general idea of what's going on in the Executive Branch and how it all needs to be managed. For that, we could set up an order of Department Heads which would accede automatically (beginning with the head of Administration?), but then those Departments might need to be codified in the Constitution (or would Federal law be satisfactory?), which could be a problem if we want to change Department names and structures from time to time. Also, some individual Department Heads might be

ideally suited for their present jobs but not for the overall Presidency. We figure now that the ideal approach may be for the selection to be made from among current Department Heads by some combination of the houses of Congress, preferably using the #YesNoAbstain voting method. For the present, though, that still is our secondary recommendation, and we are currently holding as our primary the elevation of runners-up in the previous election, because (especially in our proposed #OpenBallot environment based upon voter signatures instead of party nomination) at least all those people actively applied for those jobs, and were perceived by some as being qualified for them. However, we are open to further discussion.

Question 259 (continued)

Any possible objection that anyone could have on having an elected Legislature at all?

Ideated in October 2020 that another reason to specify a No to lawless direct democracy is that a majority could legally kill or deport all minority, then a majority of the remainder kills or deports the new minority, and eventually you end up with no people at all, which would be sociologically imprudent. You need to have some laws in place to protect your minorities, because you will always have them, and will always need them in order to maintain any society at all.

Question 436 (continued)

Should the Government continue to make sure that product and workplace safety are maintained?

While reviewing our writeup for the Third Pass (November 2020), we found a note in our 'black book' which one of our panelists had suggested a long time earlier, but which apparently had never gotten introduced into our formal treatment of this Question. The note suggested that we address the problem of radiation generated by cellphones, TV's, etc. By this point, we had already addressed in Answer 437.5 the prospect of harmful radiation coming from cellphones and celltowers, and assigned this matter to our new Federal Department of Science for investigation, so let us by all means make sure that they cover TV's and other such products as well.

Question 122 (continued)

Regardless of whether the Electoral College is retained or not, should the President and Vice-President (and analogous State executives) continue to be voted for in a single ticket, or should the first runner-up in the Presidential election automatically be named Vice-President, or should the two run separately?

Realized in November 2020 that we need to modify our rules for creating a P/VP ticket in consideration of our proposed #OpenBallot, because we don't want tickets at that early stage, only individuals, but the VP probably should be in that field since she might someday need to accede to the Presidency.

Thought about the problem over the following week, and figured that unofficial polling using #YesNoAbstain can gauge the public appetite for different P/VP prospects, and then at some point prior to balloting the frontrunners can choose from among secondary finishers for their running mates, presumably emphasizing

the strongest finishers with whom they are sufficiently compatible in order to maximize the ticket's chances, and then YNA in the general election for the ticket.

Question 344.2

Should prisons be public or private?

Added in November 2020 from personal reflection and much Twitter debate: We do not see a theoretical *per se* advantage one way or the other. We can easily envision a public agency coming under fire for not giving enough budget dollars to prison conditions, or of overcoddling our prisoners at taxpayer expense. We also can see private firms accepting large government contracts and skimping on operating expense, or again of overcoddling in order to improve their image.

Both approaches can be either good or bad, so the Answer here is either a competitive environment involving both public and private entities, or else (our preferred approach for simplicity and consistency) to switch from one emphasis to the other whenever we appear to be failing in our goals.

Main thing is to establish some set of standards for all our prisons. We have some suggestions in this document, including the graduation levels of prison conditions, where the more lawful get to have better conditions, and those who prefer jungle law must tough it out more. Whatever the standards may actually be at any given time, though, we should make sure through our various watchdog outlets (which can be both public and private) that we are meeting all of them, or else we will take away our authority and budget dollars from whoever happens to be in charge at the time.

Question 601.5 (continued)

To what extent (if any) should we respect the privacy of individuals?

Amended in November 2020: Another cinematic recurrence of the Eternal Debate on privacy occurred in the 1990 film *The Hunt For Red October*, where Political Officer Putin reminds Captain Ramius that "Privacy is not a major concern in the Soviet Union. It is often contrary to the collective good." How do we reconcile this position with our previous finding in favor of respecting people's privacy more? Not too hard.

Our previous conclusion was that nations generally may set their own boundaries as to an individual's 'right to privacy' versus a society's 'need to know'. Maybe they actually were better off in the Soviet Union having less privacy and more oversight, or maybe not, but that was their decision to make. Although our group tends to believe in government transparency and personal privacy, at least for America, other countries may choose to experiment (again) with different models, after which we can see (again) what tends to work and not work.

That said, our group yet questions the logical validity of Putin's statement: The 'collective good' which he references is only the sum of everyone's 'individual good'. For, if every individual in the society feels in lousy shape, then the collective is in lousy shape. If severe restrictions on personal privacy tend to increase individual unhappiness, then that must do detriment to the collective. We claim that a society where everyone is spying on one another, and trying (often successfully) to get one another into trouble, will tend toward still more general unhappiness than a society in which we all help each other.

We therefore conclude (again) that a certain amount of personal privacy is essential to a happy society, notwithstanding the desire of the Statists to peek into bedrooms and generally pry into everyone else's business.

Question 22 (continued)

What rights and responsibilities attain to a 'citizen' of a given nation?

Treated afresh during the Third Pass (December 2020) in light of our resolution from the Second Pass to retain the institution of Citizenship:

We established in the revised treatment of Question 21 in the Second Pass that nations generally may set their own parameters for the privileges or requirements which may apply to its citizens, including if a given nation carries multiple 'castes' of citizenship. We therefore have little to add for Question 22, except that we should not expect citizens of other nations necessarily to possess all the same privileges (including the right to vote) as we do. All mileage may vary.

One specific provision which we would add for all nations is that they should clearly indicate the citizenship status of any given subject on any passport which they may issue to that subject, and that such passports should continue to be required for international travel. Again, prior to 11-Sep-2001, we might have preferred to be able to travel around the World as easily as we travel around the States, but we apparently will not get to do that in real life for some time, if ever. Until that time, each nation deserves to know the national affiliation of any individual seeking to enter its borders, so that it can take whatever security steps it may deem appropriate according to the political climate of the day.

Question 23 (continued)

What rules and procedures -- if any -- should govern the changing of individual citizenship from one nation to another?

Treated afresh during the Third Pass (December 2020) in light of our resolution from the Second Pass to retain the institution of Citizenship:

There is a big temptation to allow individuals and nations to do their own thing (in the spirit of 'lower-case libertarianism'), without any guidance or oversight at the global level. If we were to go that way, however, then it would be possible for a given immigrant to satisfy all the conditions of citizenship in a new nation, without explicitly relinquishing citizenship in his previous nation. With enough time and effort, he therefore could end up being a citizen of all nations. We don't want that, do we? If we are keeping the institution of Citizenship, as we determined in the Second Pass reconsideration of Question 21, then it follows (doesn't it?) that there must be some provisions somewhere which ensure that a given individual retains primary citizenship in only one nation at a time.

We theoretically could leave it up to the citizen's new nation to notify the old nation, but they generally would have little motivation to do so. If the citizen is able to extract certain privileges from the old nation, then that's that much fewer privileges which the new nation must provide. Once the new nation establishes by way of the most recent application that the individual is (at least supposedly) changing his primary national affiliation, they don't really need to do anything else.

This leaves the old nation hanging, and thinking that this individual still is on its 'first team', and providing privileges which the individual does not really deserve.

Therefore, as loath as we are to add to our global bureaucracy, we yet are reluctantly recommending at this time that an agency of the House of Nations (one of the three houses in our proposed 'Earth Congress') should arrange to be notified of every changed citizenship, so that they can make sure that the subject's previous nation has been duly notified of the change. [Later: Wow, that could be a lot.]

Question 24 (continued)

What rules should govern the citizenship of a newborn child?

Treated afresh during the Third Pass (December 2020) in light of our resolution from the Second Pass to retain the institution of Citizenship:

As described in our Second Pass reconsideration of Question 21, the default national affiliation of a newborn child shall be the same as that of her mother at the time of birth, regardless of the place of birth. That nation may accord different levels of privileges and responsibilities to newborn children and to minimally-educated adults and to certain other 'castes' of citizens, so a newborn child may be considered by her home nation as a 'pre-citizen' or an 'associate citizen', but such rules are internal.

Question 109 (continued)

What sort of time frame would be considered most appropriate to prohibit the publication of poll/survey results?

As we reviewed the original notes more closely in the Third Pass (December 2020), we saw that the General Summary was right the first time, that we had originally decided "no polls to be published, ever", because we explicitly saw no useful purpose for them, and because we implicitly felt that they might skew the election. Even so, we are sticking with the main decision reached in the Second Pass, that we can have some polls and surveys in the early part of the campaign, if only because the public would freak out if we tried to prohibit them entirely, but that we should continue to encourage some moratorium before the election in order to mitigate skewing.

Question 183 (continued)

Whether or not there are any other legit functions to be handled by the Bureau of Labor, should the collection and/or analysis of labor statistics be here, or elsewhere?

Now that we had established for the Second Pass a Bureau of Labor Relations within the Federal Department of Finance, this Question becomes more relevant.

We previously figured in Session 109 that we should "keep all Statistics-keeping in one agency." Should that continue to be the case with a Bureau of Labor Relations in place, which (at least in a perfect world) may not have that much else to do?

We still claim Yes as of the Third Pass (December 2020). One reason is that the folks who are expert at collecting and maintaining Statistics should be allowed to use their talents for Labor as well as all other agencies, rather than assign the function of

Labor Statistics to personnel who are better suited to other tasks. Another reason is that the Statistics which the Labor Relations Bureau might use could also have some utility for other government agencies and/or the general public. Third reason is that our assigned agency name suggests that the Bureau of Labor Relations should focus more on the human aspects of the Labor function, and less on the Statistical aspects.

Question 643.1 (continued)

Do we have continuing problems with any particular Team names, logos, colors, or other similar attributes?

As follow-up to our previous recommendation, the Cleveland baseball club announced in December 2020 that they were dropping their 'Indians' nickname.

Question 629 (continued)

For those personal-behavior laws which we find no longer to apply in our more-advanced society, shall we actively recommend that they be repealed at whatever levels they currently exist?

Noted during Third Pass review in December 2020: If the 'sunset committee' ever finds that it is having too difficult a time keeping current with all the laws needing to be reevaluated before they expire, or if the full assembly ever finds that the re-ratification process is taking up too much of their time, then they should take that as an indication that maybe we have too many laws on the books in the first place.

It should be remembered throughout this process that the more laws we make, at any level of government, the more difficult it will be for most people (even most lawyers) to remember all of them. We understand (all too well) that each new generation of lawmakers is eager to 'make their mark' by passing new laws and resolutions for this and that (gotta keep naming those local post offices after local celebrities, right?), but at some point the exercise becomes self-defeating. That is why we need some periodic cleanup of our legal codes, and why at least some of the lawmakers in each new generation should emphasize the challenge of cleaning up the books at least as much as they are seeking to add to them.

Question 437.5 (continued)

Do we have any product suggestions to be advanced by American industry?

Toy Weapons - notes added in December 2020

Maybe the Fed has been encouraging or even subsidizing the production of Toy Weapons, because they specifically want kids to have the muscle memory of holding and firing guns, and to build up fantasies of participating in military engagements, so that more of them presumably will be eager to enlist later in order to fulfill their childhood dreams, and maybe it's been working. In any case, we continue to claim that it's a net-bad idea. Kids who develop those impulses often grow up to use them as gangsters or vigilantes or rogue police or offensive military, and we do better without that, especially in the no-war environment which we envision and encourage. Maybe even before then, we imagine that we will have enough young people willing to enlist without such advance psychological programming. Besides, the elimination of such programming may actually help to facilitate our desired no-war environment.

Question 684.5

What about the custom of displaying extra house lights near the Winter Solstice?

Added in December 2020 from personal observation: A lot of folks like to display colored lights and other Christmas decorations on their homes and frontyards in the weeks surrounding current December 25. How do we feel about this practice generally, and what should we do with it if we move Christmas to December as recommended in Answer 682?

Seems to us that we need to address both these Questions together. For, we observe that there are two reasons for the lights. One is because some folks specifically associate the lights with Christmas. Other is because it's around the Winter Solstice, which (in the Northern Hemisphere, containing the vast majority of the Earth's land area) is the darkest time of the year.

Lights therefore might not be as applicable if we move Christmas to September. But, we still would like the extra lights in the vicinity of the Winter Solstice, whether we move Christmas or not. Not only is it the darkest time of the year throughout the Northern Hemisphere, but in many places it is also the coldest, and for many folks it is the loneliest. Lights on some of the houses in the neighborhood help to bring us all a little extra cheer, and make it easier for us all to get through the season. Even if it's too cold to venture outside your house, and too dark to see even if you did, the lights remind you that your neighbors are still nearby, sharing the same conditions.

There was noise during the 1970's that we should cut back on holiday lights because we needed to cut back on energy consumption due to the Arab oil embargo. More recent evidence suggests that this so-called 'energy crisis' either was deliberately fabricated, or at least could easily have been avoided. Even if energy consumption does (again?) become a serious concern for us, air conditioners are far bigger consumers than house lights, and we could cut our consumption way down if we discontinue 'summer school' as recommended in Answer 570. This should allow us to use up a little extra energy in the wintertime for some solstice cheer.

Question 124.4 (continued)

In general, what Voting Method is best for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies?

Added in December 2020 from Twitter badgering: We have been having a hard time getting some folks to quit yammering about 'proportional representation' (PR) and 'single-transferable vote' (STV), and those expressions never appeared earlier in the present write-up, so we figured that we had better add a more explicit discussion.

Our secondary hangup with these approaches is that they are more complicated than they really need to be. It makes more logistical sense to us for each district to elect one delegate to represent it. And, as long as we prevent gerrymandering (especially as provided in Answer 69), the philosophical makeup of the assembly is very likely to mirror that of the overall electorate.

Our primary hangup is that the approaches are heavily dependent on the existence of political parties, which we found in Answer 62.5 to be against the public interest.

According to fairvote.org, the three main varieties of PR are party-list voting, mixed-member proportional voting, and single-transferable vote. All the variations share the attribute of electing multiple delegates per district instead of just one.

Under the party-list system, "Each party puts up a list or slate of candidates equal to the number of seats in the district. ... On the ballot, voters indicate their preference for a particular party and the parties then receive seats in proportion to their share of the vote." Whatever other problems this approach may solve, it suffers from the core problem that it treats all party delegates as identical: They can be interchanged among the several seats as if they were clones or robots. Parties are making the actual decisions, not the delegates, and there really is no reason to have all those delegates there at all. Party bosses could instead cast their proportional votes of 18% here and 31% there like the shareholders of a corporation or partnership.

Under the mixed-member system, "Half of the members of the legislature are elected in single-member district plurality contests. The other half are elected by a party list vote and added on to the district members so that each party has its appropriate share of seats in the legislature." There is a certain amount of charm to this idea, in terms of trying to please everybody by having everybody's preferred form reflected in the assembly. But, again, it makes the process more complicated than it really needs to be. Even worse, if one of the approaches actually is as bad as some folks assert, then it should not be reflected in the assembly at all.

Under single-transferable vote, "All candidates are listed in the same place on the ballot. Instead of voting for one person, voters rank each candidate in their order of choice." This system does at least have the redeeming feature of distinguishing between candidates, and therefore rehumanizing them. The fairvote.org website describes the approach further as follows:

Imagine a school where a class is trying to elect a committee. Any student who wishes to run stands at the front of the class and the other students vote for their favorite candidates by standing beside them. Students standing almost alone next to their candidate will soon discover that this person has no chance of being elected and move to another candidate of their choice to help him or her get elected. Some of the students standing next to a very popular candidate may realize that this person has more than enough support to win, and decide to go stand next to another student that they would also like to see on the committee. In the end, after all of this shuffling around, most students would be standing next to candidates that will be elected, which is the ultimate point of this process.

We observe a parallel here with the approval-based approach which we recommend for the #OpenBallot in Answer 105.5, in that voters are choosing from among multiple likable candidates, and are likely to support the most borderline likables over those who are either locked for advancement or else have no chance.

However, there are potentially-big differences. In our #OpenBallot, we are trying to see only who deserves to be listed on the ballot, and each voter may support multiple candidates for ballot inclusion. In the STV system, they are actually choosing who gets elected, and each voter gets only one vote which must in its entirety be transferred or left where it is.

This leads to a 'strategic voting' problem, in which voters nominally support candidates who are actually not their favorites. As a result, the candidate who would

have received the highest level of support under either single-vote plurality or our recommended #YesNoAbstain would end up with approximately the same percentage as other candidates who are similar but not identical. We therefore never get a chance to see which candidate is actually the best, and everyone is reduced to being a mere tool of the Party.

In our model, we prefer that everyone votes for #PeopleNotParties, so that decisions can get made by the delegates whom we elect, not by the party bosses who nominate the delegates and tell them what to do. We therefore are inclined to favor (as we found in Answer 81, to which some of this discussion may eventually need to get attached) the system where each district selects the one delegate who appears most net-qualified, including by knowing and caring about the needs of all the residents of that district, and therefore by being more likely to stand for those needs effectively in the assembly. Phooey on the parties. #PartiesAreTheProblem

Question 558 (continued)

At what level of government should education be supervised?

While reviewing the entire preceding text for the Third Pass in December 2020, came across a note from September 2019 that we were to reconsider the idea of national standards for education with allowance for state/local variation.

We now approve the general concept. We strongly concur with our original argument from Session 255 that there must be some regional variation, due to the prevalence of different geographies, industries, languages, and cultural influences in different areas of the country. Question then became to what extent (if any) we also want a national standard to form the basis of such variations.

We are mindful of the need not to overcentralize anything, neither political power nor fiscal policy nor especially Education. When too much influence over any particular subject is concentrated in the hands of a few, the risk increases that an erroneous or malicious judgment by the oligarchs will occur and cause devastating damage to the entire society. In the specific case of Education, overcentralization can result in dangerous narratives (such as "the U.S. Cavalry treated the indigenous American populations with dignity and respect at all times") being programmed into all kids as if they were robots. We must allow room for competing narratives, in order to spur the debate which will get us ever closer to the Truth, whatever that might be.

However, going too far in the other direction can cause problems as well. If we were to allow every State or Township to decide the entirety of its primary curriculum, then other dangerous narratives (such as "Segregation is God's divine will") could propagate and cause even greater social problems. Besides, having some amount of central core curriculum will allow us all to live peacefully and productively in any other area of the country if we ever want or need to.

We therefore need some kind of hybrid control of the narrative between national and local influences. In general, the Fed should decide upon those lessons which it feels everyone in America should know, and then States and smaller levels should supplement with the knowledges which are more relevant for their localities. In practice, there may need to be some overlap of influence for controversial lessons.

But, that raises further Questions: How would such an overlap work?

What happens when the Fed somehow discovers that a particular State or Locality is teaching something dreadfully dangerous? Should they only offer a recommendation to change? Should they somehow submit a competing narrative for the kids to consider? Or, should they somehow enforce the national will by punitive action?

We currently imagine that we will need some combination of these and possibly other approaches. Recommend first, engage in formal public debate in case of continuing disagreement, and resort to direct corrective action only when needed.

But, what form could/should such corrective action take? We currently have in our model that accreditations should happen at the State level, and we still don't want to bother the Fed with creating and maintaining licenses for all the thousands of schools in the country, when it has enough issues to manage at the national level. We have removed 'revenue sharing' from our model, and are allowing each jurisdiction at each level to tax for its own needs, so the threat of withholding inter-government funding is no longer available.

However, we may still be able in our new model to impose monetary penalties upon rebellious subsidiaries, especially if we enable the 'master ledger' discussed in Part II. Other possible remedies could include arrest of the offending officials by the U.S. Marshal's office, or demotion of the State back into a Territory.

Fed should really be careful, though, in imposing such penalties. It could work against you. It might send the message to the rest of us that you couldn't win the debate on the merits, and so needed to resort to force. It might sway us toward believing whatever the opposition is trying to teach.

Primary recommendation, then, is to let formal public debate settle as many issues as it practically can. If a national legislator disagrees with the curriculum which is being taught in her home jurisdiction, then she can engage in debate with the applicable local officials. If she agrees with the local curriculum but some other national legislator disagrees, then the two of them can hold a national debate about it, probably within the context of a legislative committee.

This way, the entire society gets to observe the debate, and perhaps help to influence it through our social media and other channels. And, we can facilitate the debate and resolution without the need for yet another Federal agency, except that one or more houses of Congress may want to maintain an Education Committee, which would facilitate the debates and recommend any extraordinary remedies for consideration by the full Congress.

Question 712.3 (continued)

What (if anything) can/should be done about the fact that we currently throw away so much good food at restaurants?

We had proposed in October 2019 that discarded food at restaurants can possibly at least be released for the sustenance of local animals. We suggested at that time that mice can be distracted from such disposal sites by a liberal cat population. We are now having additional thoughts on the matter as of the Third Pass (December 2020). Even if the distraction tactic works as suggested, then you might end up with

an overpopulation of cats around local restaurants. If it does not work, then the risk of rodent disease could become worse than the mere loss of food.

This goes to a level of zoology and biochemistry which is beyond the expertise of anyone currently active within our group, so we will not presume to speculate which course is net-best. We defer to those who know more about those sorts of things than we do. We also allow for the possibility that different solutions may be best for different regions, and we thus are open to the possibility that different venues may want to experiment with limited quantities to see how things go. In any case, safest probably to follow the guidelines established by your County's Health Department.

Besides, by now we have begun to see reports about improvements in technology to compost uneaten food for safer redistribution, so those paths probably will be net-better for our purpose of reducing food wastage. [Amended later.]

Question 566 (continued)

Should formal education in schools be made compulsory, or shall children and/or parents have the opportunity to pass or self-educate?

Added in December 2020 from personal reflection: You don't need to do well in all the courses which you take in secondary school (that is, what we currently call 'high school'), because we don't expect you to be great at Everything, although some of you will be. Main things which we are trying to do in secondary school are (1) to expose you to a wide variety of subjects of possible interest to you, and (2) to help you decide which subjects you are best suited for. We therefore want you to do well enough on the weaker subjects to show that you properly exposed yourself to the subjects and made a sincere effort to learn something from them, so that may be equivalent to a D grade. We also want you to do well enough (say A or B level) on at least one course in the secondary curriculum for us to get an indication of what path(s) may be good for you in life. We therefore may not need to be as hung up on grade-point average (GPA) as we have been, and maybe we should focus instead on the number of students who get an A or B in at least one secondary course, for it is anything less than 100% then we have a problem.

Question 675 (continued)

Do we want to reset the date of the New Year back to the Winter Solstice, or stick it in March as the Romans did, or leave it as is, or do something else?

Pursuant to the note which we entered in January 2020, about current December 22 possibly being a bad day for the Rose Parade due to lousy weather, we observed that December 21 of 2020 would have been a spectacular day for it, and we have been thinking about moving New Year's Day to December 21 instead of December 22.

Question 361a (continued)

Generally, who owns or can own The Land?

Amended in December 2020: We previously assumed an ongoing periodic payment by each lower level to each higher level, but upon further reflection we lean away from it, because the higher level is already saving money and trouble by not needing to deal with the administration of the territory in question. Easier and possibly

cheaper all around if each jurisdiction at each level taxes for only its own stuff, and spends from only its own internal resources.

Question 380 (continued)

To recapitulate, what is the basic form of our preferred economic structure?

Amended in December 2020: We previously assumed an ongoing periodic payment by each lower level to each higher level, but upon further reflection we lean away from it, because the higher level is already saving money and trouble by not needing to deal with the administration of the territory in question.

Question 412 (continued)

Should each governmental jurisdiction raise its own revenue, or should revenues be calculated in such a way as to allow for some funds to be apportioned to either higher and/or lower jurisdictions?

Amended in December 2020: We previously assumed an ongoing periodic payment by each lower level to each higher level, but upon further reflection we lean away from it, because the higher level is already saving money and trouble by not needing to deal with the administration of the territory in question. Higher level can extract their funds from direct taxation of local residents and businesses as needed.

Question 675 (continued)

Do we want to reset the date of the New Year back to the Winter Solstice, or stick it in March as the Romans did, or leave it as is, or do something else?

Added in December 2020: Winter Solstice hit at 0502 Eastern Time on 21-Dec-2020, so maybe December 21 is a better candidate for New Year's Day than December 22, meaning an 11-day shift instead of 10 days. We allow for the fact that the natural progression skips by a day every leap year, so we need to examine more closely when the Solstice tends to fall after any leap-year corrections.

Question 610 (continued)

Shall there continue to be such a thing as 'indecent exposure', either in person or over photographic media?

Amended in December 2020: We apparently never said anything before about nudity in Art. This too has been an off-and-on debate for many years, and was satirized prominently in Episode 32 of "Monty Python's Flying Circus". Should we allow paintings and sculptures (such as Michelangelo's "David") to be publicly displayed which display certain body parts?

We claim yes, on two main grounds: First is the theoretical, in that making more of a fuss about the objects is creating more angst and anxiety than objects themselves do. Second is the actual, for which we cite the widespread presence of such objects and images in Europe (including even in the Vatican Museum!) without a resulting rampage of sex crimes or other breakdown of society.

Question 583 (continued)

Shall a college student who declares a particular major be required to take courses only in that discipline?

Amended in December 2020: We apparently never treated the converse of this Question, about whether students who declare a particular major shall be required to take courses outside of that discipline.

Moderator has a hard time believing that we had never addressed this matter before, because it was a major factor contributing to his not doing as well at Caltech as he might otherwise have done. Other factors (including personal shortcomings and distractions) were also to blame, but I went there to study Math, and they made me take a bunch of other courses and labs within disciplines (including Organic Chemistry and Interpretive History) in which I did not then have either the strength or the interest. What for? I had already chosen my path, so why did they place irrelevant obstacles in the way of my self-actualization?

Maybe it's because the standard approach has been for the early years of college to fulfill the same function which we assigned to secondary ("high") school in our model, to give students a taste of a wide variety of subjects in order to make them more well-rounded citizens and help them to choose their future paths.

On that assumption, we now communicate to all colleges as part of our model that they should be getting away from that approach. Once a student has decided to specialize in one or more specific subjects by attending college, presumably after having had enough introductory exposure to a wide variety of alternatives to make an informed decision, she should be allowed to earn degrees in those disciplines without needing to pass any further courses in other subject tracks.

Question 671.2 (continued)

Under what conditions (if any) is it appropriate for any individual, organization, or government to display any flag representing the former Confederate States of America?

While reviewing our personal activity log in December 2020 as part of the Third Pass (because that showed the dates when we ideated and posted many of our notes from during and after the First Pass), we found a note from 29-Apr-2020 about our having added this Question to our 'black book', but we did not find any evidence of our having actually addressed the Question, so we needed to do it at this time.

This obviously is a complex and sensitive topic, and right away the Moderator-author must in good conscience admit some level of personal bias: He was born and raised in California, which sided with the Federal forces during the American Civil War of the 1860's. Further, he personally preferred for America to remain together as a single Nation, without the institution of Slavery being allowed or practiced anywhere.

It may therefore be difficult for our SIG to treat this Question objectively with our current quorum of one, but we will do what we conscientiously can:

Confederate flags can mean different things to different people: They can stand for States' Rights generally, for the specific reduction of authority by the Washington

government, for the beauty and charm of your particular State of residence, for the courage and valor exhibited by Confederate troops against vastly superior forces, for a social system involving different treatment for different racial groups, and yes in some cases for the institution of Slavery. For some people, the flags can represent a combination of these or other factors.

In general, if you harbor a philosophy with which I disagree, I prefer that you have the ongoing opportunity to express it, provided that you do so in a non-injurious and non-threatening manner. For, not only should you have the Freedom of Expression in our American society according to Answer 38, but I also want to know your feelings and prejudices before I speak with you or date you or hire you. Confederate flags can tell me a lot about you in a moment, so we like having that instant clarity.

However, there are other points to consider.

In our general discussion about flags in Answer 602, we commented that people generally display a certain national flag to show that they recognize the authority of that government -- and no other -- over their lives and homes, and that in case of any armed conflict that is the side which they will support. Some people (especially recent immigrants) also like to display the flags of their ancestral homelands, at least on certain cultural occasions, not so much as a recognition of their ongoing political authority but more as an homage to their earlier relationships.* [For example, when we speak of the "Six Flags Over Texas" (which for some time has been the basis of a brand of theme parks), one of those six flags was from the short time in the early 1800's when Texas was an independent nation. We don't hear or make a big outcry when Texans display their original national flag anywhere, do we?]

If you are in the latter group, and displaying a Confederate flag because you are merely expressing a philosophical affinity with that society, then as a simple cultural expression it might not be so bad.

If it is more of a political statement, that you feel that our legal standards should be adjusted according to some alternate viewpoint, then it starts getting a little more serious, but may still be okay. Some might argue that it is little or no different from when some people fly the black POW-MIA awareness banners underneath their American flags, but we are not prepared to equate the two at this time.

If by your display of a Confederate flag you are making the statement that you do not recognize the Washington government as having any authority over you, or that you recognize it but wish that they would go away, then that is a more serious matter. It places you at an opposition with the rest of our society, and tells us that we cannot depend upon you to provide us with any level of assistance when we need it. If anything, we can expect that you will operate against us any chance you get.

Still, if that is your actual posture, then it is better for you to be open and transparent about it, than to act as a 'double agent', pretending to support us but secretly working against us.

Generally, then, although some of us might wish that you would prefer not to do so, yet we probably need to relent if you wish to display a Confederate flag at your home or private business, and not treat it as a legal violation.

Doesn't mean that we need to like it, though, and it still leaves the question of how we should interact with you on an ongoing basis if that is your preference.

For example, suppose that your home or business catches fire: Would/should we be expected to extend the same community effort to put out the fire as we ordinarily would for peaceful and law-abiding citizens who are not expressing any active rebellion toward the American government? Or, shall we cheer because another declared enemy of the United States has suffered a setback?

Both postures are tempting from an emotional standpoint. However, we generally have been seeking a more humanitarian posture in this document, including with an expanded 'international oversight organization' which would arrange for economic aid to nations with whom we might carry some ongoing political disagreement. Our suggestion therefore would be for the locals to go ahead and put out the fire if they practically can, and then we would be hoping that you would respond in kind by letting up somewhat on your rebellious expressions, even if we may not be able to force you to do so. Don't be surprised, though, if your neighbors choose to ignore this our suggestion, and let your building burn down anyway. If you choose to make an enemy of them, then they may choose to make an enemy of you, and we may not be able to stop them. Prudence is therefore advised.

Same probably goes if you are a peaceful community group, such as for architectural preservation or Civil War reenactment. If including a Confederate flag in your society's branding helps to make your members happier, and if such display is not causing an actual or perceived threat among your neighbors, then maybe it's not big enough of a problem for us to worry about. Even then, though, we would still advise against it, because it can be too provocative, and can lead to escalated social tensions which our group is seeking to mollify wherever they exist.

That leaves government buildings, and by extension the uniforms of police and military personnel. All of the Southern States petitioned for and were granted readmission into the Union following General Lee's surrender in 1865, so in theory that should have been an end to it. However, Confederate symbols have appeared on the flags of certain Southern States at least until very recently, statues of Confederate leaders have continued to appear in the Capitol buildings of certain Southern States, and we sometimes see Confederate flags on display within the offices of certain Southern legislators and governors.

Perhaps it is our personal bias showing through here, but this strikes us as a far more serious matter than a local farmer merely slapping a Confederate bumper sticker on the back of his Chevy pickup. It is an indication (isn't it?) that the regional governments in question continue to harbor a level of official antipathy toward the American society of which you nominally are a part. This is understandable to some extent, because this document is full of complaints about what the Washington government has done in past centuries and even in recent years. However, to be dissatisfied with our current national government does not mean that we should want to destroy it or secede from it. Better (isn't it?) to seek improvement through peaceful and legal avenues.

We established in Answer 25 that Secession is a theoretical possibility for certain regions under certain conditions. However, we also recommended in Answer 591.6d that we avoid any further attempts at secession from the United States, on grounds that our "railroads and highways and flight networks and industrial distributions and military recruitments and utilities and banking systems and broadcast media and governmental structures" are now too interconnected to make separation feasible.

On the other hand, do we really want to have States among us which harbor enough residual animosity towards our society that they continue to display flags of a competing national government in our modern capitol buildings?

We could try withholding Federal assistance to your State when a Confederate flag is displayed in your capitol, and/or pursue some sort of legal or criminal remedies against the offending officials, in hope of motivating them to display only American flags, and basically 'pretend' to like us, but that would not solve the core problem.

Core problem is the attitude, and at some point we need to get tired of treating you as a full-fledged and fully-empowered State if you are going to continue treating us as an enemy through your display of Confederate flags in your government buildings. At some point, we need you to either join up with us completely, or not.

We therefore are suggesting that any State or Local government should consider very carefully whether it really wants to display any Confederate symbologies in their official government buildings, or on the uniforms of any of its military or paramilitary troops. If you choose to do so notwithstanding our contrary preference, then it at least creates the appearance that you consider yourself in active rebellion against the United States, so we would need to have some conversations on the matter.

Specifically, it might be a good idea if the applicable local official were to be summoned before an applicable committee of Congress, to testify as to the intent behind the display in question. If you genuinely feel that your State should separate (again?) from the Union, or that certain racial groups should be enslaved or otherwise treated differently, or some other posture of hostility against America and its theoretical principles of "Liberty and Justice for All", then you probably will be eager for the opportunity to state your position openly and for the record in front of a national audience. (For, wasn't that your idea of displaying the Confederate flag or other symbol in the first place, to grab our attention and make a big public statement about your values?) Conversely, if you testify for the record that you display the Confederate flag merely because your daughter was recently cast in the lead of a local stage production of "Gone With The Wind", or some similar benign reason, then we probably can take you at your word, and let it go for the present.

So then, what if you're in the first group? What if you're a Governor or Senator of a State which is so collectively pissed at America (for whatever combination of reasons) that you are eager to secede from it, either singly or in a group? Again, we generally are recommending against Secession and in favor of less drastic remedies, but at some point there may come a time (and, in the minds of some, it may already be here) when the urge to separate from your mother country may become too great to ignore any longer, as apparently was the case in both 1776 and 1861.

When that happens, do we keep you here at the point of a bayonet? It's been done before, but again we don't recommend it, for the same basic reason that we opposed compulsory military service in Answers 154 and 155: If you need to force your citizens to fight, then maybe you shouldn't be fighting. In this case, if you really perceive yourself as being that much of an enemy of ours, then our sticking a gun in your face is not going to change your attitude, except possibly for the worse. So no, we probably should not try to force you to remain in our American family.

To the contrary, even if you do not seek secession, we still may not want you to stay in the house any longer. If you are sufficiently hostile toward America, or if you make us think so by openly displaying Confederate flags in your public buildings or on your public uniforms, then at some point we may want to 'expedite the secession question' by proactively expelling you from the Union, and good luck to you.

There, how'd we do?

Question 437.5 (continued)

Do we have any product suggestions to be advanced by American industry?

Light Bulbs - added from personal observation in December 2020

Moderator had occasion to replace the burned-out bulb on his patio deck with a low-energy fluorescent equivalent, and he was way dissatisfied, as he was when making a similar experiment in other times and places. Those low-wattage bulbs are simply not as bright, and they make it much harder for me to see or read anything. You want to save energy, I get it, but I want to see. The reason why we have light bulbs is so that we can see. It doesn't do us much good to buy and use light bulbs which don't allow us to see.

With all the energy which they routinely use for lights in Las Vegas and New York and a lot of other large American cities (to say nothing of the rest of the World), and with whatever environmental impact all those bright bulbs may be having on our atmosphere, it's not going to make that much more of a difference if I can have one single decent bulb which will allow me to see and read on my patio deck. We therefore should not preclude the classic bright bulbs from being produced and sold on a widespread basis in this country.

Question 414 (continued)

Are there any methods other than traditional taxation which might be considered for raising Government revenue?

We did not dig in December 2020 our note from April 2020 that criminal fines can be used in part "to help families cover the costs of Police funerals." Seems to us upon reflection that Police funerals should be covered entirely by the applicable Cities, so they are the ones who may need a partial cost offset, not families.

Question 589.2

What subjects might/should be included in the standard secondary-school curriculum for the foreseeable future?

Added sometime between July and December of 2020, for inclusion where local resources permit: Aeronautics, American History, Chorus, Customer Service, Dentistry, Fencing, Gaming, Golf, Greek, Hospitality, Metallurgy, Musical Performance, Sign Language, Swimming, Tennis, Welding

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At this point, we completed the 'Second Pass of the Third Pass', by placing all notes into their proper chronological sequence as nearly as we could practically determine. All initial Question introductions have been bolded, and all subsequent introductions not. Everything has been reconstructed and rephrased into a consistent literary style, with session numbers and calendar months clearly identified throughout.

Next steps (in addition to adding random notes as they occurred to us) were to add notes on additional items recently dispatched from our reading list, and then to make a final read-through of the entire document, without following along in either the 'black book' or the 'blue book', so that we could get the perspective of a non-Moderator reader who does not have access to those materials. We would clarify and polish the language as needed, but in such a way as not to disturb the pagination on which we had (again) worked so hard. Any substantive amendments to any of our Answers would be entered after this point of the report. [Done.]

Question 699

What position shall we take on so-called 'possessory credits'?

As another exceptional usage which we detected in December 2020, the 1983 film *Trading Places* stated in its opening credits that it was a "Landis/Folsey" film. John Landis was the Director, and George Folsey was the Executive Producer.

Refreshing to see another example where the Director does not get the entire possessory credit, but we still wonder whether we need that line at all, because the film is actually the collaboration of hundreds of artists and technicians.

Question 368 (continued)

How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

Added in January 2021 upon personal reflection: Where we have previously used the boring and cumbersome expression 'index dollars' to translate any historical dollar amount to its equivalent in some given base year* [*Following paragraph from https://www.easidemographics.com/mdbhelp/html/consumer_price_indexes__cpi_.htm summarizes the change in base year from 1967 to 1982: "Beginning with the release of data for January 1988 in February 1988, most Consumer Price Indexes shifted to a new reference base year. All indexes previously expressed on a base of 1967=100, or any other base through December 1981, have been re-based to 1982-84=100. Selection of the 1982-84 period was made to coincide with the updated expenditure weights, which are based upon data tabulated from the Consumer Expenditure Surveys for 1982, 1983, and 1984."], we now thought that we might use some specific consumer product which has been around for a long time, and use a given historical price of that product as the benchmark for all our theoretical discussions.

Our benchmark product should be a food item, specifically a fairly satisfying and compact one on which a homeless person could subsist if he needed to, and easily accessible from an urban location, so our thought went to hamburgers. We briefly toyed with using McDonald's or Burger King or some similar large national chain, but the product names kept having two words, and the symbols two characters, and it was still cumbersome. Besides, those large chains have plenty enough publicity already without any help from us.

It then occurred to us that we might be able to use 'the Tommy' as our benchmark, in reference to the local chain which began in downtown Los Angeles in 1946. That

would be both succinct and fun, and we would be only too happy to accord some free national publicity to that excellent brand which has served the Southern California urban community for many pleasant decades.

We therefore at this time added to our to-do list a note to contact the Tommy's headquarters to see if we can obtain a set of historical price lists from the original Beverly/Rampart location, and their permission to use their trademark name in our literature.

We would then select some specific product from their list, preferably one which cost nearly One Dollar as of the previous CPI base year of 1967. The exact price of that item at that time would constitute 'One Tommy', and we would use the evolving price of that item to translate any future dollar figure to a corresponding number of 'Tommies', in other words, of how many of those product items the given dollar figure could purchase at that time of history.

We could use the symbol "₣" or "₵" to abbreviate Tommies for our various equations.

Although we do not particularly recommend it at this time, one possible way to use this approach to address the original Question 368 would be for any employer to adjust her workers' salaries whenever there is any price change in the benchmark Tommy's item. That way, she is paying each worker the same number of Tommies.

For example, suppose that a Tommy's Double Hamburger cost \$1.00 in 1967, and then they raised the price to \$1.25 at some later point. Worker John was earning \$10,000 per year at the time of the price increase, and Employer Mary seeks for the present to maintain his salary at the same real rate. In order to keep pace with the cost of living as exemplified by the Tommy's menu, she needs to pay John \$12,500 per year, so that he can still buy 10,000 Double Hamburgers per year. She probably would then need to adjust her own company's prices accordingly.

This basically is what has been happening for several decades now, with wages and prices inching ever upwards in hope of catching up with each other. What we need is some sort of mechanism to disincentivize Tommy from raising his price in the first place, and/or to incentivize his restoring it to its original level afterward. Same for all those vendors who currently constitute the actual Consumer Price Index.

In the meantime, when Worker John sees his salary go up to \$12,500 but that the Tommy's Double Hamburger priced upward at the same rate, he will know that he has not really advanced any in real terms. If his experience in Mary's company has made him a better worker, or if he has taken courses which enable him to do more things, or if Mary simply wishes to reward him for his length of dedicated service, then she will want to raise his salary by higher than the Tommy's rate, such as to \$15,000 per year. Then, he could buy 12,000 Double Hamburgers per year @ \$1.25, so we would say that his real salary has increased from 10,000 to 12,000 Tommies, that is from ₣10,000 to ₣12,000. Or, do we prefer "₣10,000 to ₣12,000"?

Question 683 (continued)

Do we want to continue/encourage the practice of exchanging gifts on Christmas?

Added in January 2021 from personal reflection: If continuing gift exchanges for adult recipients at all, then please be advised that gift cards are dumb. It's really

silly to have a big gift-exchange ceremony at your office or someplace, and each 'secret Santa' is simply giving a gift card to someone else. It shows no imagination or insight or effort, each big 'reveal' is an anticlimax, and perhaps worst of all it requires the recipient to shop at or through some venue which she might not have patronized otherwise. Gift cards have the additional problem of not showing how much value (if any) is remaining after a partial usage, so recipients may need to track or label them somehow. It would be more convenient simply to give each other the corresponding amount of physical cash, although we are recommending in Answer 375 to continue phasing out of cash. If you don't know the adult recipient well enough to identify a gift which she definitely would like but for some reason does not already have, then (as discussed in the original discussion of this Question) better to skip the whole silly business, and escape from the slavery of needing to purchase some kind of gift each Christmas for everyone you know.

Question 380 (continued)

To recapitulate, what is the basic form of our preferred economic structure?

We followed up in January 2021 on the note from our Kelton reading in June 2020: Did we have in this A2E document either a specific Question on why we need to tax versus print infinite Monopoly money, or at least a peripheral discussion of that point in the context of a different Question?

Several different Questions peripherally treat the topic of where the total amount of credit comes from which can be used as a 'medium of exchange' among private entities in place of physical pumpkins. These include, but may not be limited to:

367 - But, where does the local dropoff center of the chosen network get the power to issue credit?

368 - How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

372 - By what mechanism shall the relative value of a good or service be determined?

373 - Given that many goods (particularly food items) are consumed shortly after production, and also given that a large part of the economy comprises human services which cost nothing other than time to provide, shall the total credit amount be a fixed figure, or shall it fluctuate with population, or shall it fluctuate with the total amount of material wealth currently in existence, or shall some other means be used to determine it?

374 - However we determine the aggregate amount of credit, how shall it be initially apportioned among the different segments of the economy?

377 - Shall banks be owned and operated by a governmental entity, or by private interests?

379.1 - How does the Federal Reserve system currently operate, in comparison with the model described above?

383 - But, what about the economic theory which has it that continued government spending is good, to stimulate the economy?

412 - Should each governmental jurisdiction raise its own revenue, or should revenues be calculated in such a way as to allow for some funds to be apportioned to either higher and/or lower jurisdictions?

414 - Are there any methods other than traditional taxation which might be considered for raising Government revenue?

However, we did now locate the following Question, directly on point:

415 - What would happen if, instead of traditional taxation, we gave to the Federal government the power to print money for itself?

Here are the notes from our original treatment of this Question:

We had found against this concept during the discussion of Question 368, which is another reason why these Questions need to be rearranged.

To recap, we confirmed in Session 220 that it is important for numerous reasons to keep our currency unit fairly stable, which will not happen if we simply print or otherwise issue more dollars whenever we need to cover our uncontrolled expenses.

Here is another note which we made in June 2020 during the Kelton reading:

Footnote #9 of Kelton's Chapter 1 described our current model that printing 'Monopoly money' is theoretically possible but immediately dismissible as being inflationary.

Now several months out from reading the Kelton book, we can report in retrospect that a major theme of the Modern Monetary Theory (MMT) as reported by Kelton is that we must keep Inflation limited to our designated budgetary targets, although we still have some disagreement in January 2021 as to what those Inflation targets should be. Generally, though, it seems to be possible that the Fed -- as the sole issuer of the Dollar, which at present is not backed by Gold or any other physical commodity -- gets to create new Dollars or eradicate old ones with just a few keystrokes, without needing to 'find' them from taxation or expense adjustment, and still control Inflation successfully.

We are therefore inclined at this time to adjust our model as originally expressed in Answer 368, that we do after all get to "print or otherwise issue more dollars whenever we need to cover our uncontrolled expenses", PROVIDED THAT such action does not cause the purchasing power of the Dollar to adjust in an undesired manner.

Question 368 (continued)

How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

To officially amend our previous Answer, we found in January 2021 upon further consideration of the Kelton book that we do after all get to "print or otherwise issue more dollars whenever we need to cover our uncontrolled expenses", IF such action does not cause the purchasing power of the Dollar to adjust in an undesired manner.

Question 415 (continued)

What would happen if, instead of traditional taxation, we gave to the Federal government the power to print money for itself?

To officially amend our previous Answer, we found in January 2021 upon further consideration of the Kelton book that we do after all get to "print or otherwise issue more dollars whenever we need to cover our uncontrolled expenses", IF such action does not cause the purchasing power of the Dollar to adjust in an undesired manner.

Question 537 (continued)

To what extent does a parent or other 'responsible party' have authority over what a child in his/her care does or does not do, prior to majority?

Pursuant to our note from July 2020, we found in January 2021 that Parenting should be a lesson or series of lessons -- if not an entire course -- at both the primary and secondary levels of education.

Purpose of primary education under our model is to teach all the facts and skills and values (compare with our Answer 568) which we feel that every adult citizen ought to know. According to Answer 566, the primary level should be compulsory, and all further levels are to be optional. It follows that some kids will leave primary school and become parents without having taken any supplemental training in the skill, so we had better make sure of at least a basic training at the primary level.

Conversely, if we were to restrict all our Parenting education to the primary level, then we might need to sacrifice some of the in-depth knowledge which would be more appropriate in the secondary level, for those students who wish to explore the possibility of a life path in Parenting before committing to it.

Question 373 (continued)

Given that many goods (particularly food items) are consumed shortly after production, and also given that a large part of the economy comprises human services which cost nothing other than time to provide, shall the total credit amount be a fixed figure, or shall it fluctuate with population, or shall it fluctuate with the total amount of material wealth currently in existence, or shall some other means be used to determine it?

Thinking more in the Third Pass (January 2021) about the "universal basic income" which has been receiving more public traction recently, and which we previously allowed in our model as variable dividends to workers when our economy is in a growth phase, we now envision that we still might want to place maximum limits on our dividend payments, as opposed to tying them to a set proportion of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or other indicator. For, we don't want to burn out the Earth or excessively pollute it, so we should make sure not to overharvest or overproduce.

For example, if we designate at a given time of history that we want to keep economic production somewhere in the range of \$3-6 trillion dollars per year, then we might want to allocate 1% of that amount as payback to workers if we hit or exceed the minimum (so, 30-60 billion spread among maybe 150 million workers, or 200-400 dollars per worker per year), but then cap it if we exceed the maximum, so that workers will have reduced motivation to produce in excess of our total target.

Question 569 (continued)

What are some of the reasons that not all children sent to school are able/willing to give their full concentration to the matters at hand, and what can we do to correct those issues?

During one of the Moderator's thrice-daily rest breaks (source of many of our best concepts and phrasings in this document), ideated in January 2021 further language

on element (2) from Session 258, about the teacher possibly being a poor presenter. Now thinking that this language may eventually need to be rolled out into a separate Question, something along the lines of "What should we do when students complain that the lessons which we teach will not help them in real life?", the main Answer to which would be that we make sure that that never happens, because we emphasize as each lesson is being taught why we are teaching it, and then we can supplement the Answer as to specific tracks with language such as the following:

Reason for playing Chess and working Puzzles in class is that it helps you to develop the mental ability to solve other kinds of problems, just as Jumping Jacks and other Calisthenics help you to develop the physical ability to do all kinds of useful things.

You are very likely to encounter some kinds of problems in the course of your life, situations where you are not sure which course you should take. Could be in an actual Game or Puzzle, or what educational or vocational path you should take, or in connection with your paid employment, or for some hobby or other personal project, or where you want to live, or how to manage your finances, or your love life, or how to raise your kids, or which candidates or propositions to vote for, or which religion (if any) is right for you, or generally what you want to do with your time on Earth. When that happens, it will be helpful for you to step back from your stress and worrying, take a breath or two, and calmly examine all your options.

You will look at all the relevant information that you have, collect more information if you can, figure out which objectives are the most important for you, list out somehow all the options available to you, and put Everything together to decide which option is most likely to get you to your main goal, whatever that might be.

You learn all those skills by starting out with small-scale Games and Puzzles, containing small ranges of limited options, and develop the skills by working your way up to the harder stuff. It's therefore a very worthwhile consumption of class time in the Math track, it's a worthwhile use of time for the student, and it's likely to be a lot more fun than some of the other exercises which we will be asking of you in the Math track.

These points should be made explicitly clear to all students very early on, basically as soon in the curriculum as we begin to introduce Games and Puzzles like this, and it should be repeated several times in the early stages. Probably wouldn't do much harm to remind the older kids occasionally, lest they forget.

Question 636 (continued)

Do we want to continue to allow professional teams to somehow take turns designating which collegiate/amateur athletes they will consider for hiring, or shall we allow the young players to make their own choices about where they will try out?

Concerning our observation from July 2020 about the 'black book' note reading "On the other hand, may be good to have system whereby players pick their own teams for which to try out: If they want to get picked, they may choose to try out for a team where fewer other players are trying out; if not knowing immediately, all teams can publish lists of numbers of wannabes already signed up for tryouts, so that individual player can gauge his own abilities *vis-a-vis* other signups, and guess how good a chance he has to get picked on that team before the deadline.", and the note added later reading "But, how would we determine the order in which players would

make these selections, randomly?”, we had feared that the SIG may not ever have addressed these points, we searched in January 2021 and found that they actually were addressed in the original treatment of this Question back in Session 275.

We observed at that time that in the Athletics industry prospective employees usually need to ‘try out’ for only one team at a time, that the process often takes several days or weeks, and that a medium-grade player might miss his chance to play for the Orioles by trying out for the Yankees and not making the cut. We figured that, in order for us fans to get the best entertainment product, it makes sense from a simple efficiency standpoint that we institute enough regulation into the selection process to make sure that the best players are definitely selected for consideration first. This implies a drafting process rather than an open market.

Question 380 (continued)

To recapitulate, what is the basic form of our preferred economic structure?

As we were reviewing in January 2021 the notes from our Kelton reading, it occurred to us that we might make a procedural adjustment which would simultaneously satisfy our original desire to maintain a balanced or surplus budget, Kelton’s note that a balanced budget is not really necessary if we control inflation, and our ongoing wish for the Government never to be issuing any loans.

Adjustment would involve our incorporating a standard line in the Federal budget which we would call ‘Currency Adjustment’ or ‘Supply Modification’ or something similar, and which would basically be a ‘fudge factor’ to equal the difference (if any) between other revenues and other expenditures. It would be a positive Income amount if we are introducing more Dollars into the economy in order to ‘cover’ our higher expenditures, or a positive Expense amount if we are reducing the Money Supply. Because the general trend over the last century (with a couple of brief exceptions) has been for the Fed to spend more than it did the previous year, this ‘fudge factor’ would usually need to be an Income amount much more often than an Expense amount, so for a consistent Chart of Accounts it probably would be better to classify the line in the Income category routinely, and then allow it to be positive or negative according to current conditions.

Kelton’s stated concern (with which we enthusiastically agree) is that any budget (whether surplus or balanced or deficit) should explicitly provide that inflation should remain within whatever target range may be designated at any particular time. We help that objective by allowing this ‘fudge factor’ to be not only an automatic offset between other Incomes and Expenses, but also the specific place where proponents of a given budget model would express their perception that we need to add three trillion Dollars to the economy, or remove five trillion Dollars, or whatever else appears to be needed at the time.

Question 693.3 (continued)

What can we do about drivers who violate traffic rules directly in front of us, other than yell at them and flip them off?

Amended in January 2021 from personal reflection: The front-end camera introduced in Session 286 can be mounted on the same bracket which holds the rear-view mirror. That way, you should get a good camera view of all the traffic

within your basic sight range, without obstructing your personal view by having another device mounted on your dashboard.

Question 675 (continued)

Do we want to reset the date of the New Year back to the Winter Solstice, or stick it in March as the Romans did, or leave it as is, or do something else?

Amended in January 2021: We have changed our position, and now recommend that we move New Year's Day to December 21 instead of December 22.

Reason is that we built a chart showing the exact times of the Winter Solstice for the entire 21st century* [*GMT times came from "Solstice and Equinox Table Courtesy of Fred Espenak, www.Astropixels.com"], extrapolated to each of six key spots (London, New York, Los Angeles, Auckland, Tokyo, and Delhi) around the globe. Chart showed that every Winter Solstice in this century occurs on December 21 in some area of the World, whereas 12/20 and 12/22 happen only sometimes in some areas, so 12/21 it is.

Question 300 (continued)

Should judges be elected, appointed, or some of each?

It occurred to us some months back that maybe the Senate should still vote for SC justices using HR nominees. We took the time to resolve the issue in January 2021.

We previously were leery (and still are) of the Senate having too much (if any) influence over judicial appointments, because many Senators have seemed in recent years (if not also earlier) to represent the interests of Big Money and Big Politics more than the actual needs of their States or the demands of Justice.

However, if we place all our faith in the House of Representatives, even though supposedly it is "the People's house", those folks are also sometimes subject to narrow shifts in political preference, and might still be so even if we de-emphasize parties and otherwise reform our electoral processes as described in Section I-C.

If the members of the House of Representatives are split 51-49 to either one 'wing' or the other, then the narrow majority has a disproportional influence over the selection of any SC justice, which we claim would be bad. Better therefore to get the 'second opinion' of the other chamber. If the two chambers have similar leanings, then we can feel better about their combined choice. If they have different leanings, then they will need to compromise somehow on the choice, so that's good too.

Before getting into specifics, we also need to consider whether our proposed third chamber (see Answer 261) should have any role. Although we wouldn't strenuously object if others really wanted it to, our present feeling is that it should not. For one thing, it can already be long and hard enough to get two chambers to agree upon a choice, so adding a third chamber would likely make things even longer and harder, which in this case would be bad. For another thing, it makes sense for the Senate to be involved, if their principal focus is for the Nation as a whole; it also makes sense for the House to be involved, since they represent the population centers which will be the source of most of the problems which the SC will ever need to consider; conversely, the proposed third house is basically focused on large areas of Land, and thus would not have much foundation to consider legal and judicial appointments.

Our revised model therefore is for the House to generate a list of nominees for each SC vacancy. Because it is a national position, our default recommendation is for the list to comprise 15 nominees. (Certainly needs to be more than one, though, so that the party of a bad President can't still make his choice their only choice.) Whatever the size actually is, we also recommend that it be balanced to about one-third for each of 'left' and 'right' and 'center', whatever those labels might mean now or in the future. We do this in the same way as we do in the #OpenBallot which we now recommend for civic elections (see Answer 105.5), such that each member may approve nominations up to one-third of the ballot size. The 15 nominees with the most approvals will then be likely to represent a healthy balance of political preference. If we do not get a clear group of 15 leaders on the first ballot, because every member is selecting from only her own district, then a rule can be introduced to require each member to select from other districts.

Once the list of 15 names finally reaches the Senate, they should take up the debate and voting on an expedited basis. (For, as a matter of standard parliamentary procedure, the filling of a vacancy is a 'Special Order' which generally ought to precede any New or Unfinished Business.) If the Senate has a 'Judiciary Committee' (as we recommend and expect), then they probably should interview each of the 15 nominees, after which all Committee members should have the option to present their individual opinions to the full assembly, lest the important objections of certain 'minority' members be precluded by a partisan Committee Chair. After the Senate has digested the full Committee report, they can order additional hearings if desired, possibly as a 'committee-of-the-whole'. When the final vote is in order, it should be compiled by the #YesNoAbstain voting method, again to weed out the more widely-distrusted candidates in favor of those with more broad-based appeal.

But, what if no House nominee receives a sufficient majority (however that might be defined) of support in the Senate? Our general recommendation for civic races is to accept the 'least of all evils' because we generally do not want to go through the hassle of a special election, which is partly because too many election exercises can turn off a lot of people from ever participating at all. However, that reason does not apply in Congress, where new elections do not require such a huge effort. Or do they? We would be asking the House to come up with a whole new set of nominees, the Senate Judiciary Committee would need to take interviews with them all, the full Senate would need to hold further hearings and debates, and then you would have another vote, which would not at all be guaranteed to produce a sufficiently-positive winner. In fact, you might never get one, no matter how many thousands of names you consider. At some point, you're going to need to fill the position in order to maintain our 'tribunal of tribunals' at its optimal population, so you may as well accept it on the first ballot as order a second. We are prepared to accept a compromise of one additional round of nomination and balloting, and then if you still don't have a clear-enough winner then the top names from both rounds can be combined for a third-and-final ballot, where you take what you get, but our primary recommendation still is for a single round, and make sure that you get it right.

Question 405 (continued)

How shall we deal with the Social Security program?

As we were packaging the notes from Chapter Six of Kelton's book in January 2021, we thought more about the issue raised from our original reading the previous

August: Do we want to continue with FICA payroll deductions which nominally feed the Social Security Trust Fund, which theoretically distributes funds back to us in retirement, or shall we skip that whole deduction business?

We guess upon further reflection that this Answer depends on what it is that we really want to use the Social Security program for: Should it be more of a safety net for all elderly regardless of work history, or should it be more of a pension program where benefits go up according to the amount and value of work performed in life?

We can see an argument either way, and maybe the real Answer is some kind of hybrid. On one hand, we do want to make sure that all our elderly have at least a basic amount of ongoing care, as part of this big 'implied social contract' which we have discussed earlier, in which working-age adults raise and care for a generation of kids, in exchange for those kids taking care of us when we retire. We all feel better as individuals when we know that we do not need to fear retirement because there will always be a minimum safety net for us regardless of any other conditions. When we all feel better as individuals, we are better as a society.

On the other hand, with whatever other parameters we may be imposing in order to create our version of 'modified capitalism', one core attribute which we are retaining is that it is better for the society if workers do their jobs out of incentive than out of obligation. It's reflected in element #2 of the Seven Factors of a Good-or-Healthy Economy as expressed in Answer 358, that we should have "incentives for people to improve their standard of living by working to help the society which provides it". It follows that we should not only provide higher compensation for more valuable work at the time that it is performed, but also provide a higher pension benefit for those workers who have provided us with higher levels of production in their careers.

If we all are receiving the same level of benefits when we retire, then it does not make sense to tax workers for the funds which 'pay for' those benefits. For one thing, it would mean that those who work more will be assuming a greater share of the funding burden than those who work less, so again it's penalizing workers for working, an *infamia*. For another, it is just our own dollars coming back to us, which may have made sense to Roosevelt, but not to us. It means that we are not getting any actual pension or other reward from the Society, or from the Three Families which own it according to p.33 of Kelton.

Conversely, if the benefits go up in proportion to the amount and value of work previously performed in one's lifetime, then an argument could be made for taking a deduction from each payroll, as a way of measuring how much salary the worker earned in his lifetime, which in turn indicates the aggregate value of previous work, at least in theory, although we again would need to account somehow for child-raising and other household work which might not get compensated in the traditional sense. It would not be a funding of the Trust Fund *per se*, because we won't know until you actually retire how many dollars per month you will be getting back, nor the purchasing power of those dollars relative to their initial investment. However, it would indicate your share of whatever 'pie' is being distributed at that time.

If that's all that it is, though, then we can still take that measurement without actually deducting anything from the worker's payroll. The same number of Dollars which now are taken from each paycheck can be treated as Points Earned toward that worker's retirement benefit. Then, whatever level of total benefit is determined to be appropriate for a given fiscal year (as with all other budget considerations, we

must always make sure that everything is priced in such a way as to keep inflation within whatever target range we may designate at that time), that total can be parsed out in proportion to everyone's earned points. You probably want to assign a portion of the fund to be distributed to all elderly equally, and then the higher margin can be paid out proportionally as a supplemental incentive.

In sum, then, whether we want Social Security to be an equal safety net for everyone, or a graduated pension program, or (as we now recommend) a hybrid of the two, in any case we find that we don't actually need or want payroll deductions to be pretending to subsidize a Trust Fund for regurgitating those payments to us.

We still might want to keep a provision in place whereby those with a sufficiently-high net wealth, and/or who have more than a certain maximum number of points earned under the SSA program, should not receive any benefits from the program after standard retirement age, so that more dollars can go to the people who really need them. Or, performing all that tracking may be more trouble and expense than it's worth. Maybe that's a decision for each generation to make for itself, based upon then-current fiscal conditions. This is our position as of now.

Question 17.1 (continued)

Shall we define the word 'government' to refer to this organization, without making any specifications at this time as to its structure or functionality?

As we were reviewing our notes in January 2021 from earlier in the Third Pass, we noted that we had recently begun to have second thoughts about the objection raised by a panelist back in Session 70, about the use of the word 'government' for the organization which manages all our public needs. We originally objected to the objection, on grounds that people might get confused if we remove the word 'government' from our model. However, the panelist may have been right after all.

For, in that we have decided in Answer 17 that we need to have some kind of 'public organization' in place to build our roads, collect our garbage, put out our fires, protect our citizens from crime, and perform other essential services for us, we should make it clear at all times that We The People are in charge of that organization. We fund it, we empower it, and we select its leaders, so they should be doing what we say. By contrast, applying the word 'government' to that organization implies that they are the ones who have control over us, as they frequently have asserted by their words and actions in real life.

We probably don't solve that problem by calling it 'The State', for that can seem even more like Big Brother controlling us like so many ants for the good of the collective. Meanwhile, the generic expression of 'public organization' which we introduced in Session 70 is probably too vague to be useful, since there can be numerous public organizations at different levels doing different things.

We probably will need some other expression which clearly describes an organization which performs services for the public at the public's direction. However, we also recognize from Answer 18.3 that each society gets to decide how much control it wants to exert over individual behaviors, so any public entity (legislature, dictator, secret police, etc.) which seeks to limit public behaviors can indeed be described accurately as a 'government'. These entities actually need not be related.

We suppose that we could go with 'The Administration' to describe the entity which does our public jobs for us, as some already refer to it.

Question 436 (continued)

Should the Government continue to make sure that product and workplace safety are maintained?

As we were reviewing our notes in January 2021 from earlier in the Third Pass, we observed that the Science Department which we hypothesized earlier is now becoming a Cabinet-level entity with the incoming presidential administration.

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At this point in January 2021, we finished reviewing and packaging the notes which we had compiled several months earlier from Stephanie Kelton's book "The Deficit Myth", and all other notes subsequently logged for any other of the Questions in our Outline. Next step for us was to take yet another look (as we did in the Second Pass) at the substantive conclusions currently reflected in our General Summary, but this time focusing principally on our Part Two, in order to make final decisions on any further changes which might have been indicated from recent economic reading.

Question 662.9 (continued)

Recognizing that minor variations in Pronunciation occur naturally among different regions within a large Nation, do we yet have any specific recommendations to offer?

We had noted peripherally back in Session 252 that the word 'prenuptial' should be pronounced *pre-nup-chel*, not *pre-nup-choo-el*, there being no extra 'u' in that last phoneme, and that even the attorneys in 'L.A. Law' were guilty on that one. We rolled the note out into a separate amendment to Answer 662.9 in January 2021.

Question 128.5 (continued)

What specifications (if any) do we care to make as to the impeachment of the U.S. President and/or Vice-President?

Added in January 2021: A former SIG correspondent recently addressed to us a question which basically amounts to "Does and in impeachment mean and or or or and/or?". It is rare that any sentence can have three consecutive appearances of the same word and still have a real and unique meaning ("very very very good" doesn't count for unique), but this one does.

Question referred to the first 'and' appearing in Paragraph 7 of Section 4 of Article I of the U.S. Constitution, that "Judgment in Cases of impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from Office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any Office of honor, Trust or Profit under the United States...". Did the conjunction mean that the two 'sentences' are linked, to be either assessed together or withheld together? Or, can either 'sentence' be assessed on its own without the other?

In this specific instance, the second 'sentence' can possibly be considered to imply the first. For, if one is disqualified "to hold and enjoy any Office of honor, Trust or Profit", then that implies (doesn't it?) that he should relinquish any such position

which he currently holds, which would include (wouldn't it?) the position of President or Vice-President of the United States.

But, what if the two outcomes are not thus linked? What if they are independent of one another? How should we approach this construction when we see it elsewhere?

Our initial thought upon hearing this question was that we should consider in context how similar words and constructions appear elsewhere in that document. This led us to consider the phrasing of Section 4 of Article II, reading: "The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors." There are a few troublesome conjunctions in this provision.

We generally find that 'and' means 'and/or' in most such constructions. That is, the provision could apply to either A by itself or B by itself or the combination of A and B.

For instance, in the opening phrase of this passage, they cannot possibly mean (can they?) that the set of "The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States" are to be either removed or retained as a bloc. We previously held for this Answer that any impeachment and/or other forced removal of an incumbent President generally should include the Vice-President, since they were elected together, and presumably were subject to the same influences. However, we now feel (following the unprecedented second impeachment of the guy who got inaugurated in 2017) that this need not always be the case, because sometimes one guy can be sufficiently guilty by himself. Even if the two offices were always tied together, though, would you then also dismiss "all civil Officers" which were appointed under their administration, for the sins of one individual? We doubt it.

However, the 'or' in this passage must also mean 'and/or'. Otherwise, someone convicted of both Treason and Bribery would not qualify for removal.

This suggests that the second 'and' probably also means 'and/or', although that is not as clear in this instance. If you've got someone who's not guilty of Treason or Bribery, but who is guilty of "other high Crimes and Misdemeanors", then that condition presumably is sufficient for impeachment, based on the 'or' conjunction. But then, must you have committed both "high Crimes" and "Misdemeanors" in order to qualify, or both "high Crimes" and "high Misdemeanors"? And, because of the plural construction, must you have committed more than one of each?

This is where some interpretation may be needed, and goes to show that there is more than one way to be an Originalist.

Opinions may vary among students of Constitutional Law, but we have formed some proposed conclusions from our backgrounds in grammatical study and historical reading. First, we imagine that the adjective 'high' modifies only the simple noun 'Crimes', not the compound noun 'Crimes and Misdemeanors'. A misdemeanor is also a crime, and we imagine probably was considered so even in Madison's time, or else it would not have found its way into Section 4. It therefore would be redundant to speak of 'Crimes and Misdemeanors'. Instead, we imagine that they are talking about 'high Crimes' on one hand and 'Misdemeanors' on the other. In that sense, 'Misdemeanors' are the equivalent of 'low Crimes', whereas the 'high Crimes' are equivalent to what we today typically call Felonies.

Second, although an argument could be made from a strict semantical standpoint, we yet hold as a matter of practical judgment that they are not really requiring multiple crimes (whether 'high' or 'low') to have been committed before one can be found subject to impeachment under this rule. The 'or' conjunction implies (doesn't it?) that only one count of Treason would be sufficient, and that only one count of Bribery would be sufficient, so only one count of any other 'high Crime' or 'Misdemeanor' would also be sufficient. In other words, we are treating the provision as though they had said 'or any other high Crime or Misdemeanor' instead of 'or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors'.

In partial sum, they appear to mean 'and/or' at least sometimes when they use 'and' in the Constitution, because 'and/or' was not a common expression at the time, but not all such instances in the document necessarily mean that.

This brings us back to the original question the first 'and' appearing in Paragraph 7 of Section 4 of Article I. We feel upon further reflection that this is another instance when they meant 'and/or' when they said 'and'. Key word in this phrase seems to be 'further'. For, in this particular construction, if the two outcomes A and B are independent of one another, then you could assess either A or B as a judgment, and still satisfy the provision, because it is not "further than" the stated maximum. You also could assess the combination of [A and B], which likewise would "not extend further than" the stated maximum.

Again, we may or may not be able to extrapolate this interpretation to every conjunction in the Constitution, but we apparently can apply it at least to some.

Question 138.8

Should the Chief Executive of any state or nation have the legal authority to pardon anyone?

Added in January 2021, following a long list of Presidential pardons asserted by the guy who had been inaugurated in 2017, and who as of this addition was already a subject of numerous past and current investigations for a variety of criminal acts.

Actually, we probably should have thought a lot sooner to add this Question to our Outline. For, we had already seen in real life how the process of Presidential pardons can be abused. Ford famously pardoned Nixon of all possible crimes in 1974, only a month after succeeding him in office. Ford had been appointed Vice-President by Nixon only a few months earlier, following Agnew's resignation on corruption charges. It was widely speculated at the time (even in *MAD Magazine*) that Nixon had specifically appointed someone who would pardon him upon his departure from office, and we do not now rule out the possibility that Agnew's resignation was either orchestrated or precipitated in order to allow Ford into the pardoning loop. Even if that was not the actual case, then Nixon certainly took advantage of the situation to arrange for himself to be relieved of all criminal responsibility.

Should that be okay? Clearly not. We found in May 2019 as part of Answer 128.5 that neither the President nor any other government official is 'above the law', or should be treated as such. It logically follows that a criminal President should not be able to evade the legal consequences for his bad acts. It further follows that he shouldn't get to be pardoned by either himself or an appointed successor.

But, you may ask, if the President generally gets to pardon other people, then why can't he pardon himself? Answer is that maybe he shouldn't have the general pardon power in the first place. We found in Answer 138.5 that a President shouldn't be able to pardon his/her spouse, but why should they get to pardon anyone at all?

The original intent of the Presidential pardon appears to be related to the idea of a State Governor being able to remit a sentence of execution, basically as a final level of appeal which can counteract any corruption or inefficiency in the Judicial Branch. Trouble is, in the case of a stay of execution, the Governor is not overturning the original conviction, and the defendant probably will be continuing his prison sentence as an alternative to execution. However, the Presidential pardon seeks to absolve the subject from any criminal conviction or personal punishment.

Even if we forget temporarily the fact of a corrupt President seeking to pardon himself and his spouse and his kids and their spouses and kids and everyone else who ever worked for him or supported him in any way, and even if we momentarily assume an honorable President who has not been guilty of any corruption, either personally or by association, we still feel that the Presidential pardon is an abuse.

Why should the President get to relieve anyone at all of criminal liability? He was not an original trier of fact, he was not an original or appellate interpreter of the law (and might not even be a lawyer at all, let alone a judge), and he was not present at trial to observe the demeanor of the witnesses. Why then does he get to substitute his judgment for that of the judges and juries who were on the scene? To mitigate corruption? I tell you this: I'm going to have a lot more suspicion of corruption in a solitary executive than in a set of several judges and lawyers and citizen jurors.

Should the President's authority therefore be limited to commuting an execution sentence, same as the State Governor? Not applicable in our model, which disallows the Death Penalty for any one crime, and requires conviction on several serious charges before it can be considered for anyone. We have that provision in place in order to mitigate against the chance of execution for a wrongful conviction, because requiring several serious convictions will increase the likelihood that at least some of them will be correct and therefore deserving of death. Governors and Presidents don't really have anything to add to this model, so they shouldn't get to do so.

Seems to us that the most which a Governor or President can properly do in our model is to issue a formal request to the applicable Court of Appeal (or possibly the Supreme/Superior Court), that they reexamine either the sentence or the underlying conviction, on the basis of some fact or argument or perspective or philosophy which you have reason to believe was overlooked during the original treatment of the case.

It would be up to the Court to either entertain the Executive appeal or dismiss it. If they do agree to entertain it, then all the normal procedures and standards for either upholding or overturning any of the previous rulings would continue to apply.

Even at that, though, the Executive must have had no involvement in the selection of any of the judges who would be considering their appeals. For, we don't want to create the perception or reality that the judge would owe any level of allegiance to the Executive, because such a conflict could easily result in Injustice being done. We already have in our model (see Answer 300) that Executives should no longer have any involvement in the selection of judges at any level, so that's that.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

While adding the remaining agencies of our model administrative structure to our non-Mensa website in January 2021, we realized that we still had both Economic Aid and Public Assistance listed in our summary as bureaus of the federal Public Services Department. Was this intended? Is it now wanted? Seems to us now that any Economic Aid being issued internally constitutes Public Assistance, but that Public Assistance can take forms other than Economic Aid.

We went back through the above writings, and refreshed our recollection that 'Public Assistance' was the name which we assigned in April 2020 to the agency which supervises our network of 'help centers' (formerly 'orientation centers'). Meanwhile, 'Economic Aid' was the name which we had assigned in May 2019 to the former 'Social Services', being the agency which would be in charge of issuing any checks of monetary redistribution (whatever that means) to ordinary citizens.

There could be an argument for keeping these agencies separate, and there could be an argument for combining them, since we might not want to issue checks to anyone still residing at the 'help centers', so the offices should be allowed to share their records. Also, we now observe that 'Public Assistance' is a pretty vague expression, which (like our old buddy 'Domestic Affairs') could cover a bunch of functions which we have assigned to a variety of bureaus in a variety of departments.

For expediency, with so much work still ahead of us, we settled on combining both the agencies and the names, such that 'Public Aid' would both issue monetary payments to eligible citizens as directed, and also manage the 'help centers' which provide various onsite services to homeless and immigrants and others.

Question 17.5 (continued)

What is the purpose of having nations?

While reviewing the General Summary again in January 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we found a problem in our original definition, that Nations are places where certain laws apply to all persons. For, we have the same definition with regard to Cities, and the same could be applied to multiple civic levels in between. We need something which identifies Nations uniquely.

What really makes Nations unique is that they are the primary level of division in our terrestrial World, although some Nations assemble themselves together (or are assembled) into 'commonwealths' or 'alliances' or 'empires'. Such associations are largely optional, in that one can stand on some points of the Globe without being in one of these optional associations, but (for at least the last couple of centuries) every spot on the Globe is under the direct control of some Nation or one of its colonies or protectorates.

We try to synthesize these elements into the following revised definition: "Nations are the primary divisions of the territory of the Earth, in which laws and political

structures can be set up which are independent of and supplemental to any which may exist for the Earth as a whole.” We could add the bit about ‘alliances’ and ‘empires’ into this definition, but in retrospect of our No War model, we all are (or should be) in the same Global alliance, and any ‘empire’ which seeks to gobble up another Nation either does so against our rule of no military conquest, or does so by peaceful and legitimate means and thereby simply becomes a larger Nation.

We are aware that there is a possible alternate definition, where we speak of ‘nations’ in terms of large groups of people who are bound by genetics and culture, regardless of where they reside relative to any formal political boundaries. For one example, Hitler infamously sought to unite the entire ‘German nation’ into a single political entity, even though many people of German descent were then living in Austria and Hungary and other areas. For another example, we often speak of the ‘Sioux nation’ and the ‘Cherokee nation’ and other large indigenous groups who occupied different areas of the American* continent with few or no specific boundaries (maybe an occasional river) before the Europeans showed up and did what they did, even though those nations are now not globally recognized as occupying any specific sovereign territories.

[*We have by now come to call ‘America’ the continent which we previously called ‘North America’, and to call ‘Amazonia’ the continent which we previously called ‘South America’. One-word titles are easier.]

Should we keep the word ‘nations’ associated with these amorphous communities of people with common heritages, and instead use the word ‘countries’ to refer to the formal delineations of land subdivision to different political organizations? We think not. Over the long course of this Project, we have observed the utility of keeping the word ‘country’ available to refer to a physical land area (such as in the expression ‘in country’), as distinct from a political or social hegemony.

Should we therefore switch (back?) to using the word ‘tribe’ to refer to the Sioux and Cherokee and other indigenous cultures? It’s a theoretical, but again we think not. We observe that one reason why we have come to refer to these larger groups as ‘nations’ is that some/all of them actually comprise several ‘tribes’. Another reason which we now observe is that these peoples might actually have been considered as ‘nations’ in our sense of primary political subdivisions of the Earth, with borders and flags and all, if we had had a global oversight organization in place which was less concerned with conquest and plunder (Popes Nicholas V and Alexander VI, we’re talking to you!!), and more into peaceful interdevelopment.

Although maybe we can be persuaded otherwise, our present position therefore is to continue to use ‘nations’ informally for certain Native American cultures as they once were, as they are now, or as they might have been now under different conditions, but that our primary use of ‘nations’ in the context of our Project shall continue to be in reference to the modern subdivision of the land areas of the Earth into sovereign political entities.

Question 29.1 (continued)

How shall we define ‘nation’ for these discussions?

While reviewing the General Summary again in January 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we observed that this Question on definition of the word ‘nation’ is largely duplicative of Question 17.5 on the purpose of ‘nations’. Thus, much of the discussion which we introduced to the latter this day actually relates more to the

former. We will need to figure out in the Fifth Pass whether these two should actually be one Question. For, can we really have one without the other? If so, then which Question should come first in the final arrangement? So noted.

Question 40.5 (continued)

By what process should any changes in State boundaries be made?

While reviewing the General Summary again in January 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we found a problem in our original conclusion that a simple majority of Congress is sufficient to break up a State for additional representation in the Senate. Even if such a proposal were to require the approval of two or three houses of Congress, a simple majority is too easy to achieve with our narrow and frequently-shifting margins of political preference.

As it is, we now imagine that any modification which involves any change in Senate representation should require approval of the Senate only, since other houses would not really have the standing to make such assessments objectively, so it is even more important that we require a higher-than-simple majority. This includes any proposal to elevate a Territory to become a full-fledged State with two Senators, as has been discussed recently for both Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia.

If new States could be created (whether through fragmentation or Territorial promotion) by only simple majority, then a party or caucus enjoying a narrow margin of representation could approve the creation of hundreds or thousands of gerrymandered States which would ensure the group's political hegemony for generations to come, and we don't want that. The majority required should be high enough to show that it is truly representative of the broad sentiment of America, yet small enough to be realistically achievable even in a polarized environment.

We now feel that a 3/5 majority is the best balance between these objectives. We wouldn't be too averse to a 2/3 majority, but that might be too difficult.

Question 73 (continued)

Should voting rights be limited to those of a certain minimum chronological age?

While reviewing the General Summary again in January 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we found a problem in our rather-quick conclusion from Session 59, that anyone beyond a certain chronological age should be allowed to vote even if not having graduated from primary school or passed the qualifying civics test.

For one thing, this approach belies our findings from Answer 580, both generally that chronological age is not a reliable indicator of sufficient maturity to engage in any given adult activity, and specifically that a primary-school diploma should be both necessary and sufficient for Voting. It also contradicts our Answer 71, that primary-school graduation is both necessary and sufficient for an individual to be permitted to register to vote, with the understanding that the eight years of primary school are to be used to teach all the facts and skills and values which we expect all American adults to possess, except that passing a standard test on the structure and processes of government shall serve as an alternative to a primary-school diploma for voter registration.

In sum, if you have passed a certain chronological age and feel that you should have the right to vote, but if you have not completed our basic primary-school curriculum, then you should demonstrate your civic knowledge by passing the same standard test which is used by current primary-school students for being able to vote early. If you are not able or willing to do that either, then you probably should not be allowed to vote, because we are presuming that you do not know enough about the basic structures and processes of government, and we are directly observing that you do not appear to be supportive of our current civic and didactic institutions.

Question 126 (continued)

What is the motivation for any particular government agency to follow such principles?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we confirmed our previous finding about requiring a balanced budget in order to provide bonuses to employees whose departments come in under budget. Even in the 'MMT' environment proposed by economist Kelton, governments subordinate to the Fed still have finite quantities of Dollars to allocate, and therefore need to manage their incomes and outgos in such a way as to remain in operation, whatever that translates to in terms of specific fiscal standards and procedures. At the Federal level, with a balanced budget not being a strict necessity under MMT, the original reasoning is more relevant, that government agencies could inflate their operating budgets in order to make themselves look prettier by coming in under them, which would redirect more Dollars to where they really ought not to go.

Question 412 (continued)

Should each governmental jurisdiction raise its own revenue, or should revenues be calculated in such a way as to allow for some funds to be apportioned to either higher and/or lower jurisdictions?

Our recent relook at Question 126 in an MMT context raised a troublesome issue for us in February 2021: We originally felt that each lower government owes some kind of ongoing periodic payment to the next higher level, basically as 'rent' for the privileges of self-rule and self-administration. We later sought to simplify things and relieve lower levels of this ongoing tax burden, by recognizing that the higher levels may not really need cash from the lower levels, if they are saving the work of territorial administration by letting the locals take care of things internally.

If we do that, however, if we allow all governments to operate independently of their subsidiary units and parent entities, with no taxation or 'revenue sharing' ever happening in one direction or the other, then what is to stop States and Counties and even Cities from issuing their own currencies and taxing on that basis?

Well, maybe they could, although things would get rather cumbersome for citizens who would need to juggle up to four separate currencies in order to appease all applicable governments. Probably simpler for all of us if we all operate with a single currency?

But, as economist Mosler pointed out with his business-card example, children and adults and governments often won't do the work which is demanded of them by their parents unless they are paid for it either with some commodity which they would

individually find useful, or else with some kind of currency which is in demand by someone else, especially by a higher government.

Thus, if the Fed really wants everyone in the nation to be using the same currency, then they will require a certain amount of that currency in periodic taxation, either from subordinate governments or from individual citizens or both. When they know that they must deal with at least that one currency in their daily lives, most citizens and governments will want the simplicity of dealing with only that one currency, although a few still seem to be getting into the digital alternatives notwithstanding their volatility.

But, we do have a national sales tax in our model, so hopefully that will be enough motivation to maintain some amount of Dollars in their cash portfolios, so those will need to be acquired from either direct employment and/or government grants. In any case, all individuals and governments will still be wanting to deal in the currency which the Fed will want in sales taxes from all but the poorest of us. We therefore probably can continue to skate without States needing to make periodic payments to the Fed as a condition of continuing to exist.

Question 132 (continued)

Should the President (or Governor, or other Chief Executive of a jurisdiction) have unilateral authority to establish, adjust, or eliminate Departments in the Executive Branch, or should the Legislature have complete authority, or some kind of hybrid?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we observed that our original Answer -- which apparently went far beyond the scope of the original Question to cover all actions undertaken by a Chief Executive -- did not specify what "a simple majority of the Legislature" means in a multi-house environment. Therefore decided to clean it up at this time.

It could mean a simple majority of each house in the legislature, but it doesn't need to. It could mean a simple majority of a simple majority of houses in the legislature, but it doesn't need to. It could mean a simple majority of all delegates in the legislature combined, but it doesn't need to. It could mean something else.

There are two competing factors to be considered here. One is that the Executive has taken some action which is perceived (at least by some) as being outside of the scope of the position's proper authority, and which therefore should be rescinded as quickly as practical. Other is that you don't want a narrow margin in a polarized environment having too much sway over Executive operations; overturning should have broad support and should be considered carefully.

In a two-house legislature, especially in the polarized environment which was prevalent in America as of this amendment, it's easy for the two houses to have narrow majorities of opposing polarities. As such, it will often be difficult to ever get them to agree on anything, which is a big reason why we figured that we should specialize orders of business in order to get more done. If the faction opposing the Executive narrowly condemns the action as allegedly being outside its authorized scope, and if the faction supporting the Executive narrowly approves the action, then we don't have a really clear idea which side is really correct.

We could then defer decision to the Judiciary Branch, but they have shown themselves to be rather partisan also, and besides their dockets are already too thick to allow quick and decisive response on all similar actions. Legislature should be sufficient. They are the ones who set the parameters, so they should be the ones to assess whether anyone has exceeded those parameters.

If it is an action in an area which was parameterized by one specific house, then the majority approval or disapproval of that one house generally will be sufficient. If it is an action which required approval of both houses, then both houses should be involved, but we may not need both houses to agree, for again that can sometimes be hard. We like the idea that opposite rulings by the two houses should be resolved according to which ruling was passed by the greater majority. If the two houses are exactly tied, then the Executive action stands, because you need 50%+1 in order to achieve the simple majority required in our original Answer.

In the three-house legislature recommended in our model, again the overturn can happen in a single house by simple majority if that one house was the only one involved in passing the original parameter. Or, if two of the three houses were originally involved, then the two-house rule described above may apply. If all three houses were involved, then we imagine that a simple majority of the houses should be both necessary and sufficient, meaning that at least two of the three houses each support the overturn by at least a simple majority. So amended. [Later: Groovy!]

Question 132.5 (continued)

What should happen to any government worker whose agency is eliminated?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we confirmed our previous finding from Session 74, that any administrative reorganization which results in elimination of a currently-filled government position shall cause the affected employee to be put on 60-day 'priority placement', whereby that individual shall be given preferential consideration for any vacancy existing within that period, and then be granted a severance package if found to be not sufficiently qualified for any of these. We now find that this measure should still hold even if we are willing and able to enact the #JobsGuarantee which has been suggested by Kelton and others. For, even if you are trivially able to get paid work repaving local streets and highways, you may for some reason prefer to stay within the government sector as long as you can, so if you have built up a certain amount of tenure then you should have that option for at least a little while. After 60 days, if we cannot find similar work for you within that governmental structure, then we will need for you to accept other forms of work, or similar forms with other employers.

Question 133 (continued)

Should the President have full authority (which could then be delegated to the Vice-President or to other subordinate staff) to name Department heads and other appointees without Congressional approval?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we amended our finding from Session 75, to specify which house(s) of Congress should be involved in the confirmation or rejection of any nomination for a Department head or Bureau chief.

We now feel that this authority should reside in the Senate in the specific case of the U.S. Congress. For, we have by now come to believe that most items of business should be dispatched within a single house, in order to improve legislative efficiency and reduce backlogs. (However, we observed at this time that the document which we are now calling our 'General Summary' (being the former 'Executive Summary') still had under Answer 261.7 that "We should continue to require all houses to evaluate all bills", so we will need to address that directly.) Besides, in the specific case of Executive appointments, if we are to hold true to the idea that the Executive Branch reports to the Legislative, then it would constitute 'mixed signals from the employer' if one house approves an appointment and another house disapproves.

In our proposed division of labor, the population-based house (being the House of Representatives in the current model) would focus on entitlement programs and other measures which mostly affect our population centers, the area-based house (doesn't exist in current real life) would focus on issues affecting our physical environment, and the 'upper' house (such as the U.S. Senate) would deal with issues affecting the entity (Nation, State, World, etc.) as a whole. This latter mission would necessarily include appointments to dispatch key functions within the public administration.

This is similar to how we do things now, with the U.S. Senate being asked to confirm all nominations offered by the Executive Branch, so good, one less thing to change.

We generalize this policy to all governments at all levels: If you have more than one house in your legislature, then the 'upper' house (that is, the house which contains the fewest members) should be the one which considers any senior appointments to your public administration. You can continue to have measures in place for internal vetoes within your legislature, such that a sufficient majority of one or more other houses might be sufficient to overrule a senatorial confirmation or rejection, any such procedures probably needing to vary with the ever-evolving political climate.

Question 261.7 (continued)

Should all houses of Congress be required to approve any general piece of legislation as a condition of its being enacted, or shall we allow houses to 'specialize' on different areas of legislative business?

While amending Answer 133 in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we found a problem in our rather-quick conclusion from October 2010, that we should continue to require all houses to evaluate all bills. We had since come to believe that most items of business should be dispatched within a single house, in order to improve legislative efficiency and reduce backlogs. However, that policy was never written into our Answer 261.7 before this, although the possibility was suggested in Answer 275.5, plus we have a note from an A280 amendment in September 2019 that we had decided earlier that year to allocate items of business to different Houses by category, so okay then that's part of why we are going through all this stuff again.

Here for cross-reference is the original language from Session 141:

Could be faster if we allow houses to specialize, but per Session 141 you may lose the benefit of multiple independent reviews, and you would need a macro Steering Committee, same as at the Global level, to decide which bills go

where, which could be both dilatory and unduly influenceable by political motivations.

It's a judgment call, but non-author panelist felt that we should continue to require all houses to evaluate all bills, provided that we do certain things to the Amendment process (to be decided in the next Subsection) to streamline the process.

This same sentiment was expressed very recently by a Twitter correspondent, who also disliked our model of internal legislative vetoes as allegedly gumming up the works even more. However, he also favored completely abolishing the Senate in favor of just a single population-based house to manage Everything, so he probably was not really qualified to render an objective assessment of our model.

His statement did confirm our original finding, though, that a specialized legislature would need some way of determining where bills should go, and generally might create more problems than it solves. It is indeed a non-trivial decision.

As we think about it more at this time, though, we must continue to feel that the current system ain't makin' it, this business of making sure that each of two houses approves the exact same bill with the exact same language, in the process adding numerous amendments back and forth, and often requiring the intercession of a 'conference committee' to hash out the squabbles and produce a compromise version which nobody really likes but a majority can at least minimally tolerate.

We must continue to feel that there is a better way, by allowing at least some items of legislation to speed through only a single house, with any other houses able to veto the measures only if they have sufficiently high countermajorities.

But yeah, there does lie the problem of how to determine which house evaluates each bill, plus how you handle the fact that some bills relate to more than one house.

We are now thinking of a hybridized model which might possibly solve Everything.

We already have from Answer 271 that each new bill should go first to a 'Bill Assignment Committee', to determine whether it should be evaluated by any committees other than that/those designated by the bill authors. We also have from Answer 272.3 that there should be an 'Executive Oversight' Committee within the per-State house, so we now add that each house should maintain a 'Legislative Oversight' Committee to monitor the other two houses.

Then, instead of waiting for one house to pass a version of the bill before another house ever sees it, we maybe could it make standard procedure that each house's Bill Assignment Committee routinely notifies the other two Legislative Oversight Committees at the same time that it assigns the bill internally.

Then, if one or both of the other houses feel that the bill lies partly or exclusively within its province, then it can effect a ruling on the bill before the originating house gets a chance to do so. Basically, whichever house effects a ruling on the bill first gets to do so by simple majority, and any house which would reach a different ruling must do so by supermajority as previously established in Answer 280.

This approach may still need some attention, but at least it has the advantage of obviating a macro Steering Committee for the entire Congress, plus it actually gives legislators a motivation to act on items quickly and get them off the calendar.

Question 171 (continued)

What functions or issues should be handled by the Bureau of Agriculture?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we found a problem in the statement that the "General mission of the Bureau of Agriculture should be to maximize the quantity and quality of our agricultural output." We have since come to recognize (and we believe that it is articulated several times through this document) that maximization may not always (if ever) be in our best interest, lest we burn out the Earth and create famine conditions for ourselves later on. Our agricultural production must be both plentiful and sustainable, so our revised phrasing is to "optimize" our agricultural output.

Question 197 (continued)

Should postal services continue to be managed by government, or should they be devolved to private enterprise?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we found a problem in our finding from May 2004. Original language:

Panelist in Session 118 asserted that it was then a private organization [challenged later], and suggested that it was doing okay as it was. Second panelist noted that the Post Office kept raising its rates, and suggested that maybe government should be overseeing rates and/or operations.

Moderator was leery of a private postal organization, since most regular people still send billions of pieces of mail every day, and they depend on an organization doing this reliably and at relatively low cost; if we make it private, then it would be a monopoly, and so would require government oversight. First panelist claimed that most mail would turn over to electronic venues in the near future, so a private postal service would need to keep rates low and the service reliable in order to remain competitive. Second panelist appeared to concur. Also, private organizations would have the means and motivation to operate more efficiently than a government organization would, and they also would be motivated to minimize the costs of any employee benefits.

We now observe a couple of key things. First, although many communications do now happen electronically, we have not gotten away from postal communications nearly as much as the panelists predicted back in 2004. Second, we were specifically seeing a need for public oversight of the postal process during the 2020 presidential election, in which certain communities needed to rely on mail-in ballots because physical polling sites were severely restricted and required standing in line for up to seven hours. There were allegations that Commissioner DeJoy had instructed his subordinates to deliberately delay certain postal deliveries in order to keep some ballots from getting through, or at the very least had maintained a highly inefficient operation during the election season.

Actually, for a third observation, there has recently been a big push for prisons to be remanded from private to public control, so the same basic principle can apply here: For such an important function, we must be able to exercise public oversight and control, whether we outsource certain functional elements to private firms or not.

We therefore at this time restored Postal Service as a Federal function, and assigned it back within what we are now calling the Public Services Department.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Upon reconsidering Question 197 for the Third Pass in February 2021, we decided to restore Postal Service as a Federal function, and assigned it back as a Bureau within what we are now calling the Public Services Department.

Question 201 (continued)

Shouldn't the election of Senators and Representatives be administered at the State level?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we found a problem in our rather-quick conclusion from Session 118. Actually, it was not really the conclusion so much in this instance, but rather the limiting nature of the Question. Because this Question was organized under Section I-D, it preceded the spot in Section I-E where we decided to have three houses in the American Congress. We have made a note to fix that sequencing in the Fifth Pass.

In the meantime, we needed to consider now how the delegates from our proposed third house should be elected. To do that, we refreshed our recollection at this time as to the following excerpt from Answer 261.1 as recorded in our General Summary:

It would be better to base the per-Area districts on actual geographic Area, rather than according to State boundaries, because it is the geographic Area that the delegates are supposed to be representing, and because we would like to reduce the impact of State politics on the process; also better to have national uniformity in determining representation within a national legislature. Districts in the per-Area house generally should be 2°x2° in size and shape, approximately bounded by odd-numbered latitudes and longitudes, but actually following the nearest County borders....

This statement (which we saw no reason to challenge any further at this time, in that we recall that it had already been through multiple wringings over the years) tells us that we want to back away from State involvement in elections for the per-Area house. We don't want to burden the Fed with regional elections, so that leaves the Counties as our go-to. If we are following County borders with our delegation boundaries, then it makes sense for the Counties to collect their internal data and combine their totals with their neighboring Counties to determine the final results.

So, let's say that I'm one of 16 Counties in my local per-Area delegation, and that I've finished adding up the votes from my County. To whom do I report these figures if not to the Fed or any State? What is the 'capital' of our delegation? It seems to us that regional delegations should be allowed to determine their own procedures if they prefer, as long as we get to the same base result. If they cannot otherwise agree, then as a default we suggest reporting to the Elections office for the County with the highest population in your delegation. They then would have the responsibility for reporting the total results back to the individual Counties and upward to the Fed and outward to the applicable news media.

Question 240

Should the Patent Office and Copyright Office be financially self-sustaining?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we observed that this is one of several Questions (along with Question 232 on a hypothetical agency for 'Language Services') which we originally addressed in the context of a balanced (or surplus) Federal budget. This was before we read Stephanie Kelton's book "The Deficit Myth", which argued that we do not really need to be hung up on maintaining a limited Federal budget, since the Fed is the issuer of its own currency, and can create or destroy Digital Dollars whenever it wants to.

We are still wrestling with this challenge to one of our core paradigms, and we may change our mind further as we continue to do so, but for the present our feeling is that the correct Answer may lie somewhere in the middle. We maybe can (and maybe should) get away from a balanced Federal budget if it helps us to address what Kelton calls "The Deficits That Matter", but maybe it's not healthy to simply throw unlimited quantities of Digital Dollars at every agency and program which wants them, because Dollars cease to have any meaning or value if anyone can add them to his bank account as easily as turning on a faucet.

Kelton does include the provision that creation of Digital Dollars should not be quite infinite, and that any introduction of new Dollars into the economy must not cause Inflation to exceed our designated targets. But, is that provision enough?

We still have a couple of concerns. One is that Inflation may suddenly pounce upon us later, after workers and lenders and benefit recipients stop hoarding their Dollars for retirement and start spending actively, so our current ability to control Inflation does not necessarily mean that we always can. If that suddenly happens, then the Fed would need to reverse the flow of new Dollars into the economy, which would mean that some recipients who had come to depend upon them would be left without. Might be better to obviate any such unhealthful dependency.

Other concern is that even in an Inflation-controlled environment, a Federal budget which is not balanced -- or at least kept within some specific limits -- can mean that government agencies such as the Copyright and Patent Offices can request program budgets in any desired amount, so the workers all become gozillionaires, which would be inappropriate (wouldn't it?) even if they all did their jobs to optimal capacity, which would be far from a lock if they had huge guaranteed salaries.

It therefore seems to us that we still would benefit from a balanced or surplus Federal budget. Even if it is not a strict necessity, we reduce the risk of Inflation and increase our economic stability if we treat Dollars as scarce quantities to be managed

prudently even within the Federal government. We do that by keeping the Federal budget within certain limited constraints.

Specifically, we still like the idea of taxing from our wealthiest citizens in order to care for our poorer ones, on grounds that they have benefitted excessively from the work performed by the so-called 'lower classes' and need to pay some back in order to make things right. But, we don't want to overpenalize the wealthier individuals either, because that wouldn't be right either, which is why we previously figured out that any Wealth Tax should be no more than 30% of one's overall revenue.

Where and how do we draw that line? Public administrations (particularly including the Fed) should keep some cap on their spending, and should specifically spend no more than 30% on the types of programs which would be funded by a Wealth Tax according to our Answer 418. We maintain those limits by making sure that the total of any Revenue equals the total of any Expense, unless we specifically approve any variance for some given purpose.

In sum, we would continue to like agencies such as Copyrights and Patents to be fiscally self-sustaining if they practically can, so that we have more flexibility in other areas of the Federal budget without needing to raise Taxes or risk higher Inflation. However, as we originally stated, we recognize that this may not always be a practical possibility, and that in any case we still need agencies such as Copyrights and Patents to exist for their important public service, so we are still not requiring internal fiscal balance as a condition of the services getting performed as needed.

That was a long way of saying 'no change', but it was important to show that we considered the 'MMT' perspective as part of this evaluation.

Question 250 (continued)

*What shall this agency be named, and where shall it report?
4-feb-2021c*

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we observed that we still had not settled upon a better name for our Subsubsubsection I-D-1-h-viii, which we had originally titled "Social Integration", but which we earlier observed sounded more like an 'affirmative action' program than a provision of economic help to immigrants and homeless and other needy.

We now officially renamed that Outline element as "Public Assistance", both because it is more descriptive of the subject matter, and because after multiple looks at Q250 we eventually settled upon "Public Assistance" as the name of the agency which would manage our proposed network of Federal 'help centers' which provide food and housing and job referral and numerous other services to all residents in need.

Question 258.1 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the State agencies listed in Answer 135?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we observed that we were still conflicted as to the practice of 'redlining', that is, assessing higher rates of Comprehensive auto-insurance coverage according to the area of one's residence. We settled the issue at this time.

Yes, as we originally observed, there is an actuarial argument in favor of Redlining, and there is a social argument against it. On balance, at least in the specific case of America (maybe other nations can do things differently), we find that the social argument needs to prevail.

Redlining might have been okay if we did not have our extensive history of racial segregation and racial subjugation in America, but in the actual case we need to reverse those historical trends by making sure to avoid any practice which suggests even the possibility of racial profiling. If it even looks as though we might possibly be using an actuarial argument as an excuse to continue subjugating certain ethnic communities by making it harder for them to own cars and drive cars and generally advance in their social station, then that very perception is a social problem in itself.

In sum, even if Redlining is a generally-acceptable actuarial practice, we in America have effectively waived our privilege of applying it, as a result of our racist heritage.

Question 258.4 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the County agencies listed in Answer 135?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we were confused by where it said that "Hospitals should be reporting all deaths to the Coroner's Bureau." Seems trivial to us that they would want to do that without being told, because otherwise they would be stuck with a lot of dead bodies, but a panelist at Session 132 claimed that it was not always happening, so we have stated it here to make sure, and at this time clarified the General Summary.

We also augmented our previous finding from Session 133 that "Utility allowances can be provided to people who sign statements certifying financial need." It now occurs to us that we can and should deny benefits if one is living in a million-dollar home, so as a matter of public policy -- even if the applicant attempts by signature to certify otherwise -- such benefits can be denied if the applicant is residing in a zone containing highly-developed properties.

Question 258.7 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the City agencies listed in Answer 135?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we were concerned with the statement that "Communities may decide to enact certain regulations on the use of public facilities," for it would seem to permit communities to discriminate against certain would-be users on the basis of race or some other factor which ideally should not make a difference to anything.

Here is the language from when we originally decided that policy:

Parks - Should/could the use of Parks be limited to City residents? We generally preferred in Session 134 (August 2006) to have minimal regulation and maximum freedoms, but could see a community deciding that it wants to have certain regulations for certain facilities, or requiring reservations for facilities where there's a lot of competition, or issuing use permits (without requiring evidence of liability insurance) to generate fees, and possibly establishing different fees for residents and non-residents, on the premise

that residents pay more in taxes. Generally, though, best to keep Parks wide open to everyone with no restriction.

Therefore clarified the General Summary that the community decision should extend only to whether to allow non-residents to use municipal facilities.

Question 261.5 (continued)

What provisions shall we make in case of mid-term vacancy?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we observed that we still had a note that "a special election [would ensue] if no candidate from the previous election accepts." This contradicts our Answer 112, that "popular elections should not happen any more frequently than once every two years". It also violates our Answer 124.76, that "if there is no designated order of succession (especially in the case of a Legislator), then [we should] give the spouse first option to fill the vacancy."

Therefore amending A261.5 at this time for consistency and improved timeliness. To sum: Mid-term vacancy shall be filled by the spouse unless overruled by a 3/5 vote of the population-based house of the applicable Legislature. In that case, assign to the highest-ranking candidate from the previous election who accepts within the first 10 days of eligibility. If no previous candidate accepts in time, then Legislature may leave the delegation unrepresented to the next biennial election, or (recommended) decide upon a successor to fill the remaining term, on conditions that all candidates for the successorship must have been permanent residents of the delegation at the time that the vacancy was created, that they are nominated using the #OpenBallot method, and that the winner is selected using the #YesNoAbstain method.

Question 263.3 (continued)

Any problems with introduction of legislation, and other business prior to committee referral?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we observed that our Answer as then stated included a couple of elements which were introduced at different times, and which could be perceived (perhaps correctly) as being at least somewhat contradictory.

Specifically: We added a note in May 2019 reading that "Certain 'special orders' supported for introduction by a certain number/percentage of delegates may automatically take precedence over all items in regular calendar." We also added a note in March 2020 that we should "prioritize bills from those legislators who have introduced the fewest bills during that session." We now figure that we can do both.

To sum: All pending items of legislative business may be prioritized first according to how many sponsoring members each item has. A member who philosophically opposes a bill may still sponsor it for expedited consideration in order to get a vote of rejection on the record and thus preclude the bill from further consideration in that session. If there is a tie for most cosponsors (easily possible if one is in a partisan environment where blocs of delegates vote on Everything in the same way), then those bills may be prioritized secondarily according to who has introduced the fewest bills during that session. Time of introduction may be the tertiary factor. As

originally stated, the default sequence may be modified by simple majority between agenda items, or by a supermajority if any item is currently pending.

It was originally supposed to be a 2/3 majority needed in order to supplant a pending agenda item, but we figured at this time that it might be an excessive requirement, and in any case we considered how best to establish the necessary majority level quickly if one is in an emergency situation of some kind. We then thought to compare this procedure with our 'cloture' requirement as expressed in Answer 277.3 for concluding debate on any pending agenda item, but behold we found an inconsistency there. One statement indicated that a cloture motion may be introduced every hour, that the vote must be taken quickly, and that a 5/8 majority will be necessary for passage. Another statement indicated that the cloture motion may be submitted by petition outside of the debate forum, and that a 3/5 majority is sufficient in order to be compelling.

We therefore concluded Answer 263.3 by referring to the cloture provisions in Answer 277.3 as also applying in order to effect any calendar changes while an agenda item is currently pending, and then we will fix Answer 277.3 separately.

Question 277.3 (continued)

Under what conditions (if any) shall an individual legislator or minority faction be permitted to Filibuster, that is, to force a delay in taking up a particular question, or in taking the vote on any pending question?

Upon reconsidering Question 263.3 for the Third Pass in February 2021, we decided to clean up certain inconsistencies appearing in our proposed 'cloture' procedure, so that the same procedure may also be used to interrupt any pending item in favor of some measure which is perceived to have a higher priority.

Initial procedure adopted in January 2019 was that any motion to adjust the order of business should be submitted by petition, and shall require only a simple majority if merely making a certain item the next order of business, but shall require a 3/5 majority in order to stop an item currently pending. Provision added in January 2020 was for a regular floor motion to be introduced up to every hour, to be approved by a 5/8 majority in order to carry.

On balance, we now find that the petition procedure is better, so that we do not need to take up valuable floor time with procedural matters. Petition need not wait until the top of the hour in order to take effect, better to proceed immediately if the need appears to be that urgent. We also now like the lighter (that is, 3/5) voting requirement, since it is only a resequencing and not a substantive vote.

In sum, we were right the first time.

Question 271 (continued)

Standing committees having been designated for a given house, who shall determine what standing committee(s) shall evaluate a given piece of proposed legislation, or whether a special committee shall be formed?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we confirmed our finding from May 2020 that no 'Steering' or 'Bill Assignment'

committee should have any say over the sequence with which new items of business reach the full assembly. We now stand with the procedure designated in Answer 263.3 for automatic scheduling of all bills except where modified by a proper majority of the full assembly.

Question 272.3 (continued)

Should there be a committee to perform oversight of the Executive Branch as may be needed?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we confirmed our finding from Session 141, that the 'Executive Oversight' Committee should reside within the per-State house alone. There is a temptation to allow such a committee within each house, but to the extent that we practically can we should be specializing orders of business among the different houses, in order to improve overall efficiency, and again we don't want to send mixed signals to the Administration by simultaneously approving and condemning a given action. If you as a delegate in a 'lower' house are unable to persuade either of your senators that a given action needs overturning, then perhaps it is you who must change your mind.

However, we did have a concern about the last statement in the posted Answer, which included that "positions are to be left vacant until appointment is confirmed." We did not find this note in the above entries for this Question, so it may have been an interpolation erroneously reached while composing a meeting summary or newsletter report or something. In any case, we now observe that the position does not really remain vacant, since (as we often saw towards the end of the 2017-2021 administration) they often are populated by 'acting' executives who operate without explicit Congressional approval. We now therefore amended the line to read that "the positions are nominally left vacant until appointment is confirmed, while the functions get discharged by 'acting' executives whom Congress might not like."

Question 304a (continued)

To what extent shall government be involved in disapproving initiatives/referenda for alleged unconstitutionality?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we observed a conflict between our A281.8 finding from Session 147 that a 3/4 popular vote is necessary for amending a society's constitution, and our A304a finding from May 2020 that a 2/3 popular vote is sufficient.

There are a few reasons why we now find in favor of the lighter requirement.

One reason is that the General Summary note for A281.8 included a note that "we could possibly be talked into reducing [the 3/4] requirement".

Second reason is that the 2/3 requirement is used by societies such as Greater Los Angeles Area Mensa for membership approval of amendments to their bylaws.

Third reason is that the previous Constitutional provision called for approval by 3/4 of the State Legislatures, and we now figure that it's a lot easier to get 3/4 approval within the political community (especially with our current liberalities when it comes to gerrymandering and campaign finance and other forms of electoral manipulation)

than among the general population. Getting even 2/3 of our population to agree upon anything would be pretty momentous, and probably should be deemed sufficient for constitutional amendment, whereas getting 3/4 of the people to agree on anything would be all but impossible.

Question 643.7

Do we have any protocols to suggest as to locker-room celebrations following championship victories or other big wins?

Added in February 2021: We are not about to tell athletes how to celebrate who have achieved their level of achievement after lifetimes of effort, provided only that they don't openly trash their opponents in the process, which they usually do not, so we do not see a problem there needing to be addressed.

The one hangup which we do have about locker-room celebrations is when the sitting U.S. President aggrandizes himself by interrupting the festivities with a phone call or telegram or other message of congratulation.

We feel that it is inappropriate to steal a share of the team's spotlight at its most visible moment, that it is unfair to wield political power through manipulation of a private athletic contest and the media's coverage of it, and that it is abusive toward both the team members and their fans to require everyone to shush up their celebrations so that the President can squeeze in his few pre-programmed words.

We understand the theoretical philosophy behind it, that we are seeking to elevate the team's achievement by showing that it is being recognized at the highest official level of national government. However, there are other ways of doing that, whether by a tweet or press release after the game, and/or by inviting the team for a visit at the White House. Both of those still have a smaller share of the problem of the President arranging to get himself covered on the piggybacks of champion athletes, but it's a little more passive and a little more dignified, so we can let that go.

However, stay out of the locker room, would you please? You didn't march across that field, they did. This is their moment, this is their time. Don't try to steal any of their sunshine and suddenly make it all about you. Butt out. Thanks much.

Question 699

What position shall we take on so-called 'possessory credits'?

As another exceptional usage which we detected in February 2021, the 1975 film *The Man Who Would Be King* stated in its opening credits that it was a "John Huston - John Foreman" film. Huston was the Director, and Foreman was the Producer.

Question 391.6

Should retired Presidents receive any periodic intelligence briefings?

Added in February 2021: No. If they are no longer actively involved in the administration of government, then they generally do not "need to know" the same level of sensitive information that the current national-security team does. Further, we can easily imagine some former President deliberately misusing intelligence

information in order to spite the successor who defeated him, or as political payback for favors rendered during the Presidential term, or for some other nefarious reason.

If any sitting President ever actually wishes to consult her predecessor on some matter of foreign policy or homeland defense, then she should be the one to decide on a case-by-case basis how much of an update her predecessor requires in order to render sound advice on the matter. Beyond that, let the retirees retire.

We were surprised to learn in early 2021 that providing intelligence briefings to former Presidents was even a thing, not until the question came up about whether the guy who vacated the White House that year should receive such briefings. Answer seems so trivially obvious to us that it never occurred to us to formally ask the Question, but behold we have now done so.

We have temporarily staged this Question in Part II because Question 391.5 also spoke about former Presidents, in the context of pension policy. We will find a more suitable sequence for this Question in the Fifth Pass.

Question 358.1

To what extent (if at all) should 'growth' be considered a factor of a good-or-healthy economy?

Added in February 2021, after reading and hearing numerous pundits insist that an economy must continually 'grow' or else we must deem it a failure:

It never really occurred to us in our original deliberations that we really needed a strategic goal about how much to produce now versus what we did last year versus what we plan or anticipate for next year. Other nations have made 'five-year plans' and other strategic formulations, and we had always held that to be a matter of national option, not that we ever placed that much stock in such long-range planning which could be upset by the smallest perturbation from previous prediction.

We previously stated in our model that we should be producing and distributing enough that we don't have any poverty anywhere. We have that production levels should not change so rapidly that there is excessive variation in the purchasing power of our base currency unit. We have that productivity should be sustainable, and that it should not excessively impact our physical environment.

As long as those aims are continually achieved, we have not been too concerned with the 'direction' which a given economy might take. We see now that we should be.

On balance, we actually agree with the pundits here, as a change from the usual thing. It may not need to be considered one of the factors decided in Answer 358 as being essential for a 'good-or-healthy' economy, but at least it could be considered a supplemental factor for an ideal economy, that per-capita production should grow at a slow-but-steady rate. We show this in the following three population scenarios:

If your population is remaining stable, then there still might be a proportional shift towards either more children or more elderly, either of whom might require more resources and attention than working young adults, in which case you will need increasing economic production in order to keep everyone's needs satisfied. Even if the proportions also are remaining the same, we don't want an environment (do

we?) in which every week and every month and every year are exactly the same as the previous: We want something to look forward to, some incentive to keep us working hard, so we want the opportunity to improve our individual standards of life as we grow older, which means that production must still increase. It just needs to increase slowly enough that our Tommy's burgers retain the same price, but now we merely have more money left over to purchase additional goods and services.

If your population is decreasing, then at least for a short while your previous equipment and techniques will produce about the same level of total production, which can now be spread among fewer people, so your per-capita average will be going up. If the population decreases sustains, such that your labor force is diminishing to where it cannot meet previous production levels, you likewise should be able to lower production more gradually than your population is diminishing, such that your per-capita average still goes up, until the few who remain basically control the entire Earth, at which point the population will eventually start to rise again.

If your population is increasing (obviously the most common scenario in most regions over most recent centuries), then it can be harder to keep overall production going up enough even to keep up the previous averages, but we should try to exceed those levels all the same. If we are experiencing lower qualities of individual life because more people are scrambling for fewer resources, then we're doing something wrong, and we need to make some adjustments somewhere. Even if we are making our previous averages, the difficulty in doing so might lead some people to resort to violent and other criminal means of acquiring their wealth, and we don't want that. We should aim for (and achieve) a higher per-capita average even with increasing population, so that it's still easy for people to have stuff and do stuff.

Question 277.4 (continued)

Should we continue to allow/encourage legislators to give speeches to empty chambers?

Added in February 2021: Pursuant to our previous finding that we should discourage or perhaps disallow the practice of giving speeches to empty rooms, as being both ridiculous and deceptive, we now add a provision that the C-SPAN chyron which identifies the speaker and the topic should always (or at least frequently) also display the number of legislators physically present in the chamber. That way, we know whether the chamber is empty or near-empty even if the director does not ever call for a master shot. [Later: Yeah!]

Question 610 (continued)

Shall there continue to be such a thing as 'indecent exposure', either in person or over photographic media?

Amended in February 2021: Elizabeth Hurley was recently criticized for a near-topless photo which we find totally appropriate. Thus, as an exception to our previous rule about not e-transmitting provocative images for sexual harassment, you should be able to post them on your own social media, where the only people who can ever see it are your followers who have opted in. If any kids see it, then that goes to our previous point that nudity by itself is okay, again because such images are in public display all over Europe and the Earth is still spinning.

Question 367 (continued)

But, where does the local dropoff center of the chosen network get the power to issue credit?

This was the first element from Part II which we re-questioned while reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass.

Even though (as we previously discussed) Kelton and Hailstones both stated that money basically comes from people doing work for the State, and that only after initial payment does it get circulated within the economy for a medium of exchange, we have recently been observing (as we have also discussed) more of an impetus among certain political commentators for a 'Universal Basic Income' (UBI). Some folks call for only a smaller amount just to fill in gaps during a pandemic or other social emergency, while others want an amount large enough to cover everyone's basic needs at all times.

This latter option echoes the old 'to each according to his need' trope associated with the Communist philosophy, the merits and demerits of which may go beyond the scope of Question 367, and which we have discussed extensively elsewhere. In any case, if and as we begin to shift more in that direction, we would be shifting away from our classic merit-based system to more of a need-based system.

If that happens, then it would shift the focus of Answer 367, such that credit comes more (if not entirely) from merely existing as a citizen recipient of government funds. To allow for this possibility without unduly encouraging it, we are amending our Answer to read that "Individual credit comes generally from having previously produced some commodity or provided some service, although we allow for the possibility of some supplemental credit deriving from public aid."

Question 368 (continued)

How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we reconsidered whether or not Rent should be a factor in computing the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

We had found in Session 203 that Rent "varies too much over time to be useful in a Consumer Price Index, being too susceptible to changes in housing inventories and population distributions." We now observe, however, that the Rent going up continually for a family living in the same dwelling over a period of years can be taken as an indication that prices are moving up generally. Conversely, if my Rent stays the same over a 20-year period, then that can be taken as an indication that prices are generally remaining stable.

Maybe we can somehow harmonize these two factors. Maybe we should continue not to include Rents charged to new tenants, because again those can fluctuate wildly according to rapidly-shifting supply and demand within a given market, and also vary widely from one market to the next. However, maybe we should somehow reflect in the CPI what happens to Rents for tenants who have remained in their dwellings for at least a year. We thus amended our Answer at this time.

Question 374 (continued)

However we determine the aggregate amount of credit, how shall it be initially apportioned among the different segments of the economy?

While reviewing the General Summary again in February 2021 as part of the Third Pass, we reevaluated the statement from Session 204, that "insofar as we need any additional amount of credit in circulation in order to stabilize our base currency unit, and/or for transitional goals of feeding/educating our poor and improving our infrastructure, we should be taking first from those who have the most".

It occurred to us now, in the context of having recently read about 'Modern Monetary Theory' (MMT) in Stephanie Kelton's book "The Deficit Myth", that the introduction of additional credit units into the economy does not necessarily imply after all that such units must be 'taken' from anyone else. If we are able to maintain our goal of No (or at least Limited) Inflation, and if the extra credits don't have the effect of reducing people's incentive to work, then the credits can be created from nothing by the central authority with only a few keystrokes, if (as with the American Dollar) they are only digital quantities which are allocated by the central authority as shares of the overall pool of available goods and services, as opposed to being 'backed' by possession of some physical commodity.

In other words, it may not really be necessary to 'tax' anyone for anything in a digital economy. Or, if we do tax, then it may not be necessary for tax 'revenue' to equal or exceed public 'expenses', again if we can otherwise somehow maintain our basic economic goals.

For that reason, we are at least amending our Answer to include the phrase "and insofar as we need to take credit from certain other entities in order to maintain currency stability". But, is that enough?

This goes to a Basic Principle about whether we really 'need' any kind of Taxation at all, so we now need to confront it more directly in a Kelton/MMT context before we can reconsider any specific techniques or proportions suggested in Section II-C.

So then, what if we had an economic system in which the central authority did not need to 'tax' anyone for anything at all? As we noted for Q416 during the original Kelton reading in June 2020, and for Q412 earlier this month, the Mosler premise is that taxes are there to get people to work for the State, because they must work in order to earn the sole currency which can pay the taxes, so we give them the money in wages and make them pay some of it back in taxes. But, do we really need such an incentive in an economy where private interests own the means of production?

In order to free ourselves from the chains of America-based paradigms, let us now begin to look at a hypothetical new nation called 'Antaxia'. Antaxia issues its own digital currency of 'Flubbits' in order to facilitate economic communication, but does not demand any Flubbits to be returned to the issuing authority.

What is life like in Antaxia? Can they make a system work where there is money but no taxation? If so, then would their system be better or worse than how we currently do things in our own country?

Work still needs to be performed in Antaxia. Food must be grown and prepared and served, garbage must be collected and processed, roads or other public conveyances must be built and maintained, electricity and clean water must be provided, etc., etc.

Antaxia is working to develop robotic technologies to perform at least some of these duties, but for the foreseeable future will continue to require some amount of human labor in order to maintain at least a decent standard of living for all its residents.

Some of these services benefit individuals mostly, and the society only indirectly. Other services benefit the society up front, and its individuals only indirectly. They therefore definitely need at least some amount of public employment, even if they opt to leave certain enterprises within the private sector.

For whatever amount of work needs to be done for the public, how does Antaxia induce a portion of its residents to perform this labor, and to perform it well? They could rely on volunteer service, which may work to a certain extent (such as with a volunteer Fire Department), but some of the work needed is nasty and/or requires a level of professional training to which their volunteers might not want to commit.

One hypothetical manner of inducement which follows from our earlier Q367 discussion is that everyone could bring some of their 'pumpkins' or other physical commodities to the central public pool, where they could be doled out as rewards to those who perform various public services. This approach is impractical on several levels, though: It is inconvenient to carry a bunch of 'pumpkins' around to pay for any product or service, inventories must be managed aggressively to mitigate spoilage, storage and retrieval can be logistically problematic, and (perhaps most importantly) some Antaxians contribute their 'value added' in the form of services and therefore do not have a large supply of extra crops to use for payment.

Antaxia therefore figured out a long time ago that it would assign a certain number of 'points' to each public worker, in accordance with the type of work performed and the amount of effort expended on it. Those 'points' could then be used by those workers as credit to do various good things. In order to distinguish those kinds of points from various other kinds of points, the Antaxian administration refers to them as 'Flubbits'. Flubbits are the credit points issued to Antaxians who perform various kinds of work directly for the Antaxian society.

This is where things start to get a little fuzzy. Can the recipients really use these credit points to do various good things? If so, then how and under what conditions?

The set of 'various good things' divides into the subsets of publicly-sourced and privately-sourced good things. We still have not established whether or not Antaxia has any private sector for direct interpersonal marketing, and we also do not know yet how many goods and services can be procured from the Antaxian administration.

Whatever those proportions and parameters end up being, though, those individuals who receive Flubbits from any source will need to be able to redeem them for whichever goods and services are most important to them. Each vendor providing any such good or service must therefore decide how many Flubbits to require in exchange for a given quantity of resources.

But, how shall the issuing authority decide whether to issue 30 Flubbits for this service and 50 Flubbits for something else? And, how shall vendors decide how

many Flubbits to require in exchange for their goods and services? Just what is a Flubbit, anyhow, and what is it really worth?

Having read the "Answers To Everything" model, the Antaxians are intrigued by the idea of a fixed definition for their Flubbits, based in real terms upon the relative value of some commodity which everyone needs or wants. Not all Antaxians have any particular craving for Gold or any other 'precious' metals. A few Antaxians don't even pay any Rent, since they prefer to commune with Nature in trees and caves and the open air. The only commodity which all Antaxians require is Food.

Antaxia likes the A2E recommendation to define their base currency unit as the amount required to feed one person retail for one day. So, if you earn at least one Flubbit per day, then at least you are eating that day, if perhaps nothing besides.

Minimum wage in Antaxia is 5 Flubbits for each full day of work. There are some places in Antaxia where you can rent a decent living space for as little as 1 Flubbit per day. Clothes and other personal necessities usually run for a minimum of 1 Flubbit per day on average. A full-time worker in Antaxia can therefore expect to enjoy decent food, decent lodging, decent personal comforts, a margin for treats, and a margin for savings. All other items in Antaxia are priced commensurately.

But, how do these parameters of wage and price get and remain implemented? Does it happen by free-market forces alone, or by governmental manipulation alone, or by some combination?

Part of that problem relates to what a Flubbit is really worth, not just what it is nominally worth. We can define officially that each Flubbit should be able to purchase one day's worth of retail food, but what if no vendor will accept Flubbits as payment for anything? In that case, Flubbits would be worthless in real life, except that maybe they could be used to make tax payments to the government. But, this is Antaxia, and by definition we have no tax payments here. So, totally worthless.

Vendors must have an ongoing motivation to accept the virtual Flubbits in exchange for their real goods and services. In order for that to happen, vendors must have confidence that they will be able to redeem their incoming Flubbits for their own personal goods and services. Everyone must have that confidence simultaneously and continually. If anyone once claims that Flubbits are worthless, and if that claim once goes viral, then vendors will stop accepting Flubbits as payment for anything.

But, you may point out, if they cease to accept Flubbits, and if no one is going to bring any physical 'pumpkins' to their front door for every single little thing, then they aren't going to do any business, and will not receive any assets which they can use to purchase their own goods and services. However, that's where the prospect of alternative currencies comes into play. Although the 'old guard' in Antaxia denounce them for heretics, some of the younger activists have been pushing for increased acceptance of the latest 'Bytepenny' digital currency. Why, we don't know. Maybe it's because they want to be more in tune with a global culture, or maybe they are tired of the 'old guard' in Antaxia and want to have their own economy where the oldsters must either deal in their currency or get locked out.

Whatever the reason(s), the leaders of Antaxia love their traditional Flubbit, and are not eager to see it marginalized in favor of a foreign digital currency which is subject to heavy speculation and wide fluctuation in purchasing power.

Issuing their public wages in the form of Flubbits may not be enough. At some point, if confidence erodes in the Flubbit in favor of the Bytepenny, then workers may demand payment in Bytepennies as a condition of employment, so the Antaxian government would need to either switch to the new foreign currency or fold up.

Again, they can't simply demand the Flubbits back from the citizens, because their national policy is to avoid any kind of taxation.

Do they require all businesses to deal only in Flubbits as a condition of their ongoing permits? Do they then 'raid' businesses which are suspected of accepting any other currencies? Seems rather harsh, and not what we might consider 'utopian'.

Antaxia has considered the alternative of nationalizing all businesses such that operators don't have the option of switching currencies. It may end up going there someday, if truly necessary, but if at all possible they prefer to maintain a 'private sector' which has ongoing motivations to produce and circulate resources for a healthy and vibrant economy. It therefore needs another solution.

One minister in the Antaxian Privy Council recently suggested that they try a big PR campaign to support their traditional currency. Campaign points out that Bytepenny is every bit as fiat as Flubbit, possibly more so, and that people can lose confidence in Bytepenny at least as easily as in Flubbit, and that any economy is happier when their wages and prices remain within predictable and meaningful ranges.

Campaign works temporarily, with most vendors returning to the Flubbit as their primary (or only) method of accepted payment, and there is The Peace. However, the ministers are keeping a watchful eye on the whole business, realizing that public sentiment may shift again someday if they do not take appropriate steps.

In the meantime, the ministers are also watching the relative purchasing power of the Flubbit, to make sure that it remains within the desired range for overall stability and for accurate determination of all wages and prices. What happens when any or all of the five main debit categories fall outside of the designated price ranges?

Inflation and Deflation are both possible in an environment where one is trying to achieve currency stability, and safeguards must be in place for both. Antaxia hesitates to set specific price ranges for Rent or any expense category other than the core measure of retail food, because part of the whole idea is to allow the market to determine the relative value of all goods and services, because (at least in theory) they can do a more accurate job of that than the government, so we want at least to keep the proportions stable among the majority of available goods and services.

After that, we somehow adjust the active Flubbit supply, such that vendors who are more eager for scarcer Flubbits will be willing to lower their prices in order to attract whatever Flubbits they can get. Or, if prices appear to be too low, because Flubbits have already become too scarce, then we somehow introduce more Flubbits into the active economy, so that recipients will feel freer to spend, and vendors will feel freer to restore their default price levels.

But, how does Antaxia adjust its currency supply, either up or down, when it doesn't ever collect any taxes of any kind at all?

In order for vendors to be willing to lower their prices when Flubbits become limited, they must be not only willing but eager to obtain an ongoing stream of Flubbits. In order for that to happen, Flubbits must possess some level and variety of usefulness for them which no alternative currency possesses. If they cannot be used for taxation, and if their utility in the open market is dependent upon the 'faith and credit' which other vendors are voluntarily willing to accord to them, then vendors still may wish to abandon them in favor of more plentiful currencies which are also accepted within the Antaxian economy, notwithstanding the recent PR campaign.

We therefore need a reason for vendors to want Flubbits, and only Flubbits, and not to bother with any other currency which the 'progressives' might want to introduce.

After extensive deliberation, the Antaxian General Assembly has finally enacted a resolution which it hopes will solve this dilemma permanently. Since the whole idea is that one Flubbit must be able to purchase one day's worth of retail food for one person, the Antaxian administration must be willing and able to provide directly a corresponding amount of food to anyone Flubbit-bearer who demands it. Antaxia therefore is giving to itself a measure of 'eminent domain' over its food industry.

Under this new legislation, Antaxia normally allows its food industry to operate as a private sector, so that specific types of food products can find their true relative price levels, and so that worker wages can modify to match. Then, whenever the Antaxian government observes that Flubbits are no longer being accepted within the industry, or that prices have deviated so far away from the default standard that no modification of the currency supply can fix it, the government gets to step in and 'nationalize' the Antaxian food industry. This would mean that restaurant owners would become employees of the Antaxian government, would work for fixed wages instead of variable profits, and would need to set prices in only Flubbits according to governmental specifications.

Restaurant owners are generally going to want to avoid governmental control of their businesses, so they will be motivated out of fear to keep things moving in Flubbits, to move their prices only narrowly when Flubbits become too excessive or scarce, and to restore default prices when the Flubbit supply somehow gets remediated.

Opponents of the bill argued that they didn't want their old romantic freedom-loving Antaxia to be operating in a fear-based environment, with business owners forever afraid of a takeover by The State happening at any moment. Proponents acknowledged the problem, but counterargued that this solution would yet be needed until a better one came along. After all, they maintained, this was still better than a taxation-based environment in which citizens would be forever fearful of The State taking them out individually if they didn't chip in enough on an ongoing basis.

So, now we're clear, we are operating only in Flubbits, restaurant owners are accepting only Flubbits, other citizens and businesses are going to want Flubbits so that they can buy food at their local outlets, so they too will charge only Flubbit-based prices for all their goods and services. Problem momentarily solved.

With that issue out of the way, next challenge is to make sure that Flubbits maintain their desired levels of purchasing power, and that all public services will still be performed indefinitely, regardless of how the overall Flubbit supply may fluctuate.

We would meditate on this issue for the next several days.

Question 671.5

How many genders are there?

We broke off for a bit from our Antaxia meditations to give more active thought to this debate which had been raging as of March 2021 over how many Genders there are, the 'conservatives' claiming Two and the 'progressives' claiming Hundreds.

We now think that we have the problem pretty well sorted out.

The problem here is that different people have recently been using the term 'gender' to refer to two entirely different concepts, so it is small wonder that they are coming up with different Answers as to how many 'genders' there are.

One usage has a more scientific emphasis, while the other is more cultural.

Resolution of the debate will depend directly and solely upon resolution of the difference in vocabulary usage, one way or another.

The 'conservative' view is that there are only two Genders, being Male and Female. They note that it was defined this way in the Bible (Gen. 1:27), and that it has 'always been this way'.

Even though we do not always agree with the so-called 'conservative' views on different issues, yet we must acknowledge that there is a certain amount of logical merit in this particular instance. From a purely biological perspective, 'it takes two to tango' when it comes to creating children and propagating nearly any animal species. Whether by evolution or by 'intelligent design', requiring two participants for every reproduction keeps genetic characteristics mixing and matching, allowing the more favorable combinations to flourish and the less effective to filter out.

In order to require two participants for every reproduction, the two participants must have different biological characteristics. Any one creature who had all the necessary body parts could reproduce alone, and we don't want that. Nature (or perhaps God) has therefore divided our species into two segments, each with a portion of the necessary reproductive tools, not enough to reproduce alone, but enough to mate with one member of the other segment and produce a child.

Therefore, when I am interested in producing a child, I must seek out a willing participant from the other segment. Conversely, if I wish to engage in sex play with a partner on a romantic or recreational basis, and do not wish to produce a child at this time, then I must take precautions to avoid pregnancy if and only if my partner is a member of that opposite segment.

We have come to use the term 'gender' to refer to these two basic segments of population, coming (according to our trusty old *American Heritage*) from the French *gendre* and *genre*, and the Latin *genus*, meaning 'kind' or 'sort'.

Interestingly, we were also planning to note here that the word 'biology' itself comes from the Latin root '*bi-*', meaning two, suggesting that it is the science of how two creatures come together to create more creatures, but it turns out that this would have been incorrect. For (again according to *American Heritage*), the actual root is the Greek *bios*, meaning 'life', so that argument is not available to us.

The 'progressive' view is that there are numerous genders, and that there always have been. Moderator personally attended a workshop during the preceding month which asserted that multigenderism had existed in tribal cultures for millennia, and that it was the all-conquering White European culture which sought to synthesize all populations down to two genders, in its campaign of conformity and control.

They cannot mean here that one person can reproduce alone, nor that reproduction ever requires a third participant. They must acknowledge (mustn't they?) that it always requires exactly two participants to create a new life (even in a laboratory), so they must be referring to some concept other than reproduction.

It seems rather that they are referring to a set of variables which have long been associated in our White European culture with the two biological 'genders', but which do not need to be. For example, in Eisenhower's world, men were attracted to only women, and women were attracted to only men. Men had very short hair, while women had either longer hair or some kind of complex 'permanent'. Men worked outside the home, women worked inside the home. Men asked women out (except for the occasional Sadie Hawkins dance), whereas it was considered 'improper' for any woman to pursue a prospective partner. Different dress codes. On and on.

From this perspective, yeah there could be hundreds of combinations of personal preferences on diverse social topics. A person who technically classifies as Female according to the strict biological definition might 'feel' more like a 'man' in any of a variety of ways, maybe in terms of preferred partners, maybe with an aggressive demeanor, maybe preferring to dress up as Davy Crockett instead of Snow White. Conversely, a person who technically classifies as Male might identify more to the 'feminine' side in posture or attire or lifestyle or anti-competitiveness or whatever.

Having any of these personal characteristics or preferences doesn't change the fact that you were 'assigned' to a certain bio-gender at conception (not at birth, contrary to the popular expression, because the core chromosomal attribute is with you from Moment One), and caused you to develop certain glands and organs needed to perform one of the two key roles of reproduction.

Even if the rapidly-improving field of Sexual Reassignment surgery progresses to the point where an original Female becomes able to impregnate another original Female and produce a viable offspring, or to where an original Male can become impregnated by another original Male and produce a viable offspring (we'll even allow you to cheat with C-section!), that still won't change the XX or XY chromosomal pair which is hard-coded into every cell of your brain and body.

In sum, there are exactly two main 'kinds' or 'sorts' when it comes to selecting partners for reproduction, but there are hundreds of combinations of personal attributes which one might commonly associate with either of the two basic segments. We can use the same expression to describe these two classifications, and keep this enervating debate running indefinitely, or we can agree to use different expressions for them, and move on to other controversies.

Our recommendation to use the original term 'gender' to describe the basic division of population into two segments for purposes of reproduction, for yes we have been using it that way for a really long time, and we usually don't like to change unless there's some compelling reason that we really need to. For the variety of personal

attributes and preferences which are sometimes associated with certain bio-genders, we recommend to use the summary term 'personality' to reflect the fact that there are hundreds or thousands or millions of ways in which one person can be distinct or even rare or even unique among all others in the same society.

Even though the 'conservatives' win the semantic debate this time around, it comes at a price: We all must now make sure that we do not fall into the trap of assuming that a particular 'male' or 'female' possesses all the personality traits which were commonly associated with the two genders during the Eisenhower era. When someone shows up in your Zoom meeting who appears to be a woman, or even announces that she is a woman, you must not assume that she necessarily is attracted to men, or that she has a submissive personality, or that she is content to work in the home, or that she has poor driving skills, or that she can't kick your ass if attacked. She may like football more than you do, she may do your job at least as well as you can, and she maybe can drink you under the table.

At the end of the day, we must treat all individuals as individuals, and recognize that different individuals have different combinations of personality traits which make them unique, or at least uncommon. We do not need to all act in one way or two ways, dress in one way or two ways, make love in one way or two ways, or in any other manner conform to the cultural expectations of the Oppressive Oligarchs. If people are not injuring or threatening others against their will, then we generally (if not always) should Let Them Be, and not pigeonhole them for any purpose beyond the basic biological business of reproduction. Agreed?

Question 374 (continued)

However we determine the aggregate amount of credit, how shall it be initially apportioned among the different segments of the economy?

We meditated for 11 days on our thought experiment of how fictional Antaxia might get along if it did not ever collect any taxes at all. We also sought input from the 'green' panel of Twitter correspondents from outside of Mensa, without result.

It occurs to us as of March 2021 that it might be possible in theory for a nation to get along without taxation, and still maintain a stable currency, but that there are so many factors which could impact prices that it probably is not a practical approach.

Yes, the Antaxian government could release a regular rate of Flubbits into the economy as public wages, and those further Flubbits could pay for the higher quantity and quality of Antaxian resources, such that the Antaxian standard of living rises slowly but steadily without ever raising the price of a hamburger. However, they may not be able to maintain such an environment indefinitely.

Why not? To consider this, we should look further at why prices ever change at all.

In anything resembling a free economic market, Price is a function of both Supply and Demand. Prices for any business need to be high enough to cover the costs of any goods which are sold, the wages of all employees, the costs of Rent and Advertising and Insurance and other forms of 'overhead', and enough of a profit margin to keep the owners interested in maintaining the business. If any of those Supply costs ever go up, then prices usually must rise to match.

In addition, if Demand for a particular product or service ever goes down, then prices must often be lowered in order to attract whatever consumer attention the business owner can get. Or, if Demand goes up, then the business owner will often raise prices in order to take advantage.

Even in a planned Antaxian economy, agricultural yields can vary from one season to the next, if only due to variable weather conditions, so that can affect the availability of different products, and thus the prices which farmers might charge. Technological advances can cause certain products or services to rise in cost, while other costs will fall. If the Antaxians ever trade with outside nations, then the return which they can realize for their merchandise might also vary on a seasonal or directional basis.

Housing might also be an area of price fluctuation. Once the Antaxians devote enough labor and physical resources into providing decent shelter for its entire population, the rate of new housing will need to go way down, and there will need to be a greater shift toward maintenance and cosmetic improvements. As a result, the cost of maintaining a particular house or apartment building might not need to be as high in later years as it was when the property was first developed, and so maybe the rent need not be as high. However, if people were willing to pay those rental rates before, then they probably will still be willing, so the landlords have little practical reason to lower rents. If anything, they may take the opportunity to raise rents whenever they can (even in a rent-controlled environment where rates may change only when new occupants move in), because the Antaxian standard of living is continually improving, so many Antaxians will continue to want to 'trade up' their housing conditions over time as their wages go up, so they will be willing to outbid their lesser-earning counterparts, allowing landlords to raise their rents.

But, if average rents continue to rise, then we have an inflationary environment even if the price of a hamburger manages to remain constant. Or do we? If rent is controlled such that I never need to pay a higher rate as long as I maintain my current residence, and if the price of a hamburger still remains flat, then at least from an individual perspective we have zero inflation.

And, if average rents still go up even in the controlled environment, then an entrepreneurial Antaxian will realize that there still is a market for lower-cost housing, so she might develop additional properties which can increase Supply, motivate existing landlords to compete, and thus restabilize prices.

So, maybe a given business in Antaxia can enjoy a stable rental environment, can have a steady stream of raw resources to create its products, never needs to deal with labor unions demanding wage increases, and in all other manners may continue to operate within a fixed range of expenses. If consumer demand also remains within predictable ranges, then maybe that business need never raise or lower prices by any significant degree. If all such businesses can enjoy similar stability, then maybe Antaxia can get away with a zero-tax system without inflation.

Thus, if any real-life nation wishes to try that approach, then we will not be the ones to say them nay. Let them try it if they really want, and let's see how they do.

In all practical likelihood, however, even with public controls on rents and other prices, Antaxia may need to deal with occasional shifts in Supply and/or Demand, including if someone has been saving up a lot of Flubbits over a period of decades in order to buy a new house, and then suddenly releases them into the economy,

causing the various recipients to buy things which they might not have purchased otherwise, increasing consumer demand and placing upward pressure on prices.

It seems most prudent, therefore, for any non-Antaxian nation to maintain Taxation as a 'stabilizing factor', so that there never is so great a change in the number of Flubbits in active circulation (as distinct from the total number of Flubbits in theoretical existence) as to cause prices to shift upward beyond planned ranges.

We meditated upon these results for another 13 days, to consider the ramifications on other key paradigms to which we all have become accustomed.

For one thing, the Answer to this Question as originally phrased must be that we are not going to restart from scratch, giving everybody exactly the same wealth, any more than we are going to redraw all international borders from scratch as briefly considered in Answer 20. Rather, there must be some amount of 'grandfathering' of previous wealth allocations, partly in recognition of the fair ways in which some of those fortunes were earned, and largely because any such 'great reset' would be highly stressful and disruptive to the society on numerous levels.

However, we probably do not need to let everyone keep all that they have, because several of those fortunes were acquired through illicit means, and at the expense of generations of starving citizens. We must reallocate at least enough wealth to allow all hard-working and law-abiding adults to earn a decent wage and maintain a decent standard of living for themselves and their families.

For another thing, the maintenance of Taxation as a 'stabilizing factor' must imply that it need not always be a positive amount. We might sometimes need a 'negative taxation' in order to keep prices within our desired ranges of stability. We might also need both elements at the same time, as part of our ongoing 'redistribution' process. We might sometimes need to tax the Rich because they have been hoarding so many dollars that their sudden infusion into the economy can spur inflation, and we might sometimes need to anti-tax the Poor (that is, to provide them with a certain amount of 'universal basic income') in order for them to be able to spend on local businesses and keep up the prices of retail hamburgers.

In any case, we apparently cannot actually predict too far in advance how much Taxation and/or Anti-Taxation a given economy will need at any given time, even though we had calculated way back there that we could produce a 13.155% drop in overall middle-class tax rates with our revised spending model. In fact, the Modern Monetary Theory (MMT) tells us that tax rates (whether positive or negative) will need to rise and fall over time, not because spending will want to rise or fall, but rather in response to observed or anticipated shifts in consumer price levels.

Finally, because we are the creators of our own currency in America, we do not need to balance public revenues with public expenses, nor 'borrow' from any source if expenses ever exceed revenues. Keep our public programs operating as desired, and keep prices stable, including by taxing the Rich and/or giving to the Poor as needed, and then all will be well.

We are therefore amending our official Answer by separating our original finding (which is still correct as originally phrased, although not complete) with the amendments needed to bring it in line with MMT.

Question 380 (continued)

To recapitulate, what is the basic form of our preferred economic structure?

In line with the preceding reevaluation of Answer 374 in an MMT context, we also amended our Answer 380 in March 2021 to reflect the fact that we might sometimes need 'anti-taxation' in order to keep prices stable, meaning to allocate more credit shares to lesser-denominated citizens who can spend those units on local businesses.

Question 381 (continued)

Is it better for a larger portion of our collective resources to be devoted to government operations, or for government operations to require the minimum amount of resources; or, does it even matter?

We found in March 2021 that this is another Question which should be reevaluated in an MMT context.

We know from Kelton's "The Deficit Myth" and other sources that the Fed is the issuer of its own currency, and can create or destroy as many dollars as it wants with only a few keystrokes, and does not really need to 'borrow' any funds from any source for the purpose of equating cash intakes with government expenses.

Where we begin to diverge from Kelton is where she claimed that any excess of government spending over tax revenue should be permitted, as long as we do not spur inflation beyond desirable levels. We agree with the statement as far as it goes, but feel that it is not specific enough, and that it does not provide us with a basis for determining that this program deserves \$70 billion while that other program deserves \$90 billion.

We therefore are adding an element that the default goal of any Federal budget still should be for operating revenue to equate with operating expenses. This is the philosophical equivalent of the community (or, at least, its more affluent members) pitching in a certain amount of resources to a central pool for redistribution to those who provide various services in behalf of the public. When the amounts are in continual balance, we probably stand our best shot of keeping consumer prices stable at the same time that public services are getting performed.

Then, if we find or anticipate that prices will still vary from desired levels for some reason, we can inject more dollars as non-operating benefit expenses, or extract more dollars as non-operating taxation, or perhaps both concurrently, as described in our amended Answers 374 and 380. By keeping the operating and non-operating funds separate, we can give ourselves a framework for keeping operating expenses within certain budgeted levels. Kelton may not like this 'fiscal restraint' much, but we find that it is important for her overall goal (which we do agree with) of keeping inflation in check, and it keeps us from getting sucked up into the vortex of wanting to pass infinite budgets for Everything, thus stripping our dollar of any real meaning.

Meanwhile, as Kelton continues to acknowledge, subordinate jurisdictions still will generally (if not always) want to aim for balanced or surplus budgets, because -- depending on the relationship which they have with their parent jurisdictions -- they may not be able to obtain all the goods and services which they require if they experience a shortage of revenue dollars relative to expense dollars. We might in

theory be able to have a system where State and Local governments write checks for any desired amount and for any desired purpose, with the Fed always covering any shortages, so that no government ever 'goes broke'. However, we fear that such an environment will lend itself to a loss of restraint, where prices hyperinflate because governments are injecting the economy with infinite numbers of dollars.

For both Federal and Local levels, any resource has value only if it is scarce. If any one of us can get quadrillions of virtual dollars whenever we want simply by turning on a faucet, then we have no motivation to give up our real resources in exchange for more virtual dollars, so we will hang on to our real resources, and we won't trade, and we will all suffer a lower standard of living as a result. Dollars need some amount of scarcity in order to retain any value, so we must place some amount of constraint upon their creation and circulation.

One way that we do this is by continuing to tie our public expense levels to our public revenue sources, whether we technically need to or not. It therefore still is meaningful to create and enforce public budgets with limited dollar ranges, as long as all stakeholders are continually aware that a balanced budget is not strictly necessary, but instead is being targeted as a default in order to maximize the chances of currency stability, and (as Kelton says) can be rendered out of balance if we keep inflation within whatever we agree to be our designated range.

Question 382 (continued)

For those jurisdictions which prefer smaller governments, what if the government is able to provide jobs for people who would otherwise find it a challenge to be gainfully employed?

We confirmed our previous finding in March 2021: Even with the so-called "Jobs Guarantee" which is promoted by Kelton and other MMT economists, we must continue to make sure that we should not devote public resources to unnecessary and wasteful jobs, and that if necessary we should be emphasizing continued public education which can enhance people's abilities to obtain good meaningful jobs.

Question 383 (continued)

But, what about the economic theory which has it that continued government spending is good, to stimulate the economy?

We modified our position slightly in March 2021, in the context of the "Universal Basic Income" which has been promoted by several prominent political figures.

Our previous statement was "We do not subscribe to the economic theory which asserts that increased government spending is useful for stimulating the economy."

This is actually a Yes and No. Yes, we can see that a lower class which is struggling just to keep up with rent and groceries (if that much) is not going to have many dollars to throw around on the latest technical gadgets or fancy cars, and that they might do so if they had sudden windfalls of free dollars. Those dollars get circulated by the vendors to make various other personal and business purchases, and then get spent again by those recipients, and so on. That's the so-called 'velocity of money' which we read in the work of some modern economists.

No on a few levels.

First, it is not a lock that this increased spending by the lower class would stimulate the overall economy. We can see it stimulating local restaurants and theaters and ballparks and other businesses, encouraging them to hire more local workers and provide them with additional dollars to buy more local goods and services. But, will it necessarily stimulate economy at the macro scale? When more dollars are suddenly injected into an economy, businesses in a semi-free market such as America will tend to raise prices simply because they can, so the recipients of new government dollars will not be able to purchase as much as they currently think. Further, the higher prices might turn off some of the middle- and upper-class customers who would have made those purchases had prices remained at their previous levels, so overall economic activity may or may not increase as a result.

Second, even if we do experience an overall economic stimulation every time that the government increases spending, it may come at a price which we are not (or should not) be willing to pay. If our increased economic activity comes at the expense of higher prices, and if our currency unit loses all real meaning or value as a result, then we may be creating more problems than we're solving. Although it is not strictly required in our seven main goals of a 'good' or 'healthy' economy (see our Answer 358) to have a stable currency, we do have in there that we want "relative accuracy of wages and prices". It is harder to hit a moving target than a stationary one, so we stand a much better chance of allowing all wages and prices to find their true relative levels if our currency unit retains a stable value over time.

Third, if we are committed to stimulating the economy, then we might do net-better by leaving it alone. If vendors see that their sales are decreasing, then they may decide that they need to lower prices (either permanently or through occasional 'specials') in order to attract customers who would not have purchased at the previous levels. We see this is a good and healthy practice, for it is a big part of how wages and prices find their true relative levels, which is a big part of how we make sure that everyone gets just what she deserves.

Fourth, we are not convinced that we ever should be seeking to 'stimulate' the economy at all. We realize that we stated in new Answer 358.1 only last month that we should "keep per-capita production growing at a slow-but-steady rate", but there's also a lot to be said for being happy where you are. If economic activity is decreasing, then it could be a sign that prices need to be reduced, but it could also be a sign that more people are happy where they are. When that happens, we shouldn't panic and push for an immediate 'stimulus'. Rather, we should 'declare victory', and take some time off to celebrate our economic achievement.

We therefore modified our summary Answer to read "We do not subscribe to the economic theory that we ever should be 'stimulating' our economy, or that increased government spending is always an effective and desirable means of doing so."

Question 384 (continued)

How shall we determine what level of government spending is appropriate in any given period?

We confirmed our previous finding in March 2021. Even in an MMT environment, we recently found in our updated Answer 381 that it would still be useful to balance

government spending with government revenues, even if technically unnecessary, because the approach gives us the best chance of maintaining currency stability without either taking from the rich and/or giving to the poor.

It therefore continues to make sense that each jurisdiction (including the Fed) should poll its people periodically, to see how much they collectively want to spend on government operations, relative to recent levels. Poll should indicate clearly how much the government is seeking to raise or lower overall spending in order to help redirect the currency, and it should allow citizens to allocate some portion of spending toward the non-operating category of direct benefits ("Universal Basic Income", no longer to be characterized as 'entitlements', since -- as Kelton observed -- people are not always 'entitled' to them) to lower-class workers.

Poll should also make some provision for adjusting revenue as well as spending, but we want to guard against the likelihood that all non-rich respondents will vote for infinite taxation on the super-rich, although our 30% maximum threshold from Answer 385 would continue to apply, possibly to be recalibrated under certain conditions. To a large extent, though, we are willing to allow the 'smart folk' to analyze the economy deeply enough on an ongoing basis to assess which corrections in overall revenue and overall spending will be most likely to keep inflation in check, provided that the price of a Tommy's hamburger never changes, and that no tenant who remains in the same residence ever needs to pay more in rent.

Question 385 (continued)

Are there any additional mechanisms or incentives which we can concoct to allow or encourage governments to regulate spending?

We amended our previous Answer in March 2021. Our four main phases of procedures and protocols to incentivize effective regulation of Government spending continue to hold up even in an MMT environment, at least in our vision of it, again because per our amended Answer 381 we still generally want to aim for a balanced Federal budget even if it is not strictly necessary, because keeping revenues and expenses stable will help us to keep our currency stable, which will help wages and prices to locate and occupy their actual relative rates, which is one of our Seven Basic Goals of a 'good' or 'healthy' economy.

Only adjustment which we needed to make was in the Fourth element, where we established that "the proponents of any new spending program ... must specify where the funding for the new program is to come from". We had allowed for some combination of "increasing revenue" and "cutting other expenses". In the MMT environment, we must allow for the fact that expenses do not always (if ever) need to equal revenues, as well as the fact that we do not really need to 'borrow' from anyone in order to 'fund' any margin of expenses over revenues. We therefore added the option of "accepting a larger disparity of expenses over revenues".

Question 386 (continued)

Do we have room to reduce Federal spending from recent levels? If so, then where and how much?

We recast our previous Answer in more of an historical context during March 2021.

We had specified a lot of figures from the 2016 government financials for the purpose of determining how much budget surplus would be needed to 'pay down' our 'national debt' within our designated target of 75 years, and where we needed to reduce the then-current 'budget deficit' in order to achieve that target. Having read Kelton's "The Deficit Myth", however, we now realize that these calculations were largely unnecessary, except possibly for showing-off purposes.

The Fed is the sole issuer of its own fiat currency. It distributes that currency in the form of wages and contracts and benefits, and demands the currency back under various forms of taxation, thus effectively requiring us also to use that currency for all of our private transactions. Because it is the issuer of its own currency, it can create or destroy dollars whenever it wants to, and it is not beholden to the common rule which applies to all households and businesses and subsidiary governments, that any fiscal entity must keep expense levels at or below revenue levels, or else it must either dip into savings or else incur a certain amount of 'debt'. Our 'national debt' has been largely a matter of optics, and a means of diverting a greater share of our national wealth to a bunch of do-nothing moneylenders who routinely grease the political establishment for the continued privilege of making further trillions by simply shuffling numbers around on a virtual spreadsheet, as Eggeleton described.

We therefore can either cancel or repay our entire 'national debt' in a few minutes by pressing a few keystrokes, as Kelton observed. The dollars do not need to 'come from' anywhere, because they were nearly all created digitally in the first place.

It is our group's position that we generally want to get away from being a debt-based society, and that we don't want to deal with the idea of our national government continually being in debt. We previously selected a timeframe of 75 years for paydown of the 'national debt' because we didn't want to shock the system by taking less time to eliminate the debt than it took to create it. As of March 2021, however, with government spending already in the trillions, and with the increasing realization from MMT that the Fed does not need to either tax or borrow in order to spend, we are more inclined to say 'fuck it', immediately pay off all borrowers the present value of their bonds and other debt instruments, write off all the new dollars for an 'expense overage', and get the Fed out of the debt business forever. If that sudden infusion of new money causes any undesired increase in consumer prices, then we use our 'eminent domain' to take excess dollars away from our wealthiest individuals, until the currency restabilizes. Convince us otherwise.

Question 387 (continued)

How much can we reduce the overload of ongoing administrative expenses?

We found in March 2021 that we needed to amend in an MMT context most of the Answers appearing in Subsection II-B-1: We do not strictly need to either maintain a balanced budget or 'borrow' in order to 'fund' any differential, but we still might want to aim for a balanced budget as a default target to keep our currency stable.

Question 388 (continued)

What other areas should we target for possible expense reduction?

We found in March 2021 that we needed to amend in an MMT context most of the Answers appearing in Subsection II-B-1: We do not strictly need to either maintain

a balanced budget or 'borrow' in order to 'fund' any differential, but we still might want to aim for a balanced budget as a default target to keep our currency stable.

Question 388.1 (continued)

How can we reduce Defense spending?

We found in March 2021 that we needed to amend in an MMT context most of the Answers appearing in Subsection II-B-1: We do not strictly need to either maintain a balanced budget or 'borrow' in order to 'fund' any differential, but we still might want to aim for a balanced budget as a default target to keep our currency stable.

Question 388.2 (continued)

How can we reduce Treasury spending?

We found in March 2021 that we needed to amend in an MMT context most of the Answers appearing in Subsection II-B-1: We do not strictly need to either maintain a balanced budget or 'borrow' in order to 'fund' any differential, but we still might want to aim for a balanced budget as a default target to keep our currency stable.

Question 389 (continued)

If we make these huge cuts in Defense and other operating expense, then thousands of Government employees will be put out of work: Isn't this bad, and won't it create a sudden economic havoc?

We found in March 2021 that we needed to amend in an MMT context most of the Answers appearing in Subsection II-B-1: We do not strictly need to either maintain a balanced budget or 'borrow' in order to 'fund' any differential, but we still might want to aim for a balanced budget as a default target to keep our currency stable.

For this Question in particular, we are now amending our previous statement that "as eager as we are to see the numbers come down, yet we probably should be a little bit more gradual in our cutting of expenses and taxes and government payrolls." We have concluded in our amended Answer 386 that we want to eliminate all Federal 'debt' immediately, and to tax immediately from the super-rich as needed in order to offset any resulting impact on consumer prices. We also go along with immediate employment of any idle workers as may be needed through a #JobsGuarantee for public works, also as recommended in Kelton, although we still would like to give the 36-hour workweek a try first. In any case, all other adjustments to government revenues and expenses should be as gradual as we can practically make them.

Question 390 (continued)

How shall we deal with pensions or severance packages for government employees who are actually laid off?

We found in March 2021 that we needed to amend in an MMT context most of the Answers appearing in Subsection II-B-1: We do not strictly need to either maintain a balanced budget or 'borrow' in order to 'fund' any differential, but we still might want to aim for a balanced budget as a default target to keep our currency stable.

Question 391 (continued)

Can we establish any limiting mechanisms on Congressional salaries?

We found in March 2021 that we needed to amend in an MMT context most of the Answers appearing in Subsection II-B-1: We do not strictly need to either maintain a balanced budget or 'borrow' in order to 'fund' any differential, but we still might want to aim for a balanced budget as a default target to keep our currency stable.

Question 391.5 (continued)

Shall we continue to give pensions to retired Presidents?

We found in March 2021 that we needed to amend in an MMT context most of the Answers appearing in Subsection II-B-1: We do not strictly need to either maintain a balanced budget or 'borrow' in order to 'fund' any differential, but we still might want to aim for a balanced budget as a default target to keep our currency stable.

Question 392 (continued)

Should special projects be undertaken simply to provide work for people, and hopefully stimulate the economy?

We confirmed our previous finding in March 2021. Even under MMT, special projects should not be undertaken simply to provide work or stimulate the economy.

Kelton's book "The Deficit Myth" called for a #JobsGuarantee to provide minimum-wage work for all idle laborers, after the manner of FDR's 'alphabet programs' of the 1930's. We concur with the goal that everybody should have a share of our aggregate workload who wants one, but we continue to prefer that we give our proposed 36-hour workweek a chance before we implement a guaranteed-jobs program, for we may then find that such a program is not really necessary.

If any work ever needs to be performed on our infrastructures and other public facilities (as it always does), then we will want to undertake it immediately by hiring the necessary number of experienced workers at competitive wages. Any public work which does not fall into this category does not really need to be performed at all, and therefore constitutes a wasteful use of human effort and public resources.

We still feel that any program of guaranteed work should not be about creating jobs which would not have existed on their own, but rather about continually assessing our overall labor needs and apportioning them properly among our total workforce.

Question 392.1 (continued)

Should we continue to fund projects at the Federal level which apparently will benefit only single States or lower jurisdictions?

We confirmed our previous finding in March 2021. Even in an MMT environment, we still feel that the Fed should not be spending unrestrainedly, either for its own projects and programs or for those of subsidiary jurisdictions. We have already been observing a dangerous trend toward overcentralization of the American government, leading to inefficiency and mismanagement and fraud and other bad things. We are

a large and diverse Nation, and we have a multi-level government for numerous good reasons, so we should respect that structure and keep the funds separate.

Question 393 (continued)

To what extent should we continue to grant consumption-based entitlements?

We originally found that “We probably should have consumption-based entitlements in our public sector generally, but [that] for our long-term prosperity [we should] try to keep effective reins on them.” We modified our terminology slightly in March 2021 for points appearing in Kelton’s “The Deficit Myth” and other modern sources.

Specifically, we are now agreeing that we should no longer refer to public-assistance payments as ‘entitlements’, because members of the public are not always ‘entitled’ to them, and instead are to receive them only under certain conditions.

We also have recently read that we should not refer to them as ‘redistributions’, because we are not necessarily ‘taking from the rich’ and ‘giving to the poor’ on a dollar-for-dollar basis. Rather, under MMT, the Fed as sole issuer of its currency is able to create new dollars without taking away or destroying any old ones.

Pending further deliberation by folks smarter than us, we are recommending to refer to them as ‘reallocations’. For, whether the amount distributed is equal to the amount taxed or not, the proportion of monetary allocation is different as a result of the payments. Even if the numerical balance of your bank account is not reduced as a result of somebody else receiving more dollars, your proportion of the total number of dollars in circulation is lower, so your shares will not buy as many goods and services as they previously could, so your purchasing power is still reduced.

Question 394 (continued)

Should the Government continue to manage state-run Health Insurance programs?

We see no reason as of March 2021 to modify our findings in light of “The Deficit Myth” or other writings. We still want everyone covered at least for emergencies, as a public benefit, whether they can ‘afford’ it or not. Healthcare workers who cater to the less-affluent can be either paid by the public administration or else required to perform occasional *pro bono* services as a condition of their continued licensing.

One other point which we now wish to add to this discussion is that we do not particularly care for the expression ‘Medicare For All’ which we have recently seen on the social media. We do want ‘Healthcare For All’, but it need not -- and probably should not -- be administered through the Medicare program, which we observed in Session 166 as being too rife with waste and fraud to be worth maintaining.

Question 397 (continued)

If government doesn’t force people to pay into a Health Insurance program, might some individuals not be inclined to blow it off, in order to save money or spend it elsewhere, presenting a potential burden to government if they get sick?

We previously noted that the insurance industry will probably not have enough funds collectively to provide even the most essential of medical services to everyone who

needs it, if people are allowed to refrain from paying premiums for health insurance. We find in March 2021 that this principle holds up even in an MMT environment.

Although under MMT the Fed gets to issue as many dollars as it wants, provided that such issuance does not increase inflation beyond our designated targets, subordinate governments and private firms still need to operate on a balanced-budget basis, meaning that either their ongoing revenues must equal or exceed their ongoing expenses, or else at some point they will need to dip into savings or incur some debt, the latter of which we are seeking to avoid as far as we practically can.

An alternative approach might be to treat insurance companies the same as the Fed, meaning that they can issue claim payments whenever covered losses occur, and that they will basically be 'reinsured' by the Fed for any losses which exceed their premium collections. That way, all claims would be covered, insurers would never 'go broke', and premiums could be kept at more reasonable levels.

Problem there, as with the Fed generally issuing unlimited quantities of 'Monopoly money', is that the total amount of cash in circulation could continually increase in relation to the total quantity of goods and services which are available to be purchased, so vendors will tend to raise prices simply because they can, unless they are prevented by government from doing so, which would work against our basic goal of allowing wages and prices to locate and occupy their true relative levels.

We could again 'tax the rich' in order to make up any difference, but again that may or may not be sufficient to recalibrate prices at the consumer level. Most billionaires don't go to Tommy's for lunch, so taking money from them would not place any meaningful limitation on the numbers of dollars which are available to buy Tommies, so Tommy's would still be motivated to keep their prices higher.

What might be more helpful is a proportional increase in the sales tax, since many of the people who do patronize Tommy's will also make other purchases which are pricey enough to warrant taxation. When people pay more in sales tax for other goods, they may have fewer dollars available to buy Tommies, so Tommy's might then be motivated to restore their previous prices.

Even then, though, we still lose the whole idea of 'fiscal restraint'. When insurers can feel free to write claim checks in any quantity and for any amount, a much greater share of dollars may reside with the sick and injured than they might rightfully deserve, which might motivate more of us to make claims on our health and disability coverages, and 'live on the public tit' like Lieutenant Dan. If only 5-10 people do this, then it might not be so big of a problem. If millions do it, then we could see a marked decline in work performed and goods produced, which could mean a big drop in everyone's quality of life.

We have a better economy -- and therefore a better quality of life -- if the needy get what they need, if the affluent contribute of their excess (either willingly or not) in order to provide it, and if all others have an ongoing motivation to work and produce. We find that we stand the greatest chance of achieving these goals if all entities, public and private, local to global, treat dollars as finite quantities which must be managed carefully and prudently in order for us all to remain solvent and operational. This means that we need some reasonable limitation (even at the Fed) on how many dollars we can issue for various purposes. It means more specifically that insurers probably should continue to aim for their premium reserves to equal or

exceed their claim payments, with little or no subsidy coming from the Fed, with the possible exception of catastrophic disasters which exceed reasonable reserves.

Question 126 (continued)

What is the motivation for any particular government agency to follow such principles?

Amended in April 2021 from personal reflection: When reporting Covid data or unemployment or inflation or climate change or any other bad figure, there is a temptation to make the numbers look worse in order to spur more action, and also a temptation to make the numbers look better in order to placate the People. Both objectives are important, so we should seek to balance them, and we figure that the best way to find the optimal balance is simply to tell the actual truth, and let the well-informed People decide what to do and how to feel.

Question 399 (continued)

If people are allowed to 'self-insure', then will we not see some antiselection, making claim rates and premiums go higher?

We found in April 2021 that this topic must also be revisited for a projected MMT environment. However, we recommend no change to our position at this time.

As discussed in the recent amendment to Answer 397, it is theoretically possible under MMT for insurers to pay claims in excess of premiums collected, if they are effectively 'reinsured' for the excess by the Fed, which under MMT can issue as many new dollars as it needs if such action does not cause overinflation.

Trouble is, we suspect that an unrestrained Fed and an uncapped money supply are liable to cause overinflation, so we recommend the continued prudence of a balanced budget and ample claim reserves. If we subsidize premiums or claims through the Fed, and if the Fed is likewise throwing new dollars around wherever it politically feels like it, then vendors in the private sector will raise prices simply because they can (unless prevented from doing so), and sooner or later we lose all perspective of what a dollar is really worth, insofar as we still have any such perspective now.

Better we feel to relate the value of a dollar to a fixed and ongoing definition of its purchasing power, to maintain that value by treating dollars as scarce commodities so that people will not spend recklessly and vendors will not raise prices, to place therefore some restraint on the number of dollars which can be created by the Fed for either health insurance or any other purpose, to require insurers therefore to rely upon their own resources for paying claims from their own premium dollars, for them therefore to collect from their potential beneficiaries all the premium dollars which they require, and for us therefore to require universal participation from all sufficiently-affluent beneficiaries so that we do not need to worry about antiselection.

Question 406 (continued)

But, can people be trusted to plan effectively for their own retirement?

We originally found that "we must continue to extract retirement contributions from all workers on a mandatory basis". However, we are noting in April 2021 that this

measure is not needed in an MMT environment, because the Fed can create more dollars whenever it wants to, so we do not need to "extract" dollars from anyone in order to pay them to someone else. Only catch is that we must not overinfuse the economy with dollars, lest they lose value as a result of overinflation. We may therefore need to 'tax' some people in order to keep the money supply relatively stable as we issue benefits to retirees, but the total taxes do not need to exactly equal the total benefits.

Insofar as we need any taxation at all in order to 'pay for' retirement benefits for the working class, we now find that we should not be taxing the people who will eventually be receiving the benefits. Rather, retirees should be receiving those benefits without taxation, because they are basically a form of 'dividend' or 'pension' which we offer to them as reward for their lifetimes of service. Any concomitant taxation should be applied to those who benefitted the most from the work which those retirees performed during those lifetimes, so it is basically the 'capitalists' who should be providing those benefits. If they are not willing to do it through private pension funds (as they did in aforesaid), then they must be required to do it through the public administration.

Question 407 (continued)

How shall we deal with the needs of those people (both retirees and those currently employed) who have already paid large amounts into the Social Security system?

We previously found that "At the time that we are ready to transition Social Security to the private sector, each worker's accumulated share of the Social Security Trust Fund is to be remitted to the private annuity carrier of the worker's choice, and then treated normally after that", and that "Lump-sum distributions are not to be made available." In an MMT environment, we observe as of April 2021 that Social Security should be maintained as a public pension program, and that workers should get credit for any FICA deductions previously extracted, that they should receive lump-sum credit for such payments so that we do not need to track them anymore, that both retroactively and prospectively all workers below a certain means level should receive at least a minimum pension benefit from the Fed, and that middle-class retirees can receive additional benefits in proportion to their aggregate salaries earned, which calculation will again require that dollars maintain a level level of purchasing power over time.

Question 408 (continued)

To what extent shall the Federal government get involved in art funding?

We previously found that "Federal art grants may be issued to those artists who can make sufficiently-compelling cases that their projects will somehow serve the entire Nation, or large sections of it", and that "Public funding for any art projects which serve only those who visit local museums and galleries should be sought at more local levels." We continue to hold this position as of April 2021, even in an MMT environment. For, even though the Fed may issue more dollars to any recipient at any time for any reason, without necessarily taxing back an equal number of dollars from other citizens, we yet recommend a level of ongoing fiscal restraint on the part of the Fed, so that we can continually meet our MMT-acknowledged goal of keeping inflation below our target maximum.

If we issue a \$1,000,000 grant to every citizen who can 'draw Binky', then again ordinary citizens will be able to buy whatever they want if prices remain as they are, so again vendors will be motivated to raise prices in order to capture greater shares of all the cheap money, the Dollar will lose all sense of definition or meaning or value, and we will not have a solid basis for determining what prices should be charged or what wages should be paid for anything. In fact, we might as well have an 'on-demand' economy, where citizens can expect to pick up anything from the store without needing to pay anything of any real value in return. Nice if we can make it work, but we fear that such a consumption-based economy will motivate citizens to flake off of working, so our productivity will decrease, and shortages will increase, so all these free extra dollars won't be able to buy anything.

Even though MMT provides that the Fed does not need to treat itself like a household or subsidiary government, in the sense that it does not need to exactly equate cash intakes with cash outflows, yet we do recommend that it should at least approximate such a balance, in order to maximize our chances of maintaining a stable currency and a healthy economy. It should therefore exercise a certain amount of restraint in its spending, so again it should provide arts funding only for projects which clearly benefit the entire Nation or large portions of it.

Question 694 (continued)

To what extent should we allow/encourage speed bumps in streets and parking lots?

Amended in April 2021 from personal observation: Another argument why you should anti-consider speed bumps on your streets is that engines need to rev back up after they slow for each bump, so you may very easily be ending up with more noise overall. Notes for this Question will need to be combined with our related notes within Answer 258.7 for municipal agencies.

Question 344 (continued)

If we imprison somebody, do we have an obligation to keep him reasonably well-fed, comfortable, and protected from crime?

Amended in April 2021 from personal reflection: The higher prison levels proposed earlier can offer inmates their choice of wards which allow sex with other inmates and those which do not. Conversely, the lower prison levels are there for further punishment, so it could be argued that you must take what you get, although we did assert earlier that all criminal activity should be prevented at all prison levels, but maybe we can counter-argue that you waive your right to be free from inmate sex once you commit enough serious crimes to warrant demotion to the lower prison levels. Notes for this Question will need to be combined with our related notes within Answer 258.1 for state agencies.

Question 662.1 (continued)

Is it better to use "op. cit." and "Ibid." as standard footnote abbreviations, or some more modern notation?

Amended in April 2021 from personal reflection: It occurred to us that a repeater footnote should include the title instead of the author (we previously recommended

"Asimov, see p.37" to replace "Asimov, *op. cit.*"), on grounds that the work is allegedly more important than the creator. [Reconsidered later.]

Question 38 (continued)

What sort of nation do we want to have in America?

Further to the general Question of 'liberal' versus 'conservative' that we proposed in August 2019 for separate rollout, we ideated some additional notes in April 2021 to explain the conservative mindset, from the perspective of one who was there and embraced it.

We see ourselves as having taken the sacred mission to protect our world. We see ourselves as part of a corps, part of an army. We're going to defend our land, defend our institutions, defend our whole way of life. It's been working for us, it was good enough for our ancestors, and we must make sure to preserve it for all our descendants.

In theory, this position carries a lot of philosophical merit. Once we create our 'ideal world' (whatever that ends up looking like, as examined in the course of this document), we too will want to rest assured that our achievement will carry forward for the rest of our lives and long after we're gone.

Trouble is, in the actual real-life case, our previous world was *not* always good enough for our ancestors, and it's not always working now. We still have many problems throughout our society, and even most modern self-described 'conservatives' agree that we need to make some kinds of changes, although we do not always agree on what those changes should be.

We hope to clarify and advance (and possibly even resolve?) that discussion in the course of this document, and in the book which hopefully will spring from it.

Question 409 (continued)

Is there any constructive purpose to maintaining an ongoing national debt, or similar debt for smaller governmental jurisdictions?

We did not wish to maintain a national debt even before we heard about Modern Monetary Theory (MMT), and oppose it even more vigorously as of April 2021.

Back when we thought that Dollars were limited in quantity, we were reluctant to allocate a greater proportion of them to entities which only lent them to the Fed and provided no other constructive work for our society. Better we felt for the Fed to do the same as we were expecting of all our citizens and corporations, to save up for our various big purchases to the extent that we practically can, so that we would not need to worry about or budget for repaying debts later, and so that we could force more bankers to go out and work for a living.

However, we did allow for the possibility that the Fed might occasionally need to borrow for some big war (although we call for No More War in our Answer 19.5) or other big spending need, or for the purpose of assisting the national economy in one way or another. We also recognized that -- whether it was ever really needed or not -- we effectively 'owed' a certain amount of pre-existing national debt to some

combination of creditors, and that we were still continuing to add to that 'national debt' every year by recklessly spending more Dollars than we were taking in.

Now that we have confirmed (via Kelton's "The Deficit Myth" and other books) that the Fed is not really required to 'borrow' Dollars from any 'investors' in order to 'fund' its various operations and programs, it is clear that any such 'national debt' is even less important and useful than we previously thought.

MMT holds (and to some extent we concur) that the Fed gets to create as many new Dollars as it wants to whenever it wants to, provided only that it does not overheat inflation as a result, and that it may extract (tax) any number of Dollars from other sectors as may be needed to restabilize the currency. The number of Dollars issued does not need to equal the number of Dollars extracted, and any differential does not need to be treated as either a 'budget surplus' or 'budget deficit' which would in any way impact the balance of our 'national debt'. We concur that it would be easier and fairer not to maintain any sort of 'national debt', especially in an MMT environment.

Question 410 (continued)

The current national debt is enormous: Even if we do balance the budget, should we take on the chore to pay down the debt until it is eliminated?

We previously felt that we should assume the responsibility which our grandparents so irresponsibly avoided, and pay off all our previous obligations before settling in to a permanent balanced-budget environment, and that we should therefore maintain a surplus budget to pay off the 'national debt' with minimal impact upon the economy.

As of April 2021, however, we have read Kelton's "The Deficit Myth" and other works which confirm that 'national debt' is a purely theoretical concept for a government such as America which creates currency units on a fiat basis. We do not really need to 'borrow' currency units from anyone at any time, because all our checks are good by definition. We may 'tax' as needed in order to keep our currency stable (unless, like the fictional nation of Antaxia, we can manage to maintain zero inflation without such measures), but if so then the number of Dollars collected does not need to equal the number of Dollars spent, and we can simply 'write off' any positive or negative differential each year without tracking it on an ongoing basis.

We therefore see no reason to maintain a 'national debt', as we found in our updated Answer 409, so we would like to move forward expeditiously with our new environment, in which 'national debt' is no longer a thing. However, because we do not actually need to 'save up' through 'budget surplus' in order to find the Dollars to pay off our creditors, we now would rather do it instantaneously, and forget about it.

That way, the 'creditors' end up with less of a share of our wealth than they would have otherwise, so it should be net-better for the economy. If the extra infusion of cash causes prices to rise unduly, then tax from the rich as needed to restabilize.

Question 411 (continued)

Over what time frame should we plan on paying down the national debt?

Hailstones and Kelton both wrote (35 years apart) that we could eliminate our national debt over a very short period, in as little as a year or as little as a few

minutes. The dollars needed to pay off all previous creditors do not actually need to be 'saved up' through 'budget surplus', but instead can be generated immediately from nothing, since the Fed is the creator of all dollars to begin with.

This being the apparent case, whereas we originally projected a 75-year timeframe as being net-optimal to pay down the national debt if we had started the process in 2017, and of course we would need to recompute once our new model is adopted, the idea being to 'save up' over time and not overshock the economy, we now feel in the proposed MMT environment that we should eliminate the debt instantaneously.

Question 414 (continued)

Are there any methods other than traditional taxation which might be considered for raising Government revenue?

We found in April 2021 that our original Answer holds up in an MMT context if we are focusing on only sub-Federal governments. According to MMT, the Fed does not really need to 'raise revenue', since it is the creator of its own fiat currency, so it gets to write checks for any amount, and they are all 'good' by definition. We therefore rephrased our Answer slightly in order to make that distinction clear.

Question 415 (continued)

What would happen if, instead of traditional taxation, we gave to the Federal government the power to print money for itself?

Amending our Answer slightly in April 2021: We had previously stated that currency stability "will not happen" if the Fed generates unlimited dollars. We are now stating that it "is not likely to happen". For, after reading the more recent economic writings and observing the more recent experience (in which inflation has not been quite as severe as we expected with the all new money floating around), we are now allowing for the possibility that certain other mechanisms might help to keep prices in check.

Question 416 (continued)

With other methods of revenue generation not to be depended upon, and with Government not having the power to generate currency beyond the level needed to keep the base unit stable, shall we agree to chip in a certain amount of our collective resources, to be paid out to those individuals who provide various forms of civic service to us?

We amended our Answer in April 2021 for an MMT context. We are applying our original Answer to sub-Federal governments, whom we still feel should tax internally for their internal needs rather than depend upon Federal subsidies, and applying the new MMT-based reason to the Fed of taxing in order to maintain currency stability.

Question 418 (continued)

Of these basic types, which is the fairest method of taxation, or is it appropriate for more than one type to be levied at once by a single jurisdiction?

Also amending this Answer slightly in April 2021 for an MMT context.

Capitation Tax was recommended for certain public operations which benefit all residents equally. We now understand from MMT that the Fed does not actually need revenue from any source in order to 'fund' such operations, since all its checks are 'good' by definition. However, as with A416, we still need to apply the original reasoning to sub-Federal governments. We also now note that some citizens might not be able to afford a Capitation Tax, so some or all of any such amount might actually come from subordinate governments and/or the society's wealthiest citizens.

Sales Tax was proposed to cover "Most" public operations, but we now allow that it might not end up with a majority of a government's revenue, so demoting to "Many".

Wealth Tax was not mentioned in our original Answer at all, so we mention it now.

Question 425 (continued)

Given the foregoing conclusions, what are the approximate rates that we can expect to see for the different types of taxes for different levels and functions of government?

Our original Answer here involved a lengthy and elaborate matrix of revenue sources and expense destinations at the four domestic levels of National, State, County, and City. Idea was to see how much we could expect to achieve in tax savings for middle-class citizens if we made certain assumptions about expenses and revenues.

We calculated a sample savings of 13.155%, so we felt pretty good about that. We now realize as a result of Modern Monetary Theory (MMT), however, that the Fed is not really required to extract the same number of dollars that it spends, and that the cause of currency stability may require in any given year that Federal taxation may need to be either greater or lesser than Federal expenditure.

As we found last month in our revised Answer 381, though, we still should be aiming for a balanced budget as a default target for the Fed's primary operations, in order to provide the highest likelihood that currency will remain stable without intervention. Then, if it is discovered or anticipated that currency value rises or falls beyond target levels, the Fed can issue and/or extract more dollars on a non-operating basis.

In this context, our original detailed analysis would continue to hold up, so middle-class taxpayers could continue to expect the same level of total decrease under our model than under the paradigm which was in place back in 2016. Only trick to remember is that our model already had Wealth Tax at its designated maximum of 30%, so extracting any more from that source for purposes of currency stabilization or poverty mitigation or any other purposes would be improper in our model. We might therefore need to make some tough decisions if inflation continues under that model, but we are hoping and presuming that it will not.

Question 426 (continued)

Any changes in corporate finance, particularly the stock market?

We previously had that "a portion of Federal sales-tax revenue should come from stock transactions." We still believe that, but we modified our position slightly in April 2021 for an MMT context.

According to MMT, the Fed does not really need dollars to come from any entity in order to 'fund' its activities and programs. It is the sole issuer of its currency, it can create more dollars whenever it wants to, and all its checks are 'good' by definition.

However, MMT also recognizes that we can't have an infinite or otherwise overly-large quantity of dollars in the active economy, lest they lose all remaining sense of value, and thus become practically unusable as a medium of exchange. In order for the Dollar to remain within its desired value range (opinions vary as to what that range should be, whether now or down the road, but that is a separate discussion), the Fed must periodically extract some number of dollars out of the active economy.

The number of dollars extracted does not need to equal the number of dollars paid out. Further, the purchasing power of the Dollar not only is a function of the number of dollars in existence, but also is a function of the 'velocity of money', meaning the number of times that an 'average' dollar is spent, as calculated by dividing the total quantity of purchases in a given period by the number of dollars in existence at that time. If a given billionaire is simply sitting on all his cash and renting a trailer at the beach, then the effect on the purchasing power of the Dollar is almost the same as if those dollars did not exist at all, because the 'velocity of money' is lower, vendors have a harder time getting access to dollars, and they often must lower prices as a result, which is good for those who like to see lower prices but not so good for those who like to see lots of consumer spending and other economic activity. Conversely, if the same billionaire is running an active business, and paying out lots of dollars for inventory and wages and rent and equipment and other operating costs, while taking in additional dollars from product sales, the same total quantity of dollars can be generating much more economic activity, it becomes easier for vendors to get access to dollars, so they can feel free to raise prices. It's therefore not just the number of dollars in existence, but also what's happening with those dollars, which can change over time with the economic cycle and any general economic trends or strategies, so the Fed must monitor and respond to the situation continually in order to keep the Dollar within whatever value range we eventually agree upon.

Because of these factors, we now feel that it is not really appropriate after all to refer to any form of government taxation as 'revenue', since it is not really needed at the Federal level in order for expenses to occur. We therefore are replacing the word 'revenue' with the word 'intake' in this discussion. The dollars being extracted from stock transactions help to keep the overall economy stable by extracting excess dollars from the economy without overly burdening rich 'indcorps' who do little or no stock trading. They also help to reduce volatility in the stock market, by focusing a higher proportion of stock investments in companies which really deserve the dollars and will be allowed to use them for a long period.

We added a line to our summary Answer to reflect these points.

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We again interrupted our manuscript work in April 2021 to begin reading "The Politics Industry" (2020) by Katherine Gehl and Michael Porter, making notes to be transcribed into this 'blue report' for the Third Pass. We did so because another book-review webinar was then being hosted by the *New York Times*, with the same coordinator who had managed the recent Kelton book club, and because that lead author was already following our A2E account on Twitter. Proved highly useful.

Question 62.5 (continued)

To what extent (if at all) should political parties be used in the selection process?

Front flap of the Gehl book comes right out to accuse the system of working exactly as intended, and points right out the 'duopoly' of Dems and Reps as responsible for its maintenance. We were off and running already.

Question 662 (continued)

Is it better for footnotes to be placed at the bottom of the page, or at the end of the chapter, or at the end of the book/article?

Gehl's book "The Politics Industry" is another which we generally like but which still sticks all 'notes' at the end of the book, mixing in bare citations with supplemental text, so again I must either ignore all notes or flip to the back every time, only to be disappointed when I have wasted my time and mental focus by flipping back only to find another bare citation.

We amended our Answer in the vicinity of April 2021 to allow the alternative approach of sticking bare citations at the end, and leaving substantive notes at the foot of the text page.

Question 1a (continued)

Are we satisfied with the current political/economic/social order?

Intro of "The Politics Industry" sings all our songs, vested political interests, collusive duopoly, plurality stinks, lesser of two evils, impossibility of viable competition, etc.

Question 105.5 (continued)

Should we be having jurisdictions set a fixed number of candidates on each ballot, or instead allow any number of candidates to appear who have fulfilled the signature requirement?

Perhaps unfortunately, Gehl's book "The Politics Industry" proposes 'final-five voting', with a limit of 5 finalists for each race. We still like more finalists for higher offices, in order to allow for greater diversity, but maybe we can live with it.

Good news is that Gehl supports the 'open primary' concept, which is similar to our model of allowing only those candidates to appear on the ballot who have collected the most e-signatures on the applicable government's official website.

Question 124.4 (continued)

In general, what Voting Method is best for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies?

Also unfortunately, Gehl's book "The Politics Industry" supports ranked-choice voting, which we again find subject to the Polarized-Environment Problem.

Question 132 (continued)

Should the President (or Governor, or other Chief Executive of a jurisdiction) have unilateral authority to establish, adjust, or eliminate Departments in the Executive Branch, or should the Legislature have complete authority, or some kind of hybrid?

Gehl confirms in her p.13 that the Legislature should be and was intended to be the first branch of government. We have amended our Answer accordingly.

Question 18 (continued)

What kind of government do we want?

Good note on p.18 of Gehl: "America's political system has become the primary cause of our decline and the preeminent barrier to addressing the very problems it exists to solve." This goes to the role of Government.

Question 62.5 (continued)

To what extent (if at all) should political parties be used in the selection process?

Good citations on p.18 of Gehl from Washington, Adams, and Jefferson on the evils of political partisanship.

Note 3 from p.19 refers to "Why Parties? A Second Look" (2011) by John H. Aldrich, but context of text suggests that he seems to like the concept.

Bad note on p.19 shows that authors Gehl and Porter "support strong parties", although conditionally, whereas A2E would dump them, so maybe it figures that they would support ranked-choice voting in order to keep parties in the game.

Question 1a (continued)

Are we satisfied with the current political/economic/social order?

According to p.21 of Gehl, "American politics is an industrial-strength, nation-crippling perversion of competition."

Question 109.9 (continued)

How should we generally define something as being 'in the public interest' for the purpose of these discussions?

Gehl & Porter argue on pp.22-23 for electoral reform as a means of increasing the ROI (return on investment) of votes as compared with that of money.

Question 62.5 (continued)

To what extent (if at all) should political parties be used in the selection process?

Gehl/Porter p.24 has that "The tacit agreement to split the electorate and target extremes makes politics polarizing." We are not thrilled with the three consecutive ending s's, but maybe we yet find a place for this quote.

Question 109.9 (continued)

How should we generally define something as being 'in the public interest' for the purpose of these discussions?

Gehl/Porter p.24 has that "A political system is supposed to serve the public interest, so all citizens should be its customers."

Question 62.5 (continued)

To what extent (if at all) should political parties be used in the selection process?

Gehl's p.27 notes that "Parties don't need to deliver solutions but only need to convince average voters to choose them as the lesser of two evils."

Question 708 (continued)

What limits, if any, should we place on 'freedom of the press'?

Gehl's pp.29-30 claims that news media previously provided impartial analysis of political statements and actions, but now have become "nakedly partisan".

Question 283.6 (continued)

Anything on lobbyists?

Good note on pp.33-34 of the Gehl book: "The clout of lobbyists looking out for their clients' interests, and not for the public interest, distorts legislation and sometimes blurs the line between lobbying and corruption." Subtle way to stick it.

Question 62.5 (continued)

To what extent (if at all) should political parties be used in the selection process?

According to p.34 of the Gehl book: "A sure sign of the high barriers to entry is the fact that no major new party has emerged since 1854, when antislavery members of the Whig Party split off and formed the Republican Party."

Question 106 (continued)

Should each jurisdiction (Fed, State, County, etc.) be permitted to set its own rules regarding advertising limits, specification on pictures and statements for ballot publications, number and format of debates, supplemental assistance (if any), safeguards against frivolous filing, etc.?

Gehl notes on p.35 that "The six-member [Federal Election Commission] is dominated by the duopoly and typically split down the middle, with three Democratic and three Republican commissioners."

We seem to agree that this approach sucks.

Question 359 (continued)

What are the basic methods by which these goals can be achieved?

Our note from August 2019 introduced the expression 'military-industrial' into this report, and as of April 2021 it was the only such usage. Gehl notes on pp.37-38 that 'military-industrial complex' apparently dates from Eisenhower's farewell address.

Question 1b (continued)

To what extent are we empowered to make changes in the current order?

Gehl notes on p.39: "It's time to write new rules. We've done it before."

Question 103.2 (continued)

How can we make sure that debates are conducted and broadcast?

According to pp.41-42 of the Gehl book, presidential debates were controlled by the League of Women Voters (LWV) until 1987, when the two big parties adopted a recommendation of their own commission to form the Commission on Public Debates (CPD), initially cochaired by the heads of the DNC and RNC. We agree that the system was better before, and that the current duopoly would be very unlikely ever to adopt our recommendation of at least three candidates in every debate.

Question 62.5 (continued)

To what extent (if at all) should political parties be used in the selection process?

According to p.45 of the Gehl book, "Today's elections machinery ensures that moderates need not apply, that those who seek compromise are punished, and that independents and third parties are locked out."

Question 59 (continued)

If we go to a party-less ballot, how would we deal with the possibility that two or more philosophically similar candidates might split the vote, allowing the election of a third candidate who would not ordinarily obtain a majority?

According to p.46 of the Gehl book, party primaries started out as good-government reform, by taking candidate selection out of the hands of party bosses at party conventions, but they since have been optimized by the duopoly "to strengthen ideological purity and enforce party loyalty." They also hold (and we agree) that "Party primaries can have the effect of screening out problem-solving candidates, while rewarding more extreme candidates."

Question 83 (continued)

Do we wish to define any additional requirements (other than term limits) for any government office?

According to Gehl p.48, DE and others then had a sucky 'sore-loser law', where no loser of a party primary may appear on the general ballot even as an independent.

Question 105.5 (continued)

Should we be having jurisdictions set a fixed number of candidates on each ballot, or instead allow any number of candidates to appear who have fulfilled the signature requirement?

Gehl notes on p.49 that "Candidates are required [in many states] to collect a certain number of signatures, but gathering these names can be a Herculean effort, especially for new competitors who often lack the infrastructure and resources required." We would make the process electronic, free, universal, and centralized.

Question 277.3 (continued)

Under what conditions (if any) shall an individual legislator or minority faction be permitted to Filibuster, that is, to force a delay in taking up a particular question, or in taking the vote on any pending question?

According to p.54 of the Gehl book, "although in fact written down nowhere, the Hastert Rule dictates that the Speaker will not allow a floor vote on a bill unless a majority of the majority party--the Speaker's party--supports the bill, *even if a majority of the full House would vote to pass it.*" We agree that this sucks.

Question 272 (continued)

What should be the scope of the Rules Committee, the Ways & Means Committee, and certain other Committees in Congress?

Gehl & Porter concur on p.58 with our assessment that the House Rules Committee used to decide the sequence in which bills would come to floor, and which rules of debate would apply to them, but now effectively decides which bills proceed at all.

Question 283 (continued)

If so, then should there be a single authority running such operations?

Gehl notes on pp.58-59 that after becoming Speaker in 1994, Newt Gingrich gutted many structures and staff positions which provided nonpartisan analysis of pending business, in order to consolidate his partisan control over committees. In our current model, all such agencies should report to the nonpartisan 'Custodian of Congress', so that no one assembly boss would have control over them. If national funding for positions of Congressional staff is ever so low that legislators don't have enough independent information to do their jobs adequately, then we should rely on local funding to support each Congressman, rather than upon partisan lobbyists.

Question 264 (continued)

Agreed that good for legislative houses to establish special and standing committees to evaluate proposed legislation in detail, and report back to full house?

Gehl observes on pp.60-61 that many bills now bypass the committee process altogether, and are instead assembled by partisan task forces.

Question 109.9 (continued)

How should we generally define something as being 'in the public interest' for the purpose of these discussions?

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Having described in Chapter Two several deficiencies in our current rule set, Gehl concludes on p.62 that "America's top priority must therefore be to reengineer the rules of the game in politics to create healthy competition on dimensions that serve the public interest."

Question 1a (continued)

Are we satisfied with the current political/economic/social order?

Gehl outlines in pp.66 *et seq.* the main consequences of our current political system.

Question 62.5 (continued)

To what extent (if at all) should political parties be used in the selection process?

According to p.75 of the Gehl book, "Absent the threat of new competition, there's little reason for the duopoly to aspire to consensus and problem solving."

Question 1a (continued)

Are we satisfied with the current political/economic/social order?

Gehl sums up our worst problems pretty well on p.78: "We face an astronomically expensive and unequitable health-care system; onerous and costly regulatory and legal systems; a convoluted, loophole-filled tax code; a public education system that fails to equip our children with the skills needed in the new economy; crumbling highways, railroads, and airports that are a national embarrassment."

Question 62.5 (continued)

To what extent (if at all) should political parties be used in the selection process?

According to p.84 of Gehl, "Good solutions are often achieved when no group or faction gets everything it wants."

Question 38 (continued)

What sort of nation do we want to have in America?

Gehl proposes on pp.83-89 five key outcomes for a healthy democratic political system, similar to our numbered goals for economy and voting method. She summarizes these points on p.89 thus:

"A successful political system finds solutions, acts on and improves them, generates citizen buy-in over time, and balances the needs of current and future generations, all while honoring the Constitution. With healthy competition, these outcomes are possible."

Question 377 (continued)

Shall banks be owned and operated by a governmental entity, or by private interests?

Amended in May 2021: If we do have an automatic banking system for everyone, as suggested earlier, then we should actively consider requiring minimum balances, such that your debit cards don't work if your balance is below \$100 or \$1000 or some other cutoff, so that your bills will still get paid. [Reconsidered later.]

Question 1b (continued)

To what extent are we empowered to make changes in the current order?

Gehl claims on p.98 of that "We citizens have the power to shift the nature of politics and shape the architecture of our democracy if we can create a widespread understanding of how our political system actually works and galvanize action accordingly." Tempted to think 'sez you', but maybe/hopefully she actually is right.

Question 87 (continued)

Is there any other reason at all to support (or even allow) the idea of term limits?

Although not explicitly stated in "The Politics Industry", discussion panel established during a book-club session in May 2021 that the authors opposed term limits.

Question 120 (continued)

Every election for every office in the country is decided by direct popular vote, except for the ticket of U.S. President and Vice-President, which uses the Electoral College established by Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution, and by the 12th Amendment: Should the Electoral College remain in existence any further?

Participated in a Zoom meeting by LWV in May 2021 on the national popular vote.

Question 38 (continued)

What sort of nation do we want to have in America?

According to pp.119-120 of Gehl: "By revolutionizing how elections are contested and laws are made, we can break the cycle [of electoral and legislative dysfunction] and change the nature of the positions politicians take, the customers they aim to please, who is elected, how they govern, and the voting public's ability to hold elected officials accountable."

Question 105.5 (continued)

Should we be having jurisdictions set a fixed number of candidates on each ballot, or instead allow any number of candidates to appear who have fulfilled the signature requirement?

Gehl agrees on pp.121-122 that we "must" have open primaries.

Gehl also agrees on p.124 that we need more than two finalists. She lists “three main reasons” on p.125 for having exactly 5 finalists in every race at every level, but those reasons explain only why more choice is better, and do not specify why we should stop at 5. We suspect that it is because they support ranked-choice voting, and ranking becomes exponentially harder with more candidates.

Question 124.4 (continued)

In general, what Voting Method is best for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies?

Gehl begins on p.126 to explain ranked-choice voting, but appears to ignore the Polarized-Environment Problem.

Question 385 (continued)

Are there any additional mechanisms or incentives which we can concoct to allow or encourage governments to regulate spending?

Gehl begins on p.135 to push for zero-based budgeting, which we find could work and be useful even under MMT, which is not discussed anywhere in the Gehl book.

Question 272 (continued)

What should be the scope of the Rules Committee, the Ways & Means Committee, and certain other Committees in Congress?

Gehl suggests on p.136 to apply the zero-based approach to legislative rules, and to start over from scratch; we certainly are good with that. She further proposes on pp.136-137 a Legislative Machinery Innovation Commission to design an improved model, and asks the proposed commission what steps it would take to redesign the legislative process; we may be able to provide a small bit of guidance.

Question 662 (continued)

Is it better for footnotes to be placed at the bottom of the page, or at the end of the chapter, or at the end of the book/article?

Gehl actually has an asterisked footnote in the text of pp.144-145, highly refreshing.

Question 1b (continued)

To what extent are we empowered to make changes in the current order?

Gehl suggests on pp.145-146 that legislative action and ballot propositions at state and local levels can help attract and compel Congress to act at the federal level.

Question 62.5 (continued)

To what extent (if at all) should political parties be used in the selection process?

Gehl reports on p.164 that the Nebraska state legislature has party members, but no official party positions, and that committee assignments are made by a nonpartisan

committee on committees. So, it is possible to operate in a zero-party environment, at least in a one-house legislature.

Question 2.8 (continued)

How do we know anything?

Gehl notes on pp.165-166 that just because we haven't heard of a particular untried idea before, doesn't mean that it's bad, for some ideas are new while certain old ones are deliberately quashed from public awareness by the Establishment.

Question 1c (continued)

Do we want to try to make changes in our current order?

Gehl provides a Yes answer on p.167 of her book "The Politics Industry", viz.: "Today, we are called on to remake American democracy once more. The energy for the movement is out there, vibrating in a citizenry fed up with the status quo."

Question 105.5 (continued)

Should we be having jurisdictions set a fixed number of candidates on each ballot, or instead allow any number of candidates to appear who have fulfilled the signature requirement?

In a book-club session conducted in May 2021, author Gehl noted in response to one of our questions that their reasoning for a maximum of 5 candidates included a lot of game-theory analysis which included the number of candidates whom most voters can compare constructively; seemed to have little or nothing to do with their favorite voting method of RCV, and appeared to ignore the fact that party primaries for national offices often comprise up to 15 prominent candidates.

Question 124.4 (continued)

In general, what Voting Method is best for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies?

In a book-club session conducted in May 2021, author Gehl (who was kind enough to tell the attendees from our Twitter communications that the A2E Moderator had a "sophisticated" view of our different electoral options) noted in response to another of our questions that the debate about voting methods has gone on since the 1750's, and that it's hard to know which method is 'best' when they are delivering different winners. We did not persuade them (yet?) to abandon RCV, but at least we legitimized the panoply of other alternatives, for potential future consideration.

Question 132 (continued)

Should the President (or Governor, or other Chief Executive of a jurisdiction) have unilateral authority to establish, adjust, or eliminate Departments in the Executive Branch, or should the Legislature have complete authority, or some kind of hybrid?

Amended in June 2021 from personal reflection: We now see that this Question should be generalized to how much authority the President generally should have

over the Executive Branch, as distinct from needing to live within the boundaries set by Congress.

In any case, every time that the President issues an 'executive order', it should lead with "Under the authority granted to the Office of the President by Congressional Ruling No. XXXX-XXX", both to indicate the specific legal authority, and to show on an ongoing basis that the President is subordinate to the Legislature.

Question 124.4 (continued)

In general, what Voting Method is best for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies?

In the final book-club session, conducted in June 2021, one panelist representing the organization political-innovation.org reiterated that their movement is not seeking to change who wins, but rather what candidates and incumbents are incentivized to do. Maybe that's good enough, but we want to change who wins.

Question 87 (continued)

Is there any other reason at all to support (or even allow) the idea of term limits?

In the final book-club session, conducted in June 2021, second panelist representing the organization political-innovation.org stated their opposition to term limits, on grounds that Congressional staffs are underfunded as it is, so representatives are dependent on lobbyists and other influencers to tell them what to do, so term limits would diminish what little ongoing intellectual capital we have.

Question 694 (continued)

To what extent should we allow/encourage speed bumps in streets and parking lots?

Amended in June 2021 from personal observation: A firetruck needed to slow down for a local speed bump, which is another reason not to have them.

Question 434 (continued)

How shall we deal with the fact that industry is currently using up a tremendous amount of physical resources, such as steel and timber?

Amended in June 2021 from personal observation: Looking at the paper grain of a puzzle book in the morning sunlight made me more appreciate the trees which contributed to it, and made me wonder again whether we are actually moving toward this 'paperless society' which was predicted when I was a kid. Made a note at this time to look later for a graph of paper consumption over the last 50 years.

Question 645.6 (continued)

Can we recommend at this time any improvements in Baseball statistics?

Pursuant to the note first introduced in Session 278, we have been spending some time during the 2021 season working on another experiment to construct an

equitable Overall Performance Index (OPI) which would better summarize each player's total productivity regardless of defensive position(s) played.

Slightly more specifically, we have been examining each game played on a Friday between two National League teams. Gauging more than one day each week would have presented too big of a drain on our heavy A2E schedule, whereas working on Friday games could more easily be accomplished on the relaxy weekends. We did not wish to pollute our data with any American League involvement, because their frequent use of the Designated Hitter (DH) rule would mess everything up.

As of the present update in June 2021, we have data from the first 11 weeks of the season, and we have been reallocating the defensive charges according to a variety of rulesets in hope of arriving at an index which treats all positions equally, a goal which has been getting closer but still somewhat eluding us. More later.

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Now resuming our Second Pass re-review, picking up from beginning of Section II-D:

Question 441 (continued)

Is the conclusion, then, that the minimum wage should be lowered?

Affirming in June 2021 our suggestion from August 2019 to aim on a long-term basis to reinstate the \$5-per-day minimum wage as promulgated by Henry Ford, on the condition that the economy allows \$1 per day to go to food, \$1 for lodging, \$1 for clothing and other personal possessions, \$1 for transportation and other public services, and \$1 for retirement. We recognize that this may take some time.

Question 442 (continued)

In this case, won't many wage ranges go down?

Reexamined for the Second Pass re-review in June 2021: Even if we all agree that currency should retain a fixed level of purchasing power over time, and even if we agree that today's currency is way undervalued, and even if we further agree that Ford's \$5-per-day would be a good minimum wage to take us forward into the next several centuries, we still have a problem to consider.

Problem is that the process of lowering wages and prices to any earlier level is not painless, which is why a lot of people have been avoiding it for much of this time, and may continue to oppose such a recommendation.

For, a vendor will generally not be self-motivated to lower prices unless there is a dropoff in sales, which is liable to not occur unless we first lower wages, such as by eliminating any current 'minimum wage'. Prices therefore are the lagging indicator, so while we wait for vendors to realize that wages have reduced, they are not selling as many goods as they budgeted, and may need to lower production and reduce staff. Meanwhile, the lesser-paid workers who previously could afford certain goods and services must do without them until the vendors lower their prices.

These are the attributes which frequently accompany the 'recession' phase of the standard economic cycle, and people generally complain during this time, because they don't want workers to suffer and the economy to lag. Is this what we want?

Our current economic imbalance arrived as a result of a rigged system of taxation and public borrowing, so we may require an equal amount of rigging in order to reverse the process and establish a stable normality.

That is, rather than simply remove the fixed parameter of a 'minimum wage', and simply allow the free market to take its time correcting itself to a lower level of wages and prices by means of a prolonged and painful recession, it may be net-better to do as certain other hyperinflationary nations have done over the years, and perform a more systematic revaluation of our currency.

One possible way to do this (not necessarily our principal recommendation, just to stimulate thinking) would be to pick some date more than one year into the future, and announce that all bank balances will be automatically reduced by a factor of 90% (or some other) on that date, such that all businesses will want to reduce their wages and prices by the same factor in order to remain operational at current levels.

Another possibility -- somewhat more complicated -- would be to incentivize price reduction by exempting sales tax on the first 10% of gross revenue, while sharply raising the tax rate on the remainder. Under this approach, employers would know in advance that they will be charging lower prices and that they should pay lower wages accordingly, and public agencies would be doing so as well, so hopefully all workers would earn the same purchasing power which they now have. However, some vendors might still want to maintain higher prices for as long as they can, which would mean that some workers could still not afford their goods, and so we would still have the same problem of prolonged recession. Not recommended.

Third approach would be the same automatic revaluation discussed above, except performed in stages over a period of years instead of all at once. On the face, this approach would appear to be easier on the economy, by allowing vendors and workers to adjust to the changing environment over time, with less 'shock to the system'. However, if the targets are continually shifting, then people will be less inclined to make major long-term purchases such as homes and cars and annuities until the dust finally settles, so that could drag the economy even worse.

We currently are thinking that the net-best approach is a one-time automatic revaluation of currency to a point where a \$5-per-day minimum wage is both achievable and meaningful, and get it over with. However, we are receptive to considering further alternatives.

We might need to make some special provision for any physical cash still in circulation, lest everyone try to 'run' the banks after the Big Announcement by trying to withdraw their entire balances beyond the fulfillment capacity of the banks. We might do so by preventing any cash withdrawals between the time of the Big Announcement and the effective date of the revaluation, or at least by limiting the amounts released during the transition period. Fed might then retain all excess cash in a reserve fund, to be released at the new valuation to government workers and contractors over time until the fund is exhausted, after which we would go back to issuing payment by direct bank deposit. This might be better than our past cycle of printing money and then shredding the excess, but it might also be net-better to

shred some or all of the excess cash up front, and expedite the 'cashless society' which we described in Answer 375. We can consider those details further down the road, if we can once obtain general agreement on the goal to revalue our currency.

Question 574.4

Any general recommendations for presenting classroom lessons?

Added in June 2021 from personal reflection: For those teachers who don't do it already, you might consider devoting at least the first portion of each lesson reviewing what was presented in recent day(s), both for reinforcement and also to help any students who were absent for the original presentation.

Question 437.5 (continued)

Do we have any product suggestions to be advanced by American industry?

Added from personal reflection in June 2021: Smoke alarms should have volume and sensitivity controls, or else some people won't use them at all. More later.

Question 464 (continued)

Shall our economic system continue to include mechanisms whereby individuals can shift their share of responsibility to a pool?

Reviewed in June 2021: Even if we accept some or all of the premises of 'Modern Monetary Theory' (or 'MMT'), and even if we all agree to have some sort of 'universal healthcare' in place, our group continues to feel that we would benefit from certain losses being covered by a pool of resources funded by interested stakeholders.

For, as we have begun to see (again) with the latest Administration, a policy of unrestrained public spending can lead to an oversaturation of currency units in our economy, causing those units to have less purchasing power, and causing prices to rise. As previously described, this condition leads to numerous problems, including that we lose all sense of the relative value of our various products and services at any given time, it becomes harder to evaluate the value of our labor over the course of time, we need to include more zeroes in all our checks and budgets, and we are less motivated to exercise any restraint in our public and private spending.

Even though the Fed gets to create or destroy as many Dollars as it ever wishes to, and even though according to MMT it is not really necessary for the Federal budget to balance nor for any nominal deficit to be 'financed' by government borrowing, yet we generally would do best to operate as though Dollars were limited. We should never give vendors an excuse to raise prices, so we should closely monitor and control the number of Dollars in active circulation at any given time. If we inject too many new Dollars into the economy for any combination of reasons, then controlling the money supply would mean taking large number of Dollars back from those who have too many, perhaps to the point where we are taxing the rich excessively.

To keep everyone happy, we should spend what we need, but not too much (if any) more than that, so that we can keep the number of active Dollars within a narrow range relative to our population and productivity at any given time, and thus keep prices relatively stable without extracting too much in taxes from any sector.

This implies (doesn't it?) that we should not require the Fed to pay for all our various losses, maybe some of them, maybe none. In any case, we should expect to absorb at least some nonzero portion of our losses through either our own resources or else a pool of stakeholders who share similar concerns and similar risks.

As also previously described, the institution of Insurance provides the participants with enormous peace of mind, because in exchange for a predictable premium coming out of their regular personal budgets, they know that they will never need to endure more than a certain level of financial loss no matter what ever happens. They have the same knowledge under the more extreme variations of MMT, such as if the Fed simply writes checks to cover everything (all Fed checks being good by definition), but again that could cause excessive inflation so is not recommended.

Question 466 (continued)

In general (possible exceptions to be noted hereafter), shall an individual have the option to participate in pooled insurance, or shall she be required to participate?

Reviewed in June 2021: Our position as of Session 234 was that everybody should be covered for all losses except Life, and that everybody should contribute into the premium pool as much of their fair share as they practically can. If this is the case, though, then do we really need a private sector of Insurance companies to collect premiums and pay claims, or should we simply pay claims out of the public fund?

Good thing about maintaining Insurance as a thing, instead of simply paying all claims publicly whenever filed, is that it allows premiums to be calculated on the basis of risk degree as well as fiscal solvency, which makes things fairer for all.

For one example, two persons of Age 40 may have the same financial status now, and maybe even the same health status, but the fact that one of them is a tobacco user indicates (according to extensive study and experience) that he is more likely to incur greater health problems later, so it could be (and has been) argued that he should pay more in premium than his non-smoking counterpart. For another example, drivers of Age 55 usually are more financially-established than those of Age 25, so they usually can afford a higher share of premium, but the younger drivers often drive more aggressively and dangerously, and therefore have a greater chance of incurring covered losses, so again it could be (and has been) argued that they should pay more in premium notwithstanding their tighter budgets.

If we were to eliminate Insurance as a thing, and simply collected taxes from everyone at the same set of rates, and paid whatever claims we could, hopefully without fueling inflation, then we would lose this distinction. This would mean that those with healthier lifestyles would pay a higher share of claim costs than they otherwise would, which is arguably unfair. Meanwhile, those who like to engage in riskier lifestyles would have no financial motivation to limit their liabilities, so we would experience more losses than we otherwise would, which would be bad for the society no matter who is paying for it all.

Better to provide everyone with financial incentives to limit their risk exposures, so that we generally have less destruction and waste, and more happiness and health. This means graduating pool contributions according to risk level as well as whatever factors would be used to calculate various forms of regular taxes. Thus, whether it

ends up as a public or private or mixed function (as addressed under Question 465), we generally should continue Insurance as a thing, even in an MMT environment.

Question 418 (continued)

Of these basic types, which is the fairest method of taxation, or is it appropriate for more than one type to be levied at once by a single jurisdiction?

While preparing for a June 2021 meeting which included a discussion on tax funding, we cleaned up our General Summary entry to recapitulate our current position.

In so doing, we clarified that these proposed tax allocations are relevant even in an MMT environment. For, even though we do not actually need to extract the exact same number of Dollars that we are spending, nor to 'finance' any 'deficit' through government borrowing, yet it still would be helpful to have formulas which tell us how many Dollars should be extracted from various segments of our economy.

We tax not only to keep our currency stable, but also to penalize certain indcorps for spending too much, or hoarding too much, or smoking too much, or doing something else which we feel is net-harmful to society, but which is not quite so egregious as to require criminal prosecution or incarceration.

Thus, when we are deciding how many Dollars need to be extracted (via Wealth Tax) for currency maintenance, we can also assess amounts to other segments to offset other public costs, so that everybody is paying his fair share, except that again we generally should relieve our poorest citizens from any tax burden, for it is they who should be the beneficiaries of our public policies and expenditures.

In sum, our General Summary entry currently reads as follows:

Different tax funds should be dedicated to different kinds of expense, even in an MMT environment. Some public operations (such as military/police protection and parks/libraries) may be funded by taxing all persons equally, though the capitation tax for the poorest citizens might need to be covered by wealthier entities. Others (to include firefighting and garbage collection) may be funded by taxing those who own property. Sales taxes can pay for education, the Commerce Department, and any other services which benefit those who participate in and/or benefit from our economic system, with provisions in place to mitigate regressivity. Wealth Tax can help to stabilize currency at the Federal level (according to MMT), and/or to reduce the disparity between rich and poor at more local levels. Estate taxation was to be discontinued in the new sales-tax environment according to our First Pass, but we restored the element in our Second Pass to help cover certain miscellaneous categories. We would rather tax those who buy things than those who work and earn money, and we do not wish to require ordinary workers to become CPA's every April 15, so we favor complete elimination of any Income Tax.

Question 487 (continued)

By what means shall we determine whether an individual (male or female) is physically and mentally and emotionally mature enough to handle sex?

We amended the substance of our Answer in the course of examining Q580, but we never formally adjusted our General Summary, so taking care of that at this time.

Our original statement from Session 242 was that “we generally cannot see any practical way of delineating that only certain individuals are emotionally mature enough for sex [some never are], so we do not recommend the adoption of any such criterion.” Our modified position from reviewing Question 580 in Session 262 was to repose judgment in the “parent or other guardian of a post-pubescent primary-school graduate [who] feels that he/she is still not ready for any sexual interactions”.

In the latter instance, we are recommending that the older person should (1) shelter the younger person from adult interactions except when properly supervised, and (2) encourage/require the younger person to wear an inexpensive ring or bracelet or other emblem (we like a loose rubber-band bracelet which is half-pink and half-blue) to announce to all would-be suitors that the younger person is presently unavailable.

Question 530 (continued)

To the extent that abortion is allowed anywhere in our society at any time under any circumstances, to what extent -- if ever -- should it be funded at any level from public resources?

Our original Answer was that any abortion clients who cannot afford the ‘deductible’ or ‘copayment’ which we might charge (as a disincentive to abuse the process by getting abortions every other Tuesday) would ‘owe’ us the money, generally by wage garnishment once their incomes eventually reach some particular levels.

We found in June 2021 that this is another Answer which needs to be modified in the context of Modern Monetary Theory (MMT), or any similar economic vision by which the central government is creating and destroying fiat currency on a digital basis.

For, once we can track everyone’s combined assets and liabilities through continual electronic updates, we can (and should) apply any such ‘social penalty’ or ‘user fee’ immediately, so their total wealth decreases immediately, although it may or may not immediately impact their ability to make low-level purchases, which is part of what we now need to consider. Meanwhile, because we create and destroy dollars at will, we do not really ‘need’ them to ‘pay’ any money to us, because all our checks are good by definition anyhow.

This therefore goes to the larger Question of how we track everyone’s ‘cash’ balances in an MMT environment when they have any judgments pending against them. That will be next up for us, but we can (and do) amend Answer 530 at this time by noting that the MMT alternative of immediate conditional deduction may apply.

Question 95.5 (continued)

What should happen with any funds received in excess of a designated campaign spending limit?

While performing a fresh review of our A2E website in June 2021, in search of any paragraphs which needed updating for MMT or anything else, we found that yes we needed to amend our Funding paragraph, which at the time reflected our original Answer 95.5, that any funds received in excess of a designated campaign spending limit should escheat to the General Fund of the applicable government.

According to MMT, state and local governments should continue to operate like households, with fixed budgets of revenue and expense which are influenced by how many dollars are provided by parent governments and/or must be sent upward to them. Conversely, the Fed is the sole issuer of its own currency, and can create or destroy 'digital dollars' with a few keystrokes, so it does not really 'need' the monies which are contributed by any would-be campaign influencers. What therefore should happen to such excess contributions in the special case of national elections?

Easiest alternative is for the Fed to 'absorb' such contributions without redistribution, and simply write them out of the money supply. It's a possible way to go, but we are not thrilled with it, because it seems to belie the spirit of the original Answer, which was that the excess funds should go to some constructive social purpose.

Another easy alternative would be to return the excess contributions to their sources, but we don't care for that approach either. For one thing, we would have applied that principle to the general case if we had wanted to, but we didn't. We feel that the contributor is undertaking a certain amount of risk by paying into a fund which may already be at capacity, and he shouldn't get to escape consequence if that is the case. Besides, even if we did return the excesses, then wouldn't that effectively penalize the early contributors who don't get their funds back? Not the way.

Somewhat more palatable is the idea of remitting any excesses to approved charities, which idea we previously applied to the general case, but again that's a bit of a can of worms. Who decides which charities are approved or not? Would any of the 'charities' actually be political-action organizations or other nefarious outlets? Even if they were all legit charities, who would decide any proportions or limitations?

Cleanest and fairest alternative seems to be to remit any excesses to a central campaign fund, to be used by all candidates in excess of the statutory spending limit. For, if we are providing free campaign support to all candidates in the form of signature collection, debates, ballot statements, and other outlets, and if a given individual wishes to pay more money into the campaign process beyond that, then that individual is effectively making the statement that the statutory spending limit is not enough, and that he wants to see more television advertising and printed mailers and personal appearances and other outreaches which cost more to produce. Thus, if the preferred candidate doesn't get to keep the contribution for already being at statutory maximum, then at least the candidates jointly get to use it in some proportion, so the contributor achieves his secondary goal of more campaigning.

What should the proportion be? Obvious temptation is to split the pot equally, but we see a couple of reasons not to do so. One is that the bottom tier of candidates (as measured by signature count on the #OpenBallot) might be so relatively obscure and unpopular that they really don't deserve the extra funding, although one could also make the converse argument that they might actually need the extra funding more. Another reason is that allocating proportion according to signature count on the #OpenBallot would make that process all the more relevant and interesting.

It would also change the signature game somewhat, and we would need to decide whether or not that is a good thing. For, in the proposed #OpenBallot environment, each voter may sign up to one-third of the ballot length, so she might not want to waste precious signatures supporting someone who has already reached the Top 15, and so she might want to seek out other candidates who are philosophically similar, in order to improve the chances that one of them will eventually win. This would

mean that many candidates who once reach the Top 15 probably would not get too many more signatures than that, and they wouldn't need them. Ballot access is the only reason for signatures in the original #OpenBallot model, so once you reach the Top 15 you're set.

But, if we change the game such that higher signature counts can translate to higher campaign funding, then candidates would continue to push for signatures as long and as hard as they can, and many voters might want to continue supporting their favorites more than any similar alternatives. This can lead to greater gravitation toward a small number of frontrunners, instead of the more diverse slate which we have sought with our #OpenBallot of 15 famous names.

Upon reflection, we feel that it is not after all in the public interest to allocate excess campaign funding -- or any other tactical advantage -- according to signature count. Once you have reached the Top 15, that's it, you're in, you're on the ballot, and your supporters can feel free to share their support with your collegial colleagues.

Between that and the previous argument that lower-tier candidates might be able to make much more productive use of any campaign excess, we are returning to the idea of splitting the excess pot equally among all candidates in the Top 15.

Would we want to apply this same approach in the general case? It's a possible, but for the present we are leaning away from it. We can see needing greater outreach at the national level, because there are so many more of us to reach, but it may not be as necessary at lower levels, and we generally would like to see a short and low-key and non-acrimonious campaign season at all levels, which was why we advocated for a low statutory spending limit in the first place. Keeping current non-Fed paradigm.

Question 103.4 (continued)

Who should be invited to participate in the debates?

After we amended Answer 95.5 in June 2021, we continued our fresh review of our A2E website, in search of any paragraphs which needed updating for any reason, and right away found a problem in the Debates paragraph. We had just gotten through reasoning that we did not want to allocate any tactical advantage according to signature count, lest it change the game such that candidates already in the Top 15 would want to continue pushing for additional signatures, instead of allowing their supporters to advance philosophically-similar alternatives so that voters have more of a choice. But now, we refreshed our recollection that the previous Debates provision had us assigning limited stage space to the candidates with the highest signature counts, in order to obviate the perception or reality of discrimination.

Did we want to change our Answer at this time? No, we did not. We continue to recognize as a practical matter that not all stages can accommodate 15 debaters. Even if they all did, some hosts still might prefer for various reasons (including broadcast time) to limit participation to a smaller subset, especially if there is an affirmative showing (by either signature count or some other mechanism) that some candidates among the Top 15 are clearly more eligible than others. When that happens, we still wish to avoid the perception or reality of discrimination, so any such limitation should exclude candidates only on the basis of some objective measure. We do not wish to rely on unofficial polls with small sample sizes, and we

do not wish to encourage more solicitation of campaign funds (less if anything), which appears to leave only the original signature count.

We therefore need to amend our previous thinking of zero tactical advantage being based on signature count, and to allow some advantage but keep it limited.

Question 95.5 (continued)

What should happen with any funds received in excess of a designated campaign spending limit?

After we resumed our fresh review of our A2E website, we noticed in the Debates paragraph that it called for limitation of stage space (a tactical advantage!) in favor of those candidates with higher signature counts. Upon reconsideration of Question 103.4, we decided to leave the original Debates provision in effect, and determined generally to allow some tactical advantage for signature count but to keep it limited.

Question 105.7

In what sequence should candidates appear on the ballot?

Added in July 2021: It had recently occurred to us that it might be fairest and most objective to list candidates in descending order according to signature count. Alpha gives unfair prominence to candidates with surnames in the early alphabet, sorting by party association or campaign funding grants too much advantage to lobbyists and other fatcats, chronological age ignores the reality that some younger people are more net-qualified than some older, and a random sort leaves too much to chance.

It seemed to make a level of sense to have the more prominent and serious candidates at the top of the ballot, and the 'also-rans' at the bottom, but how would we make that assessment objectively? By signature count, of course.

However, this idea again ignores the trap that we don't want to accord too much tactical advantage to recipients of more signatures, lest they continue to push for them even when they have reached the minimum number for ballot access.

We want a more diverse ballot, with multiple alternatives for each basic political philosophy, so that voters can also rely on individual attributes to help inform their choices. We lose a bunch of this if frontrunners continue to try to steal signatures away from philosophically-similar alternatives.

On the other hand, the sequence of ballot appearance is not quite as momentous as the campaign finance discussed in Question 95.5 recently. A voter who likes one frontrunner and one alternative is not likely to sacrifice her limited signature capital on a frontrunner who already has a substantial total, merely to advance that candidate in the ballot listing, so the alternatives still should have a chance.

We can modify our position if experience shows that we are getting only two or three frontrunners and lots of nobodies on the ballot, but hopefully the main focus of the signature exercise will be mere ballot access, and any tactical advantages such as debate access or ballot sequence will be relatively minor.

Question 377 (continued)

Shall banks be owned and operated by a governmental entity, or by private interests?

Amended in July 2021: We had previously found that "Deposits may continue to be managed by private banks, provided that account balances are continually uploaded to the central authority, and combined such that government always knows for taxation purposes the combined net wealth of each individual and corporation." However, although we found back in Session 205 that we did not want to combine all banks into a single government entity (gives government unnecessary work, open to hacking), yet we apparently did not consider a possible hybrid approach.

A hybrid approach is what we are now recommending. We arrive at this conclusion partly because of our finding in Answer 245 that our government 'help centers' should include banking services, and because of our more recent recognition that private banks might prefer to stay away from such places, presumably because the reward wouldn't be worth the effort to them.

Largely, we arrive at this conclusion to answer the question of how we generally track in an MMT environment anyone's cash balance who has a judgment pending against him. Further, I don't want to write checks anymore, nor to deposit checks in a bank, nor should the vendors wait for checks to be cut and mailed. Basically, everything should be Auto-Pay and Direct-Deposit, same as we are frequently doing now, merely expanded to cover Everything.

We are considering the phrase 'National Citizens Bank' (not to be confused with the private 'Citizens National Bank') for where people can get accounts (usually through the 'help centers', but possibly elsewhere) which they cannot get anywhere else. We would do this as a public service, and not charge any fees to the citizens. We would provide a debit card, but we are now getting away from both physical cash and physical checks.

If you want to be funny and hack this 'bank', then the joke's on you: Most of the amounts involved would be very small compared to what you could make on the 'big con', and you would not be making the victims much poorer than they already are.

Why this proposed name? We start with the term 'National' in hope of showing that this is a public entity, not a private one which happens to be operating nationally. We add the term 'Citizens' in hope of showing that the entity is not in the business of providing corporate loans, but only citizen banking services.

We need somehow to distinguish between long-term liabilities and current cash availability. We therefore suggest that the central system originally proposed in Answer 364 for agricultural producers should track everyone's combined cash balances (inclusive of any account held in the 'National Citizens Bank'), along with any pending liabilities such as home loans or legal judgments. We were tempted to maintain a single 'point' total for everyone, so that we could track how much you have produced over how much you have consumed, the aim being to end your life in a net-positive position, but this approach would not allow you to make small daily purchases while you have some pending financial obligation. Better to keep separate accounts in each citizen's profile of the cash available for immediate purchases, and the bills and other liabilities which are expected to hit your cash account later, but

which will not impede your daily purchases in the meantime. You would still have a total net-asset balance for purposes of Wealth Tax or creditworthiness.

We understand that there is a certain amount of creepiness in the prospect of The Government keeping an exact account of every Dollar which you earn and spend. However, couple of points to consider: First, they're tracking most or all of this stuff anyhow, in addition to the websites which you visit, partly to see whether you're doing or buying anything illegal, and largely so that they can send you customized ads which are more likely to attract your active attention, and our proposed system is actually less invasive than what they're doing now. Second, we are doing this largely as a public service to those who can't get banking services anywhere else; if we could somehow guarantee that every citizen in America could be registered with at least one private bank, then our proposed system might not be necessary, at least not to the full described extent; as it is, we do not expect that we can achieve this goal even if we try to require it by law, so we should be prepared to do it ourselves.

Question 530 (continued)

To the extent that abortion is allowed anywhere in our society at any time under any circumstances, to what extent -- if ever -- should it be funded at any level from public resources?

Amended in July 2021: Now that we have fleshed out our new banking system in the Answer 377 amendment posted this day, we can revisit our model for abortion funding. Specifically, we would now apply the 'deductibles' or 'copayments' to the responsible parties via the liability accounts of their respective profiles within the 'National Citizens Bank', if they are unable to afford the payments up front. That system would need logic to allow the repayments to be held until their incomes reach the calculated level for allowing automatic wage garnishments.

Question 559 (continued)

To what extent should formal education be publicly funded?

Amended in July 2021: This is another topic which we must reconsider in light of the Modern Monetary Theory (MMT), which includes among other principles that the Federal government gets to write checks for any amounts and for any purposes, without needing either a positive bank balance or to 'borrow' funds from investors, provided only that inflation remains within designated targets.

It might therefore turn out that this Answer will depend on Question 560, on which level of government should be involved. If it is the Fed, then all Fed checks are good by definition (according to MMT), so we might have a lot more flexibility on the extent of public education funding. If it is State level or below, then MMT holds that conventional budgetary considerations apply, so the ranges would be narrower.

We provide an Answer either way: If the funding turns out in A560 to be State level or below (as we decided when originally treating Q559 in Session 255), then we should "fund education liberally, although still responsibly", as originally discussed.

If education turns out to be funded in any proportion by the Fed, then we probably still want to maintain the general philosophical goal of "liberally, although still responsibly", but we would need to add a caveat. The temptation of filling out blank

checks may be too great for us to continue funding “responsibly”, especially when we observe teachers being underpaid and physical facilities being underserved. As with any funding program under MMT (including infrastructure, healthcare, and the military), a lot of folks (as we already have seen in recent Twitter correspondence, and even as hinted in “The Deficit Myth”) might be motivated to raise funding now in order to ‘pay for’ whatever we need, and allow any inflation corrections to be addressed by other mechanisms at other times. This can be dangerous.

Better we feel to maintain the segregated approach of tax funding which we proposed in Answer 418, in which education is funded by Sales Tax, along with “any other services which benefit those who participate in and/or benefit from our economic system”. When we extract taxes to the same degree that we are expending the funds on public services, we maximize the likelihood that we will be able to keep the economy running and the currency stable without an excessive reliance on Wealth Tax. We therefore should either adjust education cost to meet our sales-tax revenue, or adjust the sales-tax rate to meet our education cost, or some combination. However we do it, let’s please make sure as a default goal that we match cost and revenue, even at the Federal level, even under MMT.

Question 701.2

Should we allow classic films and TV shows (like ‘Star Trek’ and ‘Star Wars’) to be ‘enhanced’ with new special effects for continued broadcasting?

Added in July 2021 from personal reflection: Moderator likes improvement in some institutions, but also is a traditionalist in a lot of ways, and personally does not enjoy seeing any version of a classic film or TV show which changes any of the attributes of the original theatrical/broadcast releases. Colorizing a few selected films might be all right (as will be discussed in Question 701.1 later on), provided that we always have the option of which version we wish to purchase or stream. However, I don’t like that they added a distracting ring around the exploding Death Star as an ‘enhancement’ of the original *Star Wars*, nor that they added a whole bunch of extra travelers in Mos Eisley, which according to the original script was on a planet which was the farthest away from the center of the galaxy. I also like the original matte paintings in original *Star Trek*, especially the iconic planet appearing at the opening of the classic “City on the Edge of Forever”, telling us instantly and uniquely and without a word what episode was beginning to show, and I hate its replacement.

However, as with many of the Questions treated in this document, the Moderator’s personal opinion is probably not universally held, or else there would never have been a market for these ‘enhancements’ to be created in the first place. We are hoping therefore to find a solution which will accommodate everyone’s desires.

Here then is a compromise proposal with which both camps hopefully can be happy:

If you are a cable channel devoted to shows about Science and Science Fiction, such that much of your content is going to be oriented toward special effects and elaborate matte paintings, then by all means show the enhanced versions, so that your loyal viewers can enjoy the same kind of product.

Conversely, if you are a channel devoted to running classic TV series or classic films, then please stick with the original theatrical/broadcast release, no modified images

or extra footage or director's cuts or anything, so that we who fell in love with the original product may continue our love affair throughout our lives.

Question 589 (continued)

What facts and/or skills and/or values will we want to teach in each of the subjects in each of the disciplines at the primary level, and how much time do we expect the teaching to take under ordinary conditions?

Amended in July 2021 from personal reflection: When doing a puzzle like Cross Sums, there often are multiple ways to reach the correct answer for a given square, or for the puzzle as a whole. Teacher might therefore want to ask the class (except at beginner level), how do you think we should approach the problem? Makes them pay attention more and gives them more of a sense of ownership.

Remind them as you're doing so that they will need this practice in deciding how to approach a particular problem (whether in math puzzles or anywhere else in life), because you will not always have a teacher in front of you to provide the correct answer, or a textbook or puzzle book with the answer in the back.

Amended again in August 2021 from personal reflection: Health track of primary school should include First Aid and CPR, probably at Grade 8 to maximize physical facility, although maybe First Aid can start as early as Grade 7.

Question 589.2

What subjects might/should be included in the standard secondary-school curriculum for the foreseeable future?

Amended in August 2021: When we proposed in July 2020 that "any student who takes 60% of [available secondary-school] courses ... should be eligible for graduation from secondary school", we apparently assumed that all such courses would have the same academic weight, which probably was not appropriate.

It has more recently occurred to us that 'core' subjects (like History and Physics) should get more secondary-school credit than the 'frillier' courses (like Ceramics and Woodshop). so that many students will still opt for them in order to facilitate graduation.

The number of credits assigned to each course should be a function of course length, degree of difficulty, and usefulness in the real world. Credits can be modified as needed in order to make the harder subjects more attractive to some, and the funner subjects more attractive to others.

Once we know the total number of credits available to be earned in a given school's curriculum, we can say that acquiring 60% of that number shall be deemed sufficient for graduation. Or, in that different schools may offer different numbers of credits (for staffing and other reasons), a school district may decide that a certain number of credits shall be needed to graduate from any secondary school in their district. Or, different districts can manage it in different ways, and we see which approach works better in terms of producing more and/or better graduates, which might be measured by adding and/or averaging the gross incomes of all graduates.

Question 643.1 (continued)

Do we have continuing problems with any particular Team names, logos, colors, or other similar attributes?

Amended in August 2021: Cleveland Indians recently became the 'Cleveland Guardians', and so far the name makes no sense to us, except as not being particularly belligerent or bothersome in any way, but we so far are getting no association with the City of Cleveland or its geographic environs. Meh. We like better our recommendation of 'Rockers' from February 2020.

Question 373 (continued)

Given that many goods (particularly food items) are consumed shortly after production, and also given that a large part of the economy comprises human services which cost nothing other than time to provide, shall the total credit amount be a fixed figure, or shall it fluctuate with population, or shall it fluctuate with the total amount of material wealth currently in existence, or shall some other means be used to determine it?

Amended in August 2021: We heard on "Jeopardy!" on 7/21/2021 that an original drachma could buy 6 arrows. Although we do not favor using any form of weapon as the basis for our currency, this does at least go to show that it is not an original idea at all to define your base currency unit in terms of some quantity of useful resources.

Question 418 (continued)

Of these basic types, which is the fairest method of taxation, or is it appropriate for more than one type to be levied at once by a single jurisdiction?

Amended in August 2021: We observed that our summary Answer did not as of this time assign Infrastructure to any particular tax source, so treated at this time.

First step was to research our past notes. We had a note in A21 from 11/1998 suggesting that we tie it to Sales Tax, along with Police and Fire and Education and emergency Healthcare, which we later modified by segmenting those functions among different tax funds. We had a note in A374 from 7/2017 suggesting that we tie it to Wealth Tax. Then, of course, we had a long A374 discussion in 2/2021 on whether we need to tie it to any kind of tax at all, or whether we even really need any kind of tax at all.

It was never really resolved in our previous notes, and it occurs to us now that Sales Tax makes more sense than Wealth Tax, with an increment covered by Property Tax.

For, a big reason why we have so many highways and railroads and bridges and tunnels and harbors is to facilitate commerce, so it is consistent with our previous finding that the businesses and consumers who benefit from an active commerce should contribute as needed toward making sure that it keeps happening.

Conversely, if we were to charge all infrastructure projects to the super-rich through a Wealth Tax, then -- even with the 30% cap which we adopted in Answer 385 -- the temptation would be very easy to order unnecessary infrastructural projects and improvements as a means of 'sticking it to the man' and getting more hoarded

dollars actively circulated within the local economy. Meanwhile, we tie up extensive labor and physical resources which can be used more constructively elsewhere.

Assigning the burden to the consumer through a Sales Tax gives us an incentive to fund what we need in order to keep our economy mobile and healthy, but no more.

Building safety is more a matter for building owners to deal with, and they do so largely through some form of Property Insurance. However, insofar as we invest any public resources in approving architectural plans to maintain the public safety, and/or inspecting completed buildings on a periodic basis for any new structural or electrical problems, those costs should be borne by building owners through a margin of their Property Tax.

Upon further reflection, decided that utility infrastructure (especially water mains!!) should instead be funded by Property Tax for mostly benefitting propertyholders.

Question 32.0 (continued)

If specific border disputes arise, then it is better for the affected nations to deal with it themselves, or to refer to the I.O.O.?

Amended in August 2021 from personal reflection: Should be able to appeal an international case like Assange to global court, which can be rolled into our model I.O.O. structure. Not sure whether it should go in the Nations or Provinces house. In any case, we want a policy of acquitting defendants in questionable cases, so we don't want permanent panelists like America who have already made up their minds, but neither do we want any one delegation to have sole veto power or decide the sentence by being lightest verdict on the panel. Probably allow any delegation to sit on the global appeal jury as wishes to, because broader representation of the global community is better, then go with the verdict which is lighter than two-thirds of the panel but heavier than one-third, so that we favor the underdog defendant but not too much. Thus, our I.O.O. would have both legislative and judicial authority.

Question 645.3 (continued)

What else can we do to maintain/improve fan interest in Baseball?

Amended in August 2021: Pursuant to the seventh element of our Answer, originally added in January 2019, we neglected to report our vision that the stripes for being the game MVP should appear on the arm which faces the pitcher when you bat, so that it will make you a more imposing presence when you stand at the plate.

It may make little difference to American League pitchers, who according to our Answer 644 would never again need to stand at the plate as batters, not even in the World Series, but you may as well get in the habit in case you get traded later.

We currently are envisioning one set for the first five stripes, and another for the second five, in order to make counting easier from a distance. But, what if someone gets more than ten stripes in a season? How likely is that to happen, with an average of 81 wins spread among 26 players (more when you include mid-season replacements)? If it does, if one player dominates the team so much that he is acquiring the lion's share of their accolades, then they may actually have bigger problems than where to display his stripes. In any case, there's a possibility of

building a third set on the same sleeve, but we suspect that we wouldn't have the room. Could just make the stripes smaller (two on a row?), or use badges on the hat instead of stripes on the sleeve, but we currently recommend building the third (and fourth?) set of stripes on the opposite sleeve.

Question 169 (continued)

What functions and issues shall be handled by the Department of Science?

Amended in August 2021: We are wondering whether there is some ultrasonic frequency which we can emit around the house and patio to kill flies and mosquitoes but not dogs or cats or any other household pets. Other remedies don't seem sufficiently effective, and they might be worse for the environment.

Question 622 (continued)

To what extent (if any) should we be allowing tobacco-smoking at all?

Amended in August 2021: When we stated back in Session 273 that States and Localities generally should have the authority to decide the extent of tobacco regulation within their borders, and not the Fed, owing to widespread geographic variation in attitudes about tobacco smoking specifically and governmental intrusion generally, we neglected to make an exception for Airports and Airplanes and any other specific jurisdictions which are under direct control of the Federal government.

To be clear, we feel that the Fed should have tobacco-regulating authority within its specific jurisdictions, and we strongly support the Federal policy which has been in effect for some years now, that tobacco smoking is not to be allowed on airplanes at all, and nowhere within general-access areas of public airports. Just because you may need to fly through Charlotte in order to get from Miami to Boston, doesn't mean that you need to be subjected to all of North Carolina's tobacco smoke.

Question 345 (continued)

By what criteria shall a particular jurisdiction determine the appropriate number of years of imprisonment?

Amended in August 2021: Criminal penalty can reduce according to time elapsed between the alleged occurrence and reporting it to proper authority. We do this both to encourage prompt reporting and to recognize that the effect must not have been that severe if you took so long to bother reporting it.

Question 642 (continued)

Shall we make any adjustments to when certain seasons begin or end, in order to make the year more balanced?

Amended in August 2021: Upon further reflection, we like the idea which we suggested for a possibility back in April 2019, to move the regular Baseball season from 162 games back to its previous 154, in addition to streamlining the playoff schedule to 5 games for the league championship and 3 games for division series.

Yes, it's true that Baseball is an endurance sport, and one big reason why the regular season contains so many games, any of which can last 18 innings or more, is to see how well players and teams manage to stay healthy and conserve their strengths. It also appears to be true, however, that the longer playoff schedule is wearing down pitchers to the point where they do not complete their games nearly as frequently as their predecessors (although, in fairness, part of this may also be due to the pitchers throwing faster and with more movement than before), so they need to be replaced during games more frequently, which drags down the game and bores the fans.

If pitchers have reached their physical limitations, and if the only way that we can reduce pitching changes is to shorten the regular season, then we had best do so.

Question 638.9 (continued)

What is the optimum number of Conferences per League, and Divisions per Conference? For the limited purposes of this Question, Major League Baseball is treated as a 'League', and each of its Leagues is treated as a 'Conference'.

Amended in August 2021: Now that we have observed for Answer 642 that we need a shorter regular season and playoff schedule in Baseball in order to alleviate wear on pitchers and reduce the need for boring mid-inning changes, it follows that we should take this opportunity to obviate the current 'wild-card' game by performing a final expansion of the multi-league structure from 30 to 32 teams.

We had been toying with this idea for some time, and long ago created a sample structure which utilizes only our largest population centers, and which ascertains that any State with two or more teams does not have them all in the same league:

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <u>National North</u> Chicago Cincinnati Cleveland Seattle | <u>National East</u> Atlanta New York Philadelphia Washington | <u>American North</u> Columbus Detroit Minneapolis Portland | <u>American East</u> Baltimore Boston New York Pittsburgh |
| <u>National West</u> Denver Los Angeles Phoenix San Francisco | <u>National South</u> Dallas Orlando St. Louis Tampa | <u>American West</u> Las Vegas Sacramento San Diego San Jose | <u>American South</u> Houston Kansas City Miami San Antonio |

Other possibilities are possible, of course, but we like this model as at least a starting point for discussion. Several teams retain their traditional leagues and divisions and rivalries (we would not for the wide world deprive Dodger and Giant fans the pleasure of hating each other), and we do make a few changes (not unheard of, for the Brewers and Astros switched leagues not too long ago, and many teams have relocated and even rebranded over the years), but we like the overall balance, and the opportunity of developing a few new markets.

Note here that we get away from the convention of naming any team according to its State, and focus only on its City, so that we no longer need to deal with the pesky question of which team truly represents a large state like California or Texas. [Revisited later, for not liking Seattle and Portland so far away from division rivals.]

Question 639.3 (continued)

How might we apply these standards to the four major American sports of Baseball, Football, Basketball, and Hockey, assuming current conditions?

Amended in August 2021: Now that we have established in the amended Answer 638.9 that there should be 32 teams in Major League Baseball, and in the amended Answer 642 that there should again be 154 games in the regular season, we need to redo the math which we applied back in Session 276 to determine how many games each team plays against each other team during the regular season.

However, we looked at this time to Answer 639.2 for guidance on what to do when you have four equal Divisions within a League, with no Conference structure intervening, and it turns out that we made no such provision, so we needed to do it at this time.

Question 639.2 (continued)

How best to summarize and quantify these findings?

Amended in August 2021: We established in Session 276 that if you have two Conferences within a League, then you generally should aim for about $\frac{2}{3}$ (or maybe a little more if needed) of the games being within your own Conference and $\frac{1}{3}$ with the other. Also, if you have three Divisions within a Conference or League, then you generally should aim for about $\frac{1}{2}$ (or maybe a little more if needed) of the games being within your own Division, and $\frac{1}{4}$ for each of the other two Divisions. But, we made no provision for having four equal Divisions within a League, with no Conference structure intervening, so we did so at this time.

The guiding principles here seem to be (1) that you should play significantly more games with each of your Division rivals than with any opponent outside your Division, and (2) that the fraction of intradivisional games appears to decrease as the number of Divisions increases.

If we have $\frac{2}{3}$ of the schedule played internally with two Divisions (or Conferences), and $\frac{1}{2}$ with three Divisions, then we might go as little as $\frac{1}{3}$ for four Divisions, but that intuitively seems too small to truly satisfy the first guiding principle. Besides, you might want to leave more of the smaller fractions available in case you ever decide to go crazy with more than four Divisions. We therefore are inclined to aim for around $\frac{2}{5}$ of the schedule being played within your own Division, and approximately $\frac{1}{5}$ being played against each of the other three Divisions.

Question 639.3 (continued)

How might we apply these standards to the four major American sports of Baseball, Football, Basketball, and Hockey, assuming current conditions?

Amended in August 2021: To tweak slightly our finding in A639.2 as amended, we also perceive that we might want to make the cross-country encounters rarer and more special. We therefore are envisioning a three-tier schedule, with 42 games played within your own Division (14 for each team), 88 games played against teams from your two neighboring Divisions (11 for each team), and 24 games (6 for each) played against teams in the Division on the other side of the country from you.

Question 639.2 (continued)

How best to summarize and quantify these findings?

Amended in August 2021: When we tried to apply the 2/5 rule to the actual four-Division structure which we envision for Major League Baseball, we neglected to consider the factor of wanting to make the cross-country encounters rarer and more special. As a result of our revised calculation in Answer 639.3, we see that the ratio ends up closer to 1/4 of the games (3/11, to be precise) being played internally, another 1/4 (actually 2/7, even though it's higher) against neighboring Divisions, and 3/20 of the games played against the Division across the country. Go figure.

Question 638.9 (continued)

What is the optimum number of Conferences per League, and Divisions per Conference? For the limited purposes of this Question, Major League Baseball is treated as a 'League', and each of its Leagues is treated as a 'Conference'.

Amended in August 2021: With 32 teams constituting the proposed new structure of Major League Baseball, organized into eight Divisions of four teams each, we can go ahead and obviate any 'wild-card' games in the Baseball playoffs. Instead, better to allow only the actual Division winners to progress. (Losers still have motivation to try to win their remaining games, if only for the increased draft chances described in Answer 637.) Division winner with highest record in each League plays a 3-game set against the Division winner in that League with the lowest record, and the other two Division winners in each League play a 3-game set against each other. The two series winners in each League play a 5-game Championship Series for the pennant, and of course those two winners play a 7-game World Series.

With this revised structure, we transition from a 162-game regular season plus a maximum of 20 playoff games, to a 154-game season plus a maximum of 15 playoff games. The savings of up to 13 games per season will hopefully ease the strain on modern pitchers, and reduce the need to replace them in the middle of an inning.

Question 385 (continued)

Are there any additional mechanisms or incentives which we can concoct to allow or encourage governments to regulate spending?

Amended in August 2021: Another reason to cap the Wealth Tax at 30% is to avoid the perception or reality of the super-rich having a majority or plurality interest in setting public policy. For, they might then immediately lower their own tax rate, although such a move would then reduce their standing to change it further.

Question 645.3 (continued)

What else can we do to maintain/improve fan interest in Baseball?

Amended in August 2021: MVP stripes should be on only home uniforms, both because it's a bad look to be seeking to intimidate your opponents on their home fields, and because you are more likely to lose when you are playing away so you don't want the added embarrassment of having flaunted your stripes before your

loss. However, we should also address teams like the Diamondbacks who have multiple home uniforms; for that, we imagine that each such team should decide whether to revert to a single home uniform (Moderator personally likes the tradition and continuity of the Yankees' and Dodgers' home uniforms, but also allows that some military units have different 'uniforms of the day', so maybe some sports teams get to do so as well), or keep the stripes on only one version of its home uniform, or transfer the stripe from one uniform to the next each day (lotta sewing), or create multiple versions of each MVP stripe for the different home uniforms, or fashion some special armband which can be worn over the sleeve.

Question 32.6

Should the I.O.O. get involved in recognizing internal changes of government for existing nations?

Added in August 2021: Shortly after the United States announced in 2021 that it was withdrawing all military forces out of Afghanistan following a 20-year occupation, the Taliban party of that country took control of the Kabul government. (Right or wrong, then, at least the episode showed that the American military was succeeding in its mission to prevent a Taliban takeover.) Shortly after this, the Taliban sought recognition by the United States of its political legitimacy.

This made us wonder: Why come to us? Why do we deserve this generosity?

Short answer we imagine is that they were hoping that the United States would commit to a policy of no further intervention in their country. Longer answer appears to be that they did not trust the United Nations to make a binding proclamation which would be respected by America and the rest of the World.

But then, that raises a larger Question, which we have decided to add to our formal Outline: **Should** the Taliban have appealed to the United Nations for political recognition, or is that matter outside the scope of either the current 'international oversight organization' or any valid successor?

We have in Answer 27.6 that any territory which appears to be operating as a sovereign and independent nation can/should be recognized as such by the I.O.O., and be accorded the same level of legislative representation as any other sovereign nation. We have in Answer 29.5 that we should not have any specific qualification requirements for I.O.O. delegates. We have in Answer 32.3 that the I.O.O. can airlift refugees out of major cities, but should otherwise not interfere with a nation's alleged deprivation of human rights to its residents.

It could possibly be inferred from these statements that it doesn't (or shouldn't) matter to the I.O.O. which government is currently in charge of a given country, as long as it is continuing to function as a sovereign nation.

Question of representation might arise if you have a new delegate seeking to replace the existing delegate with a new set of credentials. We can't have delegates replaced at any time by anyone who can put together a decent piece of calligraphy, but we also need to recognize legitimate changes of representation when they need to occur. It's a lot easier when the credentials are in the same format (and hopefully attested by some of the same people) as previous versions issued by the same government. But, when a new government takes over, they may or may not want to

(or be able to) use the same templates for their paperwork, so we may need to lighten up on the diplomatic rituals when we hear about takeovers in the news.

Besides, it's likely that the previous delegate was being compensated by the previous government, and would be without salary under the new administration, so she might withdraw from the scene on that basis alone. Then again, she might elect to hang around without salary in order to militate what she thinks is right.

Still, even if we know from the news that a takeover has taken place, and even if there is exactly one delegate asserting representation of that new government, there still might be a temptation to say no you can't sit at our table, because we morally disapprove of your government and/or how they managed to come to power. Should they be allowed to make those kinds of calls?

Our primary temptation is to say no, that the whole idea of our model of global governance is to focus on international issues, and to butt out of local politics.

However, should we be making exceptions for governments with known/suspected ties to international terrorism, or who came to power through violent means?

We also have in our Answer 32.1 that the "I.O.O. may incur into a country to suppress an imminent and serious threat by a 'terrorist' or other organization known to be operating within that country, provided that there is sufficiently compelling evidence of such threat coming from there, and also provided that the host country is not acting swiftly enough to suppress the threat themselves." That rule would apply whether the government was directly sponsoring the terrorism or passively allowing it. Any government would therefore be well advised to suppress any terrorist activity from initiating within its borders, so any past associations should not *ipso facto* disqualify a particular government from being recognized at the global level. Punish them when they actually do wrong, otherwise let them be.

As for coming to power through violent means, many governments currently represented in the United Nations either became sovereign nations by means of violent revolution against an imperial parent, or else toppled previous regimes through the arrest or assassination of their leaders. If we excluded every nation with a history of violent overthrow, then our table would not need to be very big.

On balance, it would seem to be beyond the scope of the I.O.O.'s authority and mission to get involved in the internal politics of any member nation. Just as we stated in Answer 27.7 that new nations should be recognized "with dispatch", in order to facilitate the global conversation, it follows that any new government of an existing nation should likewise be recognized "with dispatch" for the same reason. Whoever they are, and however they got there, and however long they'll be sticking around, for the present they have control and influence over their nation's resources and foreign policy and military structure, so they should be the ones who should be sitting at the table to tell us their side of the story and/or listen to ours.

Question 124.73 (or 124.7C) (continued)

Who should approve a recall?

Amended in August 2021: Recent attempt to recall Governor Newsom of California showed that we can effectively manage the process by mail. We now suspect (in

case it's not already happening) that the proponents of any recall should foot the cost, at least if they fail. However, we are prepared to accept that the cost should be borne by the public treasury if the recall is successful, on grounds that it is in the public interest to install the officials whom the public wants, and to remove those whom the public doesn't want.

Question 647.6 (continued)

Do we have any suggestions/requests to offer regarding TV coverage of the Olympics?

Amended in August 2021: Do not begin any Olympic events before the opening ceremony has concluded. It is annoying to hear on TV or in other media that somebody has won a medal or a preliminary heat when the Games have not yet officially begun, and it demeans the solemnity and magnitude of the opening ceremony.

If you now have so many events and competitors that you cannot squeeze all the activity within a single two-week period, then make it a three-week period, or longer if needed. Whenever you need to have your first athletic contest, have the opening ceremony sometime before then.

Otherwise, whoever officially declares the Games to be open looks like a jerk. Dude, the Games have already started: Where the heck have you been??

Question 638.9 (continued)

What is the optimum number of Conferences per League, and Divisions per Conference? For the limited purposes of this Question, Major League Baseball is treated as a 'League', and each of its Leagues is treated as a 'Conference'.

Amended in August 2021: We realized shortly after posting the preceding list that we did not allow for any teams from Canada. Should we do so?

There are arguments either way.

The more restrictive view is that Baseball started out in America, so we should be the place where the best players play. Also, while we might be tempted to station 'major' teams and leagues in Japan and other far-flung countries which like the game, it is impractical and unhealthy to require players to travel such great distances routinely. Further, if we were to include Canadian population centers to the same degree as those in America, then that would belie our Answer 148 that the two are to remain separate nations. Finally (pending further reflection), if we station major-league teams in Canada, then why not also do so in Mexico, which also really likes the sport and already has a League Of Its Own?

The more permissive view is that Canada and America have historically been better neighbors than many other pairs of nations, with very little border security ever needed until the Covid pandemic began in 2019. It was why we introduced Question 148 in the first place, because there was a school of thought out there that the two countries were similar enough that it might be most expedient to combine them. Also, the distance needed to get from Detroit to Toronto is far less than that needed to get to Portland OR, so that would argue in favor of inclusion.

Tell you what: We'll perform another experiment, this time considering all population centers which are within the same diameter as that which separates the two most distant teams in the current structure, and see what it looks like. If we can manage to include at least one Canadian team and at least one Mexican team in the revised structure, without making the travel distances any longer than they are now, then that might help to make us more of a continental community, which in turn might help us all to become a better global community.

If we do that, though, then it intuitively seems to us that we should no longer assign any non-American teams to the American League, so we'll put them all in the National, because they still represent their own Nations, and thus are still National.

That all said, we observe that the longest straightline distance between two current teams in the Major Leagues are the 3135 miles between Boston and San Francisco.

We would like to select a point somewhere in or near the middle of that corridor, and use that as the center of our circle of acceptable locations. We thought about finding the city with the lowest total distance from existing teams, but that probably would skew the center toward the east, whereas we are looking at minimizing distances for everyone, so we basically are looking for the spot with the lowest distance to the farthest team. Our farthest-flung teams currently are in Boston, Miami, San Diego, and Seattle, so we need to find which city has the easiest air access to all of them.

A little charting of online research showed us that Omaha appears to be the only sizable city where the distance is less than 1400 miles to each of the corner cities. Omaha therefore is our bogey, and we are accepting only those cities which are within 1400 miles of it.

We next looked online for the current population of the largest cities in North America, and filtered out all those which are more than 1400 miles from Omaha.

What we observed is that only 14 of the 30 current major-league teams are located within the Top 50 of North American cities by population, and that only 21 are within the Top 95. Most of the other cities on the list are Mexican towns which the author had never heard of before, and which might be on a lower economic scale.

Conclusion is clear: Just because a city is large in population, doesn't mean that it is both willing and able to support a large modern stadium and a Major League franchise. We must consider factors other than population to assess suitability.

On the other hand, many of these towns are more than 1400 miles from Omaha, and the more northerly are the more familiar. Then again, we neglected to notice until we got deeper in that the distance from Omaha to San Francisco is over 1400 miles, so again we needed to give further thought to the whole concept. Maybe we will find a different centerpoint, and/or expand the radius of acceptability, and/or include only those cities which currently play at some minimum level of the minor leagues.

Question 13 (continued)

What does it mean to injure someone else?

Amended in August 2021 from personal reflection: Threats are a form of mental injury, in that they cause you to feel bad, and distract you to the point where you

can't do all of what you would otherwise do, so we may need to expand our definition of injury.

Question 683 (continued)

Do we want to continue/encourage the practice of exchanging gifts on Christmas?

Amended in August 2021 from personal reflection: We don't really need annual greeting cards, either. They impose an expectation upon the recipients that they must reciprocate on an ongoing and time-sensitive basis, and we really should not put any others through that ordeal, especially our friends. We have many ways now (text, phone, email, etc.) by which we can easily stay in touch with our loved ones as often as we wish, on our own timetables, so they can do the same, easier on everyone. Also better to save paper products where we practically can. Sorry to those of you involved in that industry, but we need to start looking at the bigger picture more.

Question 437.5 (continued)

Do we have any product suggestions to be advanced by American industry?

Mobile Devices - added from personal reflection in August 2021

Mobile devices should stay on for as long as I dictate in my settings, and automatically go dark after that time. My device stays on sometimes unless I switch to power-saving mode, and then I need to close that window manually in order to save power. Later, when I'm typing or reading something, the screen goes dark after only a few seconds of pause, so I need to exit power-saving mode manually. Other times, when I have been in power-saving mode but have needed to type a couple of quick text messages or something, my setting changes automatically out of power-saving mode, so I need to switch it back when I'm done. Settings should never change unless I change them, and one standard setting for mobile devices should be the length of time which I want the device to remain on if I don't touch it before it starts to go dark. As long as I am still touching it within that period, it should never go dark or change my standard setting.

Smoke Detectors - added from personal reflection in August 2021

If we want people to use smoke detectors more actively, including by replacing batteries when needed, then we should include variable controls to make the alarm sounds more tolerable. Many models currently available have only one sound and only one volume and only one sensor level, and it can cause a problem. Our cat used to freak out whenever the smoke detector would go off, as it often did when someone was cooking in the kitchen. Even if you don't have pets in your house, one or more human residents might find the loud sound so bothersome that they might be tempted to remove the batteries from the units, thus defeating their purpose.

Smoke detectors should include at least one dial for volume control, and preferably at least two options for pitch or other sound variety. The sensors which trigger the alarms also should be variable, so that those who generate smoke through cooking or other household activities can find the level which best suits their environment.

Question 638.9 (continued)

What is the optimum number of Conferences per League, and Divisions per Conference? For the limited purposes of this Question, Major League Baseball is treated as a 'League', and each of its Leagues is treated as a 'Conference'.

Amended in August 2021: Following our note from earlier this month, we proceeded later in the month to perform the experiment suggested above, by considering all the most populous cities which lie within 1500 miles of Omaha, and which currently demonstrate their baseball interest and infrastructure by hosting a team at some minimum level of organized play.

Observed during the process that Havana lies within 1485 miles of Omaha, and we know that Cuba has a big baseball culture, but not sure whether we want to open that can of worms about allowing players and fans to travel back and forth, given our past political disagreements with the Cuban government. Then again, maybe the inclusion of Havana at the major-league level might be just the change that we need in order to ease relations between the countries. Besides, if we allow San Francisco but disallow Havana, then our cutoff would need to be in the area of 1450 miles, and any explanation of why we selected such a non-round number would need to address the Havana issue, and would seem pretty arbitrary and lame.

Tell ya what, though: We'll see about including some number of additional cities as 'backups', for in case any of our suggestions prove problematic for any reason.

Going ahead and leaving New York with two franchises. One correspondent recently asked why they should get special treatment, and the correct Answer is that their population size is nearly twice of its nearest American competitor Los Angeles, so deserves to get two franchises if L.A. gets only one.

However, because Toronto and Houston each have only one team, and because Chicago is between (or slightly above) them in population, it seems fairest to us that Chicago should have exactly one team in our revised structure. Further, we feel that it should be the Cubs in the National League, partly because their 'bleacher bums' are such a colorful aspect of Baseball's rich cultural heritage, and partly because let's face it the White Sox still have the 1919 World Series in their history.

We replaced our research with a fresh download from worldpopulationreview.com of the 500 most populous North American cities as of 2021. According to this list, current NL team Cincinnati is only 183rd in population, so they might have a hard time making it all the way up under our current rules, but we will see.

We searched on milb.com for the official listing of AAA, AA, A+, and A- affiliates of all major-league franchises, and notated our list accordingly. Not all of those cities (not even at the AAA level) appeared in our Top 500, relating to our 11th suggestion under Answer 645.3, that most/all of your AAA teams should be located in the next bigger markets after the major-league level.

Placement of these designations on our chart showed that 94 out of the Top 500 cities have existing teams at A- level or above. As much as we would like to develop new markets, we feel intuitively that we should not expect any community to build a stadium and fan base from scratch. With this many communities to choose from, a new major-league franchise must at least have an A- team in its current structure.

However, this criterion also means that we would be excluding not only Havana but all Mexican cities, which have for some years been organized in a 'Mexican League' which at present appears to be unaffiliated with the current farm system of MLB.

Also, we observe that only two Canadian cities would make the current cut.

We next reviewed the Top 32 cities with teams in at least the A- level, and it seems intuitively robust, not identical to our previous list, but pretty close, with no big surprises, and apparently with an even better geographic spread.

As long as we using the rule of having an existing MLB team or affiliate, we no longer need bother with the rule of geographic radius, since all the Top 32 cities lie within 1500 miles of Omaha. Suits me, didn't want to look up all those figures anyhow.

Top 32 cities in alpha order would be Albuquerque, Baltimore, Boston, Brooklyn (!), Charlotte, Chicago, Columbus, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, El Paso, Houston, Indianapolis, Jacksonville, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Memphis, Milwaukee, New York N, New York S, Oklahoma City, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Portland, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, Seattle, Toronto, Vancouver, and Washington.

If we wanted to filter out current A- cities, then we could replace San Jose with Nashville. Great city, no other proposed franchises nearby, no problem.

If we also wanted to filter out current A+ cities, then we could replace Brooklyn and Vancouver with Sacramento and Kansas City. This makes intuitive sense to us, because NYC already has two teams, while Vancouver is very close to Seattle, plus KC has had two franchises in the major leagues already.

If we also wanted to filter out current AA cities, then we could replace San Antonio and Portland with Atlanta and Raleigh. Could be argued either way, but we are leaning away from that particular filter. Few reasons why: First, although Texas would already have three MLB franchises in our revised structure, they all would be located around the perimeter of the state, whereas we could use San Antonio to represent the Texas heartland. Second, we would already have a franchise in North Carolina, which is already more than they have now, so it may not need a second. Third, we like the idea of having a franchise to represent the great state of Oregon. Fourth, although Atlanta has a current franchise in the National League, and ordinarily we might like to preserve such traditions, this might be the 'final solution' to the pesky question of what to do with those fans who like to taunt all opponents with their demeaning and arguably-racist 'tomahawk chop'.

Pending further consideration, then, that's our rule, to accept into the restructured MLB family the 32 most populous cities with existing franchises at AA level or above.

Revised listing of MLB host cities would then be Albuquerque, Baltimore, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Columbus, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, El Paso, Houston, Indianapolis, Jacksonville, Kansas City, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Memphis, Milwaukee, Nashville, New York N, New York S, Oklahoma City, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Portland, Sacramento, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Toronto, and Washington.

Pity that Miami, Oakland, Minneapolis, Cleveland, Tampa, Anaheim, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati would lose their teams under this model, but in most/all cases they could cheer on other teams (either old or new) in our revised structure, so all might be net-well. Besides, eliminating Cleveland (sad as it seems, with our memories of the great announcer Harry Doyle) might similarly be the 'final solution' to its pesky problem of how to brand the team without being/appearing racist.

Next step is to sort these 32 teams into leagues and geographic divisions. This time, we'll try to do a better job of grouping the North and South teams between the two leagues such that they do not need to perform as much cross-country travel as they did in our previous model. That means moving Seattle and Portland from the North division to the West, then we could assign Phoenix and Albuquerque to the South.

If we alternate leagues for all the West Coast teams from Seattle southward, and keep Seattle in its current league, then we end up with Las Vegas, Sacramento, San Diego, and Seattle in the AL West, not far from our previous model. LA and SF would still be rivals in the NL West, and again we wouldn't have it any other way.

With no MLB cities within the great expanse from Idaho to Iowa, our next challenge is to sort out the South divisions. If we keep Phoenix in its current league, and alternate leagues while traveling eastward then to the central, then Dallas and KC end up in their current leagues, while Houston returns to its NL roots.

East divisions must start in Florida and advance northward, but also include the two new teams in Tennessee (which couldn't very well be assigned to either the North or West, whereas the South divisions have already been taken up in order to allow Seattle and Portland to stay in the West instead of the North, but it's hard to think of Tennessee cities as belonging to the East, and needing to play frequent games in Boston and New York.

Maybe the solution here is to change our nomenclature. Because what we have been calling the South divisions actually extend from Phoenix to Kansas City, might be better to call that the 'Central' division, a name which is already in current use. Then, we could assign the Tennessee cities to two new South divisions, and the remaining teams could be assigned to the North.

It's still a little tricky this way, because Columbus and Indianapolis need to be treated as Southern cities for this purpose, but they do indeed occupy more southerly latitudes than our centerpoint of Omaha, so not so bad.

Only two of the eight South cities have current MLB franchises, being Baltimore in the AL and Washington in the NL, so may as well keep them there. Apart from that, and keeping the two Tennessee teams in separate leagues, it's pretty arbitrary, so we'll assign on the basis of which MLB franchises those minor-league teams currently belong to, so that they can minimize their transition to different batting rules.

Four of the remaining six South teams (including both Tennessee teams) are affiliated with NL franchises, so Charlotte and Columbus easily go with the AL, while Indianapolis and Jacksonville stay with the NL. Charlotte is on the East Coast, so it should play Nashville more often than the more westerly Memphis.

That leaves only the North divisions. New York N (representing the Bronx, where the Yankees play) is assigned to AL, and New York S (representing Queens, where the

Mets play) to NL. As previously discussed, we can't have a Canadian team in the American League, so Toronto moves to NL. Boston and Detroit have always been in the AL, and no big reason to move either. Philadelphia has been in the AL before, but is in the NL now, and we have room to keep it there. We previously ruled that the one Chicago team should be the Cubs in the NL, so Milwaukee returns to AL.

In sum, then:

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>National West</u> | <u>National North</u> | <u>American West</u> | <u>American North</u> |
| Denver | Chicago | Las Vegas | Boston |
| Los Angeles | New York S | Sacramento | Detroit |
| Portland | Philadelphia | San Diego | Milwaukee |
| San Francisco | Toronto | Seattle | New York N |
| <u>National Central</u> | <u>National South</u> | <u>American Central</u> | <u>American South</u> |
| El Paso | Indianapolis | Albuquerque | Baltimore |
| Houston | Jacksonville | Dallas | Charlotte |
| Oklahoma City | Memphis | Kansas City | Columbus |
| Phoenix | Washington | San Antonio | Nashville |

It occurred to us later that if we dispute the methods by which different municipal population figures are shown in different sources, then we can approach it from a state-by-state perspective, with 32 teams in a nation of 330 million (not including Toronto area) translating to about 10 million per market. We can use the line on the E side of Montana and Wyoming as a starting point, since very lightly populated, and assign states and sectors to different markets with aim of 10 million (or a little more) each, and compare with current model. [Exercise completed on 12/30/2021.]

But then, in a fine example of synchronicity, Joe Davis and Orel Hersher discussed league and playoff structure during tonight's Dodger game, on the same day that we updated our model of 32 teams in 8 divisions with a 3-5-7 playoff structure. More specifically, Joe asked how Orel would feel about dropping divisions, they agreed that having multiple concurrent division races is more interesting, but they never mentioned playing nearby teams more often in regular season in order to ease travel burdens. Anyway, Orel hypothesized four divisions in each league to obviate the wild card, they noted that the four divisions would currently be unequal but could be expanded, and they discounted long byes for the best teams because it takes them out of rhythm. I immediately sent them a short thread of tweets to mention our model, even though we did not expect that it would ever get read. [No response.]

Question 485.7 (continued)

If there is or should be an 'implied social contract', then what terms does/should it include?

We read an interesting letter in the September 2021 issue of the *Mensa Bulletin*, suggesting that the Golden Rule should be to do unto others as they would have done unto them, in order to avoid masochists giving pain because they like it.

We thought that it would be a good idea to amend our profile accordingly, but we discovered in September 2021 that the expression 'Golden Rule' did not previously appear in this 1250-page report or the General Summary at all.

We imagined that the few who ever download and inspect this document might search for the expression 'Golden Rule', and fail to find it, and conclude that our 1200 pages were not sufficient to cover Everything. We couldn't have that, so we added an essay on that subject at this time.

The classic expression of 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you' is rooted in numerous religious and philosophical traditions, including in Matthew 7:12. It makes a level of sense on its face, because we know what we want, but we don't always know what the other guy wants, so we presume that we all want mostly the same things. If we're all giving what we want, then we are getting what we want from all others.

However, in this era of advanced communication and global intercultural awareness, we must recognize (whether for good or ill) that we do not all want the same thing. Further, our panel observes that our differences of preferred treatment extend beyond the simple (if somewhat hyperbolic) example of masochism noted by that letterwriter. Some people like to fight, and will provoke the pesky peaceniks until they counterattack. (Remember when Selridge was shooting spitballs at Carney in *Biloxi Blues*?) Others like to play loud music or drive loud motorcycles in quiet neighborhoods. Still others like to drive fast in their big cars and change lanes without signaling. Some of these sets (and others) might overlap.

We therefore feel that the letterwriter made more sense than she might have known. Her revised 'Golden Rule' places upon us the responsibility of not only knowing how our fellow citizens prefer to live, but also actively respecting their wishes. It is indeed a big improvement.

But, how do we manage the fact that our neighbors have different preferences? Answer is that our neighbors will have a natural tendency to gravitate into communities of similar tastes. Those who like gambling live in Nevada. Those who like tobacco smoke live in North Carolina. At the municipal level, some live in quieter neighborhoods because they prefer it, so those who like to make a lot of noise should gather among neighbors with similar preference. As to traffic, when in doubt follow the speed limits and signaling protocols and other laws which have been posted by the jurisdictions in which you're driving.

People who don't like to restrict their actions to appease their neighbors (and you know who you are!) should help out both us and yourselves, by gathering together to live in nations and states and localities where such laws do not exist. When you do so, please post signs at your borders to show clearly that the preceding speed limits and signal protocols and other legal provisions no longer apply, so that potential visitors know what to expect, and have the option to hightail it in the other direction if the new environment is going to be too rough on them.

Question 639.2 (continued)

How best to summarize and quantify these findings?

Amended in September 2021: In case not clear from foregoing, our Answer is to aim for more games against each of your division rivals than against any other team, not so much the total number of such games played.

Question 485.6 (continued)

Should we allow slavery anywhere in the world?

We should consider the curious passage of Leviticus 25:44, appearing to allow slavery within the Mosaic Law. King James Version (KJV) reads as follows:

Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids.

English Standard Version (ESV) uses the actual word 'slaves', as follows:

As for your male and female slaves whom you may have: you may buy male and female slaves from among the nations that are around you.

To be fair, an essay from 26-Oct-2020 by Kyle Davison Bair argues that 'slaves' in this context comes from the Hebrew word *ebed*, which can mean any kind of servant or minister, not necessarily a slave in the *Roots* sense. Also, the verb 'buy' in this context apparently stems from the Hebrew word *qnh*, which can include any manner of acquisition. Point of the essay was that this passage merely "describes a hiring process, paying someone from a foreign nation to work for you".

Maybe so, but we have doubts. We have posted both versions here for a reason, and that is to distinguish between "from among the nations" and "of the heathen". It's not just foreigners which are being allowed as hired servants, but the heathen, who is widely considered in the Mosaic Law to be a distinctly lower class of person. It appears from the KJV that the actual intent was to treat the believers as the Masters and the heathen as the Slaves.

This view appears to be bolstered by the subsequent verses in the KJV:

Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever: but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour.

We do not appear to be speaking here of an 'at will' employment relationship; they are with you and your children "for ever". Also, because "rigour" is not to apply to the children of Israel, it must be intended to apply to the heathen servants.

Bair argues that two other verses in the Mosaic Law appear to prohibit slavery. We will use the ESV here because he does:

Whoever steals a man and sells him, and anyone found in possession of him, shall be put to death. (Exodus 21:16)

You must not return an escaped slave to his master when he has run away to you. Indeed, he may live among you in any place he chooses, in whichever of your villages he prefers; you must not oppress him. (Deuteronomy 23:15-16)

For the first passage, Bair argues that stealing a person "means you cannot enslave a person against their will", but we reject that argument. Rather, it reads to us that slaves can exist, but that you must not steal someone's slave and sell it as your own, any more than you can do the same with someone's horse or chariot.

For the second passage, Bair argues that "If a person working for you wants to leave, they can, and the Law protects their freedom to do so." This view doesn't hold water with us either: Both versions use the keyword "escaped", which implies that the worker was there under some level of duress, and that he was not free to depart the relationship at will. Instead, it seems to us that slavery was an okay thing according to this passage, but that a master was generally not to treat his slaves with so much "rigour" that they would be motivated to escape, because if they did then their former master would basically have waived his rights of further possession, which would be why we should not be returning the slaves to him.

Sorry, Kyle, and all you other Judeo-Christian apologists, it appears that the Mosaic Law prohibited you from eating pork and coveting your neighbor's little red wagon, but allowed you to purchase and enslave your pagan neighbors for life. Why would God and/or Moses permit this 'loophole', especially after they supposedly had gone through those ten plagues in order to persuade the Pharaoh to set the Hebrews free?

Maybe a clue can be found in the fact that the Hebrews had already been enslaved for some four centuries, according to the story. If the mere slavery had been the big universal sin, then perhaps it would have been remediated much earlier. Given that it was not, perhaps it was the eventual extent of the "rigour" which persuaded God and/or Moses that the Hebrews needed to be delivered from their bondage.

In other words, maybe the problem wasn't that the Egyptians were slaveholders, but that they were bad slaveholders.

If true, then the fundamentalists who believe every word of the Bible as the literal and divine Truth might reason (as some apparently have done already) that slavery is not only an allowance but a requirement (at least under KJV, which had "shalt have" instead of "may have"). How do we convince them otherwise? Should we even try?

This might be an example of what we call 'civil rights', as distinct from 'natural rights'. We have argued that Non-Injurious Self Determination is a 'natural right', which by nature applies to all critters of all species in all areas of the world at all times of history. But, this 'right' apparently was not recognized as such in all places at all times, or else we would never have had slavery anywhere at all.

On the other hand, as we presumably have discussed before, the mere fact that a given right was not always observed does not mean that it did not exist in the first place. It could instead be that the right existed, but was abused by evil overseers.

We have a few more millennia of experience under our belts since the time of the Ten Commandments, and one would hope that we have learned a few important lessons along the way. One of these lessons might be that we should be treating others not only as we would like to be treated, but specifically as they would like to be treated, as discussed in our Answer 485.7 as recently amended. If true, then that would imply (wouldn't it?) that we should not be treating anyone as a slave who does not wish it, which we can safely presume (can't we?) that no one does. If that is also true, then it must mean (mustn't it?) that not all rules and customs prescribed in the Bible should be applied to all peoples at all times. We shouldn't be waging wars of conquest, we shouldn't be subjugating women, and we shouldn't be enslaving our foreign neighbors. In that the Bible has specifically authorized all these practices, apparently we cannot rely on the Bible for all our modern guidelines of life, and must derive our own ethical principles, as A2E has sought to do.

Question 213 (continued)

What questions should be included in the Census?

Amended in September 2021: We already identified in Session 118 that one of the voluntary questions on census forms can be for Employment Status. We now are amending that response to allow the citizen to specify how many hours he actually works per week. We do this in order to get a better feel for our aggregate workload, so that we can apportion it more equitably. We should not only announce that we are treating such responses in confidence, but actually do so in real life. If the worker suspects (whether from the census language or from 'horror stories' in the social media) that we are going to tell his boss about his easy schedule, then he is liable to inflate his numbers, so we would get a misleading result.

Question 13.5 (continued)

What about animal rights?

Amended in September 2021: We have heard and read some disquieting reports of animals having their ears or tails or other body parts mutilated in order to satisfy some arbitrary standard of 'beauty' for purposes of competition. We are way against this. Change the standards if you must, or else grow accustomed to the fact that not as many animals meet those standards as you might prefer. In any case, don't make the animal suffer to please the humans.

Question 580 (continued)

What about for driving, voting, military service, drinking, sex, and other such stuff where we have established chronological age cutoffs in the past?

Amended in September 2021 from personal reflection: At what point do we declare that an individual can overrule the wishes of her parents on sex and all other adult activities, given that we are not relying on chronological age? We are reposing judgment in the parents until they cease acting in that capacity. In other words, when a person is earning a living and maintaining her own residence, she is a functioning adult and gets to make adult decisions, regardless of chronological age. But, while she is still living with her parents, she has not reached functional adulthood yet, so we should continue to repose judgment with the parents unless judged otherwise on an individual basis by competent social authority.

Question 678.26

Should we continue to have a Labor Day?

Added in September 2021 from personal reflection: Yes, notwithstanding the Moderator's conservative upbringing and programmed dislike of anything remotely socialistic. Workforces have been continually repressed in many nations for millennia, and it has been only within the last couple of centuries that we have asserted our critical importance to societal well-being and the fact that we deserve to be respected and celebrated and treated with decency by our masters. Those masters are liable to forget our importance if we do not remind them of it on a

recurring periodic basis, so yes let's have an annual day of celebration in which workers get to relax and parade and feel good about life.

Question 678.27

When should Labor Day be observed?

Added in September 2021 from personal reflection: We are suggesting to move Labor Day from the first Monday of September to May 1, in order to be consistent with similar observances around the rest of the World. We realize that some Americans like to do things differently from everyone else, because they like to think of themselves as independent leaders, but that mentality has been overdone in recent decades, and our group generally claims that we would do much better to join in the global partnership so as to reduce tension and increase harmony. Specifically, if we celebrate Labor on the same day as the rest of the World does it, then the movement becomes all the more potent and significant, and we stand a much better chance of capturing the attention of all our masters.

Question 39.5

By what standard(s) should we assess whether a given land area deserves to be a State?

Added in September 2021: We have seen much discussion lately about whether the land area which we currently reference as the "District of Columbia" deserves to be elevated to Statehood. We acknowledge that it has a larger population than one or two existing States, but we have argued that it is much smaller in area than any existing State, as though that fact alone were sufficient to disqualify the elevation.

Upon further reflection, we can see that our distinction about geographic area may be rather arbitrary: Without any rule in the Constitution about it, who are we to assert how much land area is needed for a State to exist? Even if such a rule were in the Constitution, wouldn't we call it into question as part of this entire Project?

It occurs to us now that we probably should not use any criterion as arbitrary as either population or geographic area, and that we can do better. How? It helps us to look at the history of how most of our current States came into existence.

Each of the original thirteen colonies was licensed to its respective developers because the British Crown saw it as an opportunity to accumulate wealth from the New World. It would need to invest resources into transportation, construction, labor, and supplies, but it expected to recover far more in gross profit. Each colony must therefore have been financially self-sustaining, able not only to survive on its own but to deliver dividends to the Crown in excess of its original investment.

Later on, the Colonies had developed to the point that they were able to do well enough on their own, without any further support from the Crown, so they declared their political independence, and converted each Colony into a self-sustaining State.

In fact, that was the original vision of several of the Colonies, particularly in the South, that they should be united only for their mutual protection, but otherwise manage their own industrial and cultural affairs, with little or no interference from the national capital. Others favored a more centralized national government.

As the country grew in size, we developed a number of Territories, each of which had some topographic or industrial attribute which united it but which also made it distinct from each of its neighbors. In common with the original Colonies, the Territories needed a certain amount of development from the national leadership, but many of them eventually grew to the point where they could sustain themselves to the same extent as the other States, and so we granted that authority in order to free ourselves from the burden of territorial administration, and granted two Senators to each of those areas.

It has been argued that certain Territories (the Dakotas for example) were elevated to Statehood not so much for their financial independence as much as to acquire additional party representation in the Senate, which may or may not have been the actual case, but at least theoretically the idea was to develop a Colony or Territory remotely until it could manage itself locally as a State, and then to grant that authority and concomitant Senatorial representation as soon as we practically could.

Seems to us now that this should be the overriding factor in considering whether a given 16-block land area should be elevated to Statehood. Not just whether it can form a State government out of its current neighborhood association, but whether it has enough industrial or agricultural power to survive on its own if needed or desired, with external trade being only a supplemental option and not a necessity.

On this level, we imagine that the current "DC" might not be able to qualify. As an urban municipality, it almost certainly derives the vast bulk of its agricultural products from outside its borders, and probably does not generate enough revenue on its own (not even from tourism) to pay for it. It is a net-consumer, and for that reason -- regardless of population or area -- it probably does not deserve the Senatorial representation typically accorded to actual entire self-sufficient States.

Secondary consideration could be that the area is unique somehow from all of its neighbors, so that we don't face a situation like splitting the one Dakota Territory into two States. However, that should not be a sufficient condition, because many small communities are culturally distinct from their neighbors but should not be elevated to States. However, it probably should be an added necessity.

Question 644.4 (continued)

How do we feel about the idea of 'September callups' in Baseball?

Amended in September 2021: If we need a compromise, then maybe allow callups for teams which have already been eliminated from playoff contention, to make them more competitive against the contending teams near the end of the season, and earn more lottery chances while giving us an entertaining spectacle.

Question 6 (continued)

What is a 'right'?

Moderator participated during September 2021 in a livestream interview on the subject of Rights, by a certain congressional candidate from Texas who had been following our Twitter activity. At the candidate's request, we focused mostly on the

pesky Question of the definition of a 'right', and I took the opportunity to summarize for him our colorful history on this non-trivial matter.

We never did come up with a better definition than our previous working model, but the Moderator took some time to think about it further in the succeeding days, and it now seems that a good working definition of a 'right' would be the 'ability to claim justly that one should be allowed to take a certain action, or to receive/enjoy a certain benefit'. This approach successfully avoids (doesn't it?) any big or ambiguous words which would need to be defined separately for the benefit of a visitor from the planet Skyron in the galaxy of Andromeda, and it also avoids any presupposition as to whether rights are Natural or Civil or some combination.

It also avoids the construction from certain dictionaries that a right is a 'just claim', because in theory you have the right whether you claim it or not.

In case not expressed earlier in this report, we now observe that the 'freedom' which we included in our working definition for multiple decades would not actually work for Q6, because you can be 'free' do something which is not your right if it happens that no one is around to stop you.

However, we also now observe that the phrase 'ability to claim' would not work either, because animals and human infants and some others might possess certain rights which they do not have the ability to claim. So, back to drawing board.

While we are not thrilled with it, at least not yet, still might be a bit too complex, at least it seems a bit more apt to define a 'right' as the 'ability to enjoy a certain activity or benefit without legitimate opposition'. Banking it for now.

Question 108 (continued)

Should the results of any polls or surveys on any elections (including those on initiatives and referenda) be published close to Election Day?

As an amendment to our original finding from Session 60, we are specifying in September 2021 that no election results should be published while any voters are still waiting in line to vote, insofar as we continue to use any physical polling places.

How we make this determination is not clear at present: Do we require the workers of each precinct to telephone when they have closed their polls, while they then proceed with their packaging and delivery operations? Or, do we give each precinct a standard window (hour? half-hour?) to process any voters who were in line at closing time, and then begin announcing results afterward? Or, do we wait until every single precinct in the country reports their results before we announce any results at all? Probably not that last.

Maybe we end up not bothering to enforce this provision very much, and merely place all voters and pollworkers in each precinct on the 'honor system' not to look up or listen to or share any news announcements until after everyone in that precinct has physically voted. Thus, even if we cannot practically require the networks to hold off on revealing precinct results when they get them after the nominal poll-closing time, yet maybe we can enforce on a local level to maintain a news blackout while anyone in the precinct is still voting or waiting to vote.

Question 105.5 (continued)

Should we be having jurisdictions set a fixed number of candidates on each ballot, or instead allow any number of candidates to appear who have fulfilled the signature requirement?

Amended in September 2021, with a couple of integrity provisions to facilitate our #OpenBallot model allowing candidates to be nominated through electronic signatures alone, viz.: Everybody can (and a few of you should) check that no fictional addresses are created next-door to you, and some can check that total signatures for each jurisdiction add up to totals for all candidates.

Question 29.1 (continued)

How shall we define 'nation' for these discussions?

Amended in September 2021: We had stated in Session 56 that a 'nation' is a 'land area with a specific border that has a national government in place to manage its affairs', and that the I.O.O. needs to recognize the government before the area is accepted as an official 'nation'.

It has occurred to us a few times since then (although we never set it down in the record formally until now) that there is an alternate definition which we should be using actively, at least until we might agree on alternate expressions. Specifically, we observe that a 'nation' can also be a 'large band of people bound by common genetics and culture'. Thus, we can speak of the Sioux Nation and the Cherokee Nation which occupy subsets of formal America, as well as the German Nation which has largely populated several formal European nations.

There thus are two types of 'nations', those which are formally recognized by the global community with specific borders, and those which are felt internally by their people whether they have specific borders or not.

Perhaps one of the usages should be replaced with another term, or maybe it is better in this instance to have two senses of the same term, because that allows us to address the possibility of converting our formal nations to our informal nations, as we have recently considered for Question 20, but apparently never set down formally until now, so here it is:

Question 20 (continued)

How shall we determine how many governments we are to have, and over what territory they will have jurisdiction?

Amended in September 2021: We had stated in Session 17 that we should not "Scrap all current borders, and start from scratch". We observed that such an approach would be very difficult or impossible in real life, that we would need to discuss mechanisms, and that most people might gravitate toward current the set-up anyway. We pretty much confirmed this finding in Session 56.

Since that time, we have considered what we feel is an intriguing way to obviate these problems, and put at least a temporary halt to people's desires to commit war and rebellion, which would make our peace policy much easier to enforce.

Instead of entrusting the placement process in the hands of a few bigwigs who might be out of touch with the needs and desires of the people, and who in some cases might have conflicting interests negatively impacting their judgment, suppose that we take the Question directly to the people. Suppose that we asked them in one massive global election which nations they prefer to belong to, and then adjusted our borders accordingly, as well as possibly adding new nations to our global roster.

We could establish a number of voting districts to cover the entire planet. Because we found for the 'Swedish project' that there are approximately 150,000,000 square kilometers of land area on Earth, we figure probably easiest to use the same approach for our election, and use 150,000,000 voting districts of 1 square kilometer each. If that is seen to be too many, then we could hang with a lower number, but it should be large enough to allow local variations to express themselves.

Each resident (regardless of age or citizenship, okay to allow parents to vote on behalf of their infant children if they agree with each other, but not otherwise) can be asked to write in (no pre-printed options) a single one-word or two-word expression (no more 'the United Blank of Blank') to designate the nation with which they prefer to associate, whether or not it is one currently existing in the formal roster. She also should have the option to write 'Direct Global' (or similar synonym) if she prefers for the area to be under the direct administration of the I.O.O., which presumably would be the case for any voting district (such as in Antarctica) which has no residents at all.

The districts which show the heaviest preference for a particular national designation would serve as the 'core' for where those nations should be based. We probably would need a computer program to help with the task, but we would keep adding districts to the model in descending order of preference for a given selection, until one district begins to conflict with its neighbor. When that happens, the boundary between those districts (especially if the area contains a river or mountain ridge or other natural margin) could serve as part of the border between those nations, or else one of the districts might get surrounded by districts with a different preference, in which case we might need to ignore that local variation in the interests of global simplicity. Maybe when we get about half of the districts filled in, we might start getting a sense of generally where people want nations to exist, and then we can start focusing on the more divided areas.

If this approach works out, then it could obviate a lot of the conflicts which we have seen for decades in places like Israel and Northern Ireland.

Question 114 (continued)

Certain political organizations currently send applications for absentee ballots to prospective voters, under guise of catering to their convenience: Should this practice be permitted?

While reviewing the entire manuscript to complete the Third Pass in October 2021, author saw again the discussion in Session 62 about whether voters might be moved to favor a candidate who sent them ballot materials, and was reminded of a personal experience which apparently did not get introduced into evidence before, viz.:

I participated in a contested election for President of our high school's chapter of the National Honor Society. After the discussion period, they proceeded to call for ballots, but they did not have any pre-printed forms to be filled out, and instead expected each member to supply her own piece of paper. Realizing that not everyone anticipated this, I quickly went through the room to distribute blank pages which I tore out of my ubiquitous notebook. I ended up winning the election.

Did the voters support me because they all genuinely thought that I was the best candidate, or did they do so because I made the gesture of sacrificing my resources and efforts to facilitate their voting, or some combination? I probably will never know. The thought certainly occurred to me at the time, which I suppose in retrospect was part of the reason why I did it. If it was at least a possibility for me at that time, then it might be a possibility for other candidates now.

Question 463 (continued)

Does the responsibility to provide for an individual's own health and safety, and for the health and safety of those to whom he may accidentally cause injury or other damage, ultimately rest with the individual?

Amended in October 2021: It might make more logical sense to charge all patients with the true cost of medical procedures which we currently insure privately and/or subsidize publicly, on grounds that the whole idea of Money is to track how much we each are contributing to our economy versus how much we are extracting from it. If it genuinely costs \$95,000 to remove a gangrenous appendix (which is how much the Moderator's insurance carrier covered for his procedure in 2016), then perhaps the permanent record should show it, so that we have a better idea of whether the patient was a net-producer or net-consumer in his lifetime.

One counterargument is again that the patient shouldn't be expected to pony up all those dollars unless we had a much more just and equitable distribution of wealth. It makes little moral sense to concentrate half our society's wealth within one percent of our population, and for those fatcats to then complain that everyone else is incurring so much cost for healthcare and other human needs. They could pay for more of it if they had more to pay with.

Even if patients did have that much cash available to cover those procedures, though, we continue to question whether the procedures really cost that much, or whether the doctors and hospitals are padding their bills simply because they can get away with it. This topic is covered somewhat under Question 394, particularly in the webinar which the Moderator attended in August 2020 as discussed above, but maybe we should get into it further at some point. It would not be fair to compromise a patient's ability to make further purchases because of an artificially-inflated price tag on his medical procedures.

Then again, if the insurance company is covering the bulk of the cost, then they would have an incentive to seek out less expensive providers, of which we would have more if more young people studied to move into the medical profession. In the meantime, maybe we can after all rely upon the statement by the insurer on what the market value of each procedure was, and add that factor as may be applicable to the overall picture of how net-productive or net-consumptive each individual was during his lifetime, even though it might not affect his purchase-making ability in the interim since the insurer is covering it.

Question 368 (continued)

How shall we keep the aggregate amount of credit stable?

Amended in October 2021: Upon further reflection, maybe the 'Tommy' is not such a great measure of inflation after all, due to potential volatility in the beef market, especially in case of a big epidemic or blizzard or something. Probably safest to rely upon a more balanced index such as the CPI-U, when determining actual levels of tax volume needed to maintain the purchasing power of the national currency. However, we probably can and should continue to use the 'Tommy' in the course of our simplified examples of inflation modeling for general audiences.

Question 591.5 (continued)

Should we require or even allow the Pledge of Allegiance to be recited each day in schools?

Amended in October 2021: We recently got curious, and at this time performed an online search on the question "do other nations pledge allegiance to their flags?".

Top of the result listing was www.quora.com, which used the phrasing of "Are there countries besides the USA that say a pledge of allegiance to their flag?".

According to responses appearing on that page, a pledge to the national flag has recently been encouraged or required in Argentina, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, the Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam, and (interestingly) Puerto Rico. However, it definitely is avoided in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

So that's good, we apparently are not totally out of whack in having a 'pledge of allegiance' at all, nor of having the pledge include a reference to our national flag. But, it apparently is not necessary for a nation to encourage/require a pledge of allegiance in order to exist. It therefore is up to us as Americans to decide whether we still want to do that sort of thing at the national level.

In considering that Question, it occurs to us now that America represents something of a special case, in that it formed as a coalition of several disparate colonies with distinctly different geographies, industries, and cultures. Debate started early and continued long over whether the several States should be treated as sovereign and independent, united only for their mutual protection, or whether they should be constituents of a stronger central government. The latter option was largely settled (at least in the minds of some) in the course of the American Civil War of the 1860's (or as some call it the "War Between the States"), although the issue was raised again during the civil-rights protests of the 1960's, and at other times. Thus, the reasons why other nations elect to use or avoid a national-flag pledge might not apply to us as readily.

We have argued in this document that America is stronger if it remains a single solid nation, fully able to use its vast infrastructure of railroads and highways and airlines to maintain our massive industrial and economic power, and willing to accept a unified national command in the hopefully-rare event that we are ever again asked or allowed to push some bad guy back behind his globally-recognized borders.

Insofar as some folks still prefer a more decentralized community, a national pledge or anthem or other ceremony might serve to remind them that we are net-preferring a single strong nation to a lot of sovereign satellites. If we were to drop it entirely, then both kids and adults might tend to focus more on local issues, and pay little respect to the federal government which is providing many of the locality's benefits.

On the other hand, if we make everyone say it everywhere all the time, then it becomes (or shows itself as) a form of psychological programming with the aim of creating mindless robots instead of thinking humans.

Compromise solution appears to be what we have already recommended here, to allow for a 'pledge of allegiance' to be recited at some schools and other institutions on a voluntary basis, but also to allow it to be skipped where it's not wanted.

Question 647.61

Do we have any ideas for new Olympic events?

Added in October 2021: While reading a police blotter in the paper about "two vehicles chasing one another", I wondered how that could be, unless maybe in a big parking lot or around the block. Latter possibility gave me the idea for a new track event which involves neither time nor fixed distance, where instead you station two or more runners at equal distances around the track, and at the gun they start to chase each other. When you touch the guy in front of you, he's out. Last one standing wins. It would be interesting to see how different people approach it, because the contest could take minutes or days. Do you go for sprinting or endurance or maybe some of each? Might depend on whether your opponents are speedsters or marathoners. We probably don't want both in the same race because the sprinters would win trivially. In any case, it would be an interesting experiment.

Question 39 (continued)

Do we want to have a completely centralized and unitary government, one which is completely de-centralized, or one which is federal with different functions assigned to different levels?

While reviewing the entire manuscript to complete the Third Pass in October 2021, we came across notes entered in Session 70 pursuant to Questions 3.6 and 3.7, remarking that people are less likely to resort to corruption and gang warfare and other evil if they feel as though they are active parts of their civic communities, and it occurred to us that this is another argument in favor of a federal system of government to apply within America, and within any other nation of any significant size or diversity.

Some large societies might prefer a one-size-fits-all approach to their grooming and apparel and other cultural norms, but we perceive that many (if not most) will prefer some amount of local distinction in their cities and neighborhoods, so this reinforces our previous conclusion that large amounts of autonomy generally should be accorded to the lowest levels of government, so that citizens can experience local diversity while still remaining part of your overall civic structure, lest they form underground cultures at variance with the core society.

Question 675.8 (continued)

Can we now eliminate Daylight Saving Time?

According to the 1-Nov-2021 article in *USA Today* entitled "Daylight saving time is 'not helpful' and has 'no upsides,' experts say", the "Department of Transportation ... is in charge of daylight saving time".

Question 255.5 (continued)

Any suggestions to offer as to pandemic management?

We were very amused while polishing this report in November 2021 that we had concurred while considering Question 188 in Session 111 that "something which needs to be mandated probably shouldn't be". That statement was offered in the context of the Fed mandating speed limits to be observed and enforced on State and local highways. Does it also apply in the case of government seeking to mandate mask-wearing and 'social distancing' and other measures among individual citizens under alleged pandemic conditions?

Same standards might not apply. We can expect (can't we?) that lower-level governments will be managed by mature civil servants who are receptive to being persuaded by whatever arguments are motivating the Fed to mandate lower speed limits, whereas many individual citizens are clearly too stubborn and territorial and self-entitled to wear masks at all, whether we mandate it or ask 'pretty please'.

It might therefore be in the public interest to require masks and other mitigative measures in certain instances, until people learn to cooperate more on their own.

Question 707.8

Any problems observed in advertised pricing?

Added in November 2021: Companies should not be allowed to advertise the price of one element of a package if you must buy the whole package, as in '\$29.99 per month when bundled'. Too easy to price one element lower and another higher in order to make profit goals.

Advertise the price of the package if we must buy the package, or the price of separate elements if we may buy them separately.

Question 487 (continued)

By what means shall we determine whether an individual (male or female) is physically and mentally and emotionally mature enough to handle sex?

Amended in November 2021: Situations of adults and kids mixing should include altar servers (previously 'altar boys'), where parents or older siblings should supervise if they practically can, but I remember (having done that stuff for nine years!) that it's not always practical, especially for early-morning Mass, so parents and teachers should stress to all kids (as previously urged) what adult behaviors to avoid and what to do when they happen.

Question 662.1 (continued)

Is it better to use "op. cit." and "Ibid." as standard footnote abbreviations, or some more modern notation?

Amended in November 2021: It had occurred to us the preceding April that a repeater footnote should include the title instead of the author, on grounds that the work is allegedly more important than the creator, but on further reflection we do not care much for the idea. Not only is it usually shorter and easier to reference the author instead of the title, but a big reason why we include such references at all is to lend credibility to our assertions, or else to show how a certain author does not deserve all that much credibility. Either way, using the names might help us to remember that certain authors in our bibliographies should always be respected, or never be respected, or be respected on only a part-time basis.

Question 377 (continued)

Shall banks be owned and operated by a governmental entity, or by private interests?

Pursuant to the suggestion offered this past May to possibly require minimum balances in all bank accounts in order to allow bills to keep getting paid, we have second thoughts about the concept as of November 2021. Part of our model is that banking services should be made available to all of our citizens, regardless of the extent of their surplus wealth, so it seems illogical to require our poorer citizens to be richer, because most of them would cheerfully do so if they possibly could.

Probably better is to make sure that your rent and utilities and other monthly bills continue to get 'paid' automatically, so that those providers don't get penalized as a result of your financial instability. But, if any such 'payments' cause your aggregate balance to drop below zero, then certain penalties/incentives may need to kick in, such as the overdraft fees already charged by many banks, and/or the inability to make certain discretionary purchases over a given dollar limit.

Question 434 (continued)

How shall we deal with the fact that industry is currently using up a tremendous amount of physical resources, such as steel and timber?

Pursuant to the note we made this past June about checking on paper consumption over recent years, we located in November 2021 a graph published by Statista on total consumption of paper and board in the United States, allegedly drawing from the Department of Agriculture and the Forest Service, and showing that consumption dropped on a fairly steady basis from 102,439,000 tons in 2006 to 73,096,000 in 2019. If we can rely on this picture, then it is encouraging that we are decreasing, but discouraging that we are still so far away from zero.

Then again, on a global basis, a graph by McKinsey&Company shows the market increasing from 250,000,000 tons in 1992 to 400,000,000 tons in 2014. Graph by ResearchGate shows global consumption increasing from 170,000,000 tons in 1980 to 400,000,000 in 2010.

Consensus seems to be that we are doing better in America, but worse globally.

Question 707.1

Do any popular songs need to be 'canceled'?

Added in November 2021 from personal reflection: Sorry, barbershoppers, but sadly it's time to retire "Alexander's Ragtime Band" and any other songs with lyrics "that make you want to go to war". Same probably goes for any songs which reflect racial stereotypes. We understand and feel the reluctance to 'cancel' any elements of our cultural heritage, especially if they carry inoffensive components (such as catchy tunes) of unique entertainment value, but at some point we must do so if we are to create a society which is free from all the problems which have plagued us in previous centuries.

Question 707.7

What sort of policy should we have in place as to 'cookies'?

Added in November 2021 from reading the *Mensa Bulletin*: If you need to ask our consent to use cookies, then quit telling us how great it is for our user experience.

Question 29 (continued)

If there is an i.o.o., then should each nation -- no matter how big or small -- have an equal vote in matters coming before it?

Amended in November 2021: No one nation should have veto power in the i.o.o.

Question 643.51

What if we limited each All-Star ballot to one league?

Added in November 2021 from personal reflection.

There's an argument that some/many/most fans simply want to see the best players play, and are not too hung up on who wins or loses, as discussed under Question 643.6, which therefore should precede this topic in the final outline. Presumably that is the main reason why ballots have typically allowed voting for both leagues.

And, if we fail to implement the recommendation of Answer 643.5 that each fan should be limited to one ballot, then it won't make much difference anyway.

However, there might be something to the idea of each fan recognizing or selecting a favorite league, and trying to stock it with the best players, in which case it would present a conflict of interest to also help choose the opposing players. Such a fan might deliberately select inferior players for the other league, so we would not necessarily get to see the best players play.

On the other hand, how often does this actually happen? How often do players get selected who are not actually the best in their leagues. Sometimes, we have observed. Of those occasions, how often was it because fans of the opposing league deliberately voted for inferior players? We may never know.

Absent a specific finding, or at least a widespread suspicion, that some fans are deliberately sandbagging their non-favorite leagues by voting for inferior players, we will defer to the base presumption that we simply want to acknowledge and showcase the best players, and that most fans are voting sincerely to do so.

If the suggestion ever comes up from any other quarter, though, to limit each fan to not only one ballot but one league, then we do not expect to oppose it strenuously.

Question 643.72

Should 'trans' athletes be allowed to compete as equals against their 'new' gender?

Added in November 2021: Before we can address this hot Question, we need to address the more fundamental Question of whether we should continue to segregate certain sports by gender at all. Why or Why Not? A2E could happily go either way on that Question, so you please tell us. Otherwise, we will decide in the Fourth Pass.

Question 377 (continued)

Shall banks be owned and operated by a governmental entity, or by private interests?

Amended in November 2021: We will eventually roll this out into a separate Question, but while we are generally discussing what banks can or can't do in our model, adding a note here that neither banks nor point-of-sale vendors (gas stations, liquor stores, supermarkets, sandwich shops, etc.) should not charge small fees for using a debit card. In our present inflationary environment, in which hardly anything costs less than a dollar anymore, it is annoying to be charged a separate 35c or 75c for using a debit card, and it is also annoying to be asked by a machine whether or not we consent to it. They are making us say Yes and thus create the impression that we approve of the charges, when in fact we do not approve but we still must complete our intended transactions. Debit-card charges are part of the cost of doing business in this modern electronic environment, and you should simply build them into your overall price structure as overhead, same as rent and salaries and insurance and other predictable costs. You should be happy to pay out those charges to your banks as they may require, and really the banks shouldn't be requiring it, because both banks and vendors are saved an enormous amount of human labor by having these machines do all the calculations for them. Or, would you prefer going back to Bob Cratchit recording and reconciling all transactions on paper for 15 shillings per week?

Question 643 (continued)

To what extent shall we either allow/encourage or prohibit/discourage the use of artificial turf in Baseball or Football?

Amended in November 2021 from personal reflection: Another reason to oppose artificial turf is same as for automatic umpire (see Answer 645.4), namely that the pros generally should be playing under the same conditions as everyone in high school and college and the minor leagues, or else it's harder for us to tell that you're really better.

Question 441 (continued)

Is the conclusion, then, that the minimum wage should be lowered?

Amended in November 2021: We will eventually roll this out into a separate Question, but before we can settle upon the specific \$5-per-day wage model mentioned in the entry from August 2019 and affirmed in June 2021, we should establish more fundamentally that we generally should base more wages on days than hours. We do so partly to focus on natural subdivisions of time, same as for noon (see Answer 675.8) and the Winter Solstice (see Answer 675), and partly so that we don't get too hung up on timeclocks and rushing our work. We might consider exempting certain strenuous occupations where it's important to earn an overtime rate if you work past the standard schedule (see Answer 443), but it may not be as important if (as also recommended in Answer 443) we spread out the aggregate workload more evenly among our entire workforce.

Question 646.35

On what days of the week should football games at different levels be played?

Added in December 2021: Jeopardy was preempted on Friday night by college football, so we should specify high school on Friday, college on Saturday, and pro on Sunday, so that the levels do not need to compete with one another for attention, and so that the fans can graduate through higher levels over the weekend, and so that the collegiates have a less disruptive schedule, and (perhaps most important) so that Jeopardy watching never needs to be rescheduled.

Question 405 (continued)

How shall we deal with the Social Security program?

Amended in December 2021 from personal reflection: Another reason to base SocSec benefit partly on accumulated wage (and thus another reason to keep a stable currency) is to discourage unofficial income like tips and contract pay, so that workers will be more motivated to seek legitimate employment, and so that more employers will need to plan for paying at least a living wage to all their workers.

Question 707.7 (continued)

What sort of policy should we have in place as to 'cookies'?

Amended in December 2021: As many websites have been reminding us lately, many website owners use 'cookies' (or try to), in order to track which pages you visit and report that data to advertisers who thereby show you ads which you hopefully will like enough to click through. This is potentially acceptable on a couple of levels, and potentially problematic on a couple of others.

It's reasonable (isn't it?) for website owners to keep count of the number of 'hits' on their pages, to help them gauge whether it is worthwhile to maintain their sites. Further, if they are dependent upon advertising revenue (as a lot of people seem to be these days), then it's also reasonable for their advertisers to want to know how

often their pages are getting viewed, before they decide how much (if any) they want to invest into advertising on those pages.

On the other hand, although we noted generally in Answer 601.5 that different societies can choose different levels of personal privacy for their citizens to enjoy, we also declared in Answer 258.7 against the so-called 'Patriot Act' which allowed far greater levels of citizen surveillance (including both library and Internet usage) than were in effect prior to the 9/11 attacks. If we don't want The Government to know what webpages we're visiting, then how can we be comfortable granting such potentially-sensitive information to private industry?

Even if we were to agree as a society that we don't want 'cookies' telling advertisers about our Internet viewing, it might yet seem unavoidable that they will find a way to obtain that information anyway. But, if that's the case, then why have website owners been making such a to-do lately about telling us that they might use 'cookies', and in some cases asking us for permission to do so?

We imagine that they are trying to get us to accept the idea that they will monitor our Internet usage and show us targeted ads. However, if it's something that we need to adjust to, and if some sites are asking our permission, then all websites should present us with the option to allow the use of 'cookies' or not, and it should be a standard setting from our Internet service providers, insofar as it is not already. If we have that setting turned off, then website owners and their advertisers should respect our decision not to be monitored, and they should merely show us a more random selection of ads if they must show any at all, and it should raise our suspicions if the ads appear to be too closely targeted to our browsing habits.

In any case, once we make a decision to accept or reject the use of 'cookies' on a given website, that site should not keep asking us for our decision, and they should not block our ability to utilize and navigate the site if we say no. In particular, the PayPal site has for some time been maintaining a banner at the bottom of their screen asking us if it is okay for them to use 'cookies', but presenting only the one option of Yes; the banner remains in place if you do not respond, blocking out much of the screen. This seems wrong on a fundamental philosophical level. If you are seeking our permission for something, then you are allowing for the possibility that we might wish to refuse, in which case you should respect our decision either way, and not keep bugging us about it, nor inhibit our use of your site, especially if it is one on which (like PayPal) the public has become heavily dependent.

Question 701.1

What about film colorizing?

Figured in December 2021 that, because we have new Q701.2 on enhanced effects in classic films, we should also have a 701.1 on colorizing. [Answered it later.]

Question 418 (continued)

Of these basic types, which is the fairest method of taxation, or is it appropriate for more than one type to be levied at once by a single jurisdiction?

Amended in December 2021: Of course, an Advertising Tax! You're using up space on our televisions and at our sporting venues and everywhere else, distracting the

public from our viewing pleasure, so you owe us something back in return for our trouble. Besides, you are contributing to the excess consumption which we are trying to control, so we will require public remuneration in proportion to the amount of exposure which you impose upon us, regardless of subsequent sales or sales tax.

However, we had second thoughts the very next day: If we open all public space to all ads, even with an added tax, then some advertisers will still pay the tax in order to show billboards in the Senate chamber and other public spaces. Can we instead declare some spaces as Not For Sale? Suppose so in theory, but as the old saying goes everyone has his price. [Considered further later.]

Question 659.1 (continued)

What should be the correct spelling of the word currently spelled as 'judgment'?

Amended in December 2021 from personal reflection: On second thought, why not remove the superfluous 'e' from 'acknowledgement', and leave 'judgment' as is? What does that extra 'e' do for us anyhow, even in the infinitive, which maybe we drop also, though less necessary for mere inflection consistency. [More later.]

Question 712.3 (continued)

What (if anything) can/should done about the fact that we currently throw away so much good food at restaurants?

Amended in December 2021: Restaurants should dump excess food in sanitary containers, to be picked up nightly by orgs which can feed it to offsite animals or otherwise repurpose it.

Question 32.0 (continued)

If specific border disputes arise, then it is better for the affected nations to deal with it themselves, or to refer to the I.O.O.?

Amended in December 2021, during our final Third Pass review of the above document: We had suggested "from personal reflection" in August 2021 that our I.O.O. structure should include a judicial element for treating international cases like Assange on appeal, but we observed during the final read-through that we had already made a similar specification in Session 180 for the Nuremberg Question.

Question 638.9 (continued)

What is the optimum number of Conferences per League, and Divisions per Conference? For the limited purposes of this Question, Major League Baseball is treated as a 'League', and each of its Leagues is treated as a 'Conference'.

Amended in December 2021: We hypothesized back in August 2021 that we might get a more robust distribution of MLB teams in major markets if we relied on state population instead of city population. Toward that end, we attempted such a distribution at this time, but came up short. For, when certain states with the required average of 10-11 million of population were assigned to markets by themselves, it tended to leave certain other states as 'orphans', not easily matchable with any other market. Key example was Georgia with 11 million and North Carolina

with 10 million (2020 population according to state.1keydata.com/state-population.php) isolating South Carolina with its 5 million. We also were not sure whether to match Kentucky with Indiana or Tennessee, or what to do with Maryland or the combination of Nevada and Utah or that of Rhode Island and Connecticut.

Conclusion is to rely on the municipal distribution which we worked out before.

Question 675 (continued)

Do we want to reset the date of the New Year back to the Winter Solstice, or stick it in March as the Romans did, or leave it as is, or do something else?

Amended in December 2021 from personal reflection: Changing NYD to actual Winter Solstice may not make such a big difference by itself, and yes the Earth will keep spinning if we don't do it, but taken together with stable currency and no DST it will be a sign that we are moving away from a society of duping ourselves to one of honesty and transparency and reality.

Question 703.5

Any other suggestions on television advertising?

While watching the Rose Bowl game in January 2022, observed a recent nasty trend for the camera to photograph a really nice vista or sweep, only for the gorgeous image to be blocked by a huge advertising logo or other graphic. Get it together Director, not to order a pretty camera shot and then block it. As for you Producers, we really need to deemphasize the massive advertising influence in this country.

Question 169 (continued)

What functions and issues shall be handled by the Department of Science?

Amended in January 2022: We read today in the November/December 2021 issue of the *Mensa Bulletin* an opinion by Science editor John Blinke that "We need a radio observatory on the entire far side of the moon, where the moon itself will block out interference from Earth." Concept sounds good to us, although we would downgrade from "We need" to "It would be nice to have". Of greater urgency is providing all our global populations with adequate food and water and shelter and medical care. Once we have treated the more fundamental needs of all our people, yes it certainly would be nice if we could expand our observation and exploration of the outer space by building a permanent unmanned observatory on the far side of the moon.

Question 486 (continued)

Under what conditions is it acceptable for two unmarried people to have sex with one another?

Amended in January 2022: We had stated back in Session 242 that unmarried adults generally get to have sex with other consenting adults at will, with certain specific exceptions and circumstances noted in the remainder of Section II-B. However, we did not present much of a rationale for that Answer, beyond the general idea (at least in America) of being able to do what one wishes if it does injure or threaten someone else against his/her will. We particularly ignored the

tradition of numerous churches (including the Roman Catholics), that one must have sex with no more than one person in his/her life, and then only when the partners are duly married to one another. We had better address that point here.

Moderator grew up in the Roman Catholic tradition, and remembers being taught that the one and only 'purpose' of sex was the creation of new life, and that any other usage constituted an abuse. They allowed the 'exception' of mutually-married partners engaging in sex for pleasure during nonproductive phases of the menstrual cycle, but that always seemed like a double-standard: If you allow that some married people will want to have sex for pleasure, then at least for them you must agree that sex has a purpose other than procreation. If you agree to that, then you must also consider that many unmarried persons will want to have sex for pleasure also, so in their minds also there clearly is a purpose for sex beyond procreation.

We see the same behavior exhibited in Nature as well: Some animal species practice monogamy, and engage in sex only when the time is right for giving new birth, but other species engage in sex when they feel like it, and some specimens have little moral difficulty in mating with multiple partners during their lives. The idea of limiting yourself to one partner in your life, and of engaging in sex only after you have undergone some kind of formal marriage procedure with that one partner, is not universal in Nature, so it is a matter for each species to consider.

In the specific case of the human species, again we have seen throughout history and in many cultures today a widespread impulse to engage in sex for pleasure, and to do so outside the bonds of formal matrimony. Many/most of us are hard-wired to experience sexual desires on a periodic basis. Those desires have been instilled in us by Nature (or perhaps by an intelligent God?) in order to keep our species propagating and surviving. For, if we did not experience a desire for sex and a sense of pleasure from the activity, then many of us wouldn't bother with it, and we would not have nearly as many offspring. We must keep wanting sex in order to have sex, and we must keep having sex in order to keep our species alive.

Of course, the frequency with which many of us (both 'male' and 'female', a distinction which is still relevant at least for the purpose of creating new children, even if for no other...) experience sexual desire is far greater than the number of new children whom we would ever want to have. Must we then suppress our urges the rest of the time? Some churches and other cultural segments would say Yes, that we are somehow 'holier' or 'purer' if we reserve our sexual activity for when we actively desire to have children, and that any other usage constitutes a perversion. Other churches and cultural segments (including the Roman Catholics) at least acknowledge that mutually-married people 'get to' have sex for pleasure, but presumably that it is largely because they expect (validly enough) that some unplanned pregnancies will result, so their populations become larger, which many churches like (especially the Catholics and the Mormons), because then their membership grows without the effort of additional conversions.

Moderator personally held this view for several years, as a result of his scholastic and ecclesiastical programming, but came to conclude after a while [as described during our original consideration of Question 494] that it's just not a realistic expectation for everyone. Moreover, even if we could somehow persuade every human in every culture in every generation to have sex only when married and when actively trying to procreate, then the frustrations from suppressing our urges would make life very stressful for us, whereas a central purpose of the A2E Project is to improve our

aggregate quality of life. In addition, those frustrations might in some cases take the form of property damage and international war and a variety of other bad things. Far better for us to live pleasurable lives, and to feel less impulse to lash out against our neighbors as a result of ongoing sexual frustration.

Should we therefore all get married when we are 15 years old, so that we can all act out our sexual urges within the bonds of formal matrimony which many churches would prefer? Again, some cultures would say Yes, but we doubt it. Many young people don't have the experience or the network of acquaintances to be able to make suitable choices for a spouse, so we would often come back to the idea of 'arranged marriages', which as discussed elsewhere is no guarantee of marital success.

In sum, then, our conclusion is that sex between unmarried partners is not only "acceptable", but actively healthful for society. Let people get married only if and when they desire to do so, and in the meantime let them play out their sexual impulses in a socially responsible manner. Any other path is dangerous.

Actually, turns out that several of these points were made while addressing Questions 491 *et seq.* in Session 244, so we will resequence things accordingly.

Question 661.2 (continued)

Any other suggestions to make on quotation marks?

Amended in January 2022: Noticing while reviewing this document for the Third Pass that we have used different formats when referencing a television series or feature film. Therefore, in order to help assess which ways are net-best, when we get back to this point in our review, we will undertake a survey of the different usages in this document, not only counting the different styles but also noting whether there was any kind of trending over time. We will settle on the more numerous and/or more recent formatting styles. [Done as noted, see later.]

Question 712.4

Do we have any recommendations to make as to restaurant hours?

Added in January 2022: It was recently suggested by one of our SIG correspondents that we should request restaurants to stay open longer in order to accommodate more customers with different personal schedules. Moderator was likewise tempted to add a recommendation that they open earlier for the same reason.

However, upon further reflection, Moderator recognized that they need to balance customer demand with the cost of labor and utilities. If there are not enough additional customers to make it worthwhile for a restaurant to extend its operating hours, then it would be unreasonable to expect them to do so for mere charity.

Question 124.4 (continued)

In general, what Voting Method is best for either ballot propositions, single-seat offices, or representative assemblies?

Amended in January 2022: We noticed that we did not have anything in our notes as to the concept of 'voting capital', so decided to add some text at this time.

One concept which we apparently did not consider during our earlier big analysis, but which the Moderator heard and read about back when he was reading papers and attending seminars on the subject at Caltech, was to assign a certain amount of 'voting capital' to each voter, to be distributed as she sees fit.

For example, let's say that you have three candidates in an election, and that you assign five points to each voter for distribution. One voter who really likes Cand A and hates all others will allocate her entire voting capital to Cand A. Another voter who mostly likes Cand A but will mildly tolerate Cand B might allocate four points to A and one point to B. Another voter might still rank A over B, but a bit less enthusiastically, and so might allocate three points to A and two to B, thus giving us more information than a straight ranked-choice approach.

It's a maybe, but on balance we recommend against this sort of approach, on grounds that it allegedly fails some of the evaluation filters which we recognized in our original analysis. First, it fails the simplicity filter, because some voters can be expected to generate vote totals which are higher or lower than the assigned capital, requiring us to ask the pesky question of whether we should reject their ballots or prorate their votes from their actual total to the assigned capital, or maybe some third thing. Second, it fails the sincerity filter, because it easily might lead some clever voters to assign point values which they don't really feel, including by granting all capital to a favorite candidate when there are others whom the voter also likes. Third, it fails the expressivity filter, because it again assumes that the voter is either positive or neutral on all candidates, and does not allow for the reality that some voters really hate some candidates, unless we allow negative numbers to be allocated as part of the total voting capital, which would make the approach even more complicated.

Question 712.5

What about this business of asking for customer names at take-out places?

Added in January 2022: It occurred to the Moderator a couple of months earlier that we might not have had anything in our notes about this practice, and so we composed a draft Answer at this time.

Used to be that take-out places would announce an order as ready for pickup by reciting the main elements of the order, or else by reading a serial number assigned on that customer's receipt, and it always (or at least usually) seemed to work.

More recently, some venues have taken to asking for the customer's name at time of payment, and then announcing that name aloud when the order was ready.

Maybe it's just the Moderator's post-hacking paranoia, or maybe I actually harbored the objection earlier than that, but in any case this seems like an unnecessarily invasive practice.

If you don't really need certain personal information in order to process your order, then it's a better look not to ask for it. Just seems nosy to me. Perhaps you want my Social Security number as well?

Maybe they do it in order to make the customers feel more like people and less like numbers, but it might mess things up if two or more pending customers have the same first name. More efficient to rely on the unique receipt numbers.

Besides, some of us have distinctive first names which might call extra attention to our presence among the public, when we may for various reasons be seeking to keep a lower profile. Our alternative is then to give a fake name, but again that might be harder for us to remember if it takes a long time to fulfill our order, and it places us in the position of making a deliberate misstatement of the facts (that is, lying), and besides it still might be the same as another customer's actual name.

Stick with the previous practice, if you please.

Question 570.9

Should we be restricting education access according to gender?

Added during Third Pass review in January 2022: Before we address Question 571 on segregating students by gender, we should address the more fundamental Question of whether both main genders (as well as various nonbinary flavors) are entitled to be present in school at all. This is another Question which may seem obvious to us now, but again different perceptions were held at different times, so it's a non-trivial matter.

Older paradigm in many cultures was that only Males should be receiving any formal education, ostensibly because they were to be the 'rulers' and 'masters' of society, whereas Females were relegated to the nominally-subordinate roles of housekeeper, sex toy, and childbearer. We even saw it depicted happening as recently as 1893 in *Life With Father*, in which Father tells his eldest son that "We men have to run this world, and it's not an easy job." Son is also asked by Elizabeth Taylor's character if he believes in girls going to college, and he gallantly replies Yes, but only if they wish to waste that much time before getting married.

We now understand a lot better that Women have a great deal to offer in many useful professions and other endeavors outside the home, whether they choose to marry someone or not. We do ourselves a disservice to refuse their constructive participation in the operation and management of our society, and we commit a grievous strategic error to allow anyone into any decision-making capacity (including as a Voter) who has not received at least the basics of our then-current educational curriculum, as well as an opportunity to continue their learning in higher levels.

So no, we should not be restricting education access according to gender.

Question 595.1 (continued)

What role (if any) should Homework play in the modern environment?

11-jan-2022b

Amended during Third Pass review in January 2022: Another reason to make homework voluntary is to reduce the amount of time which teachers or their assistants spend in correcting or otherwise evaluating homework. This will reduce teacher burnout, and allow teachers to focus more on their lesson plans.

Question 640 (continued)

Should only Division winners participate in the playoffs, or shall one or more 'wild cards' be admitted, or shall the top eight (or some other number of) teams in each Conference play, or what?

Amended during Third Pass review in January 2022: We have recently heard and/or read commentary that a lot of teams would net-dislike having a bunch of 'byes' in the first part of the playoff season. For, even though it means that they are guaranteed access to the later rounds, yet the big break can take players out of their regular rhythm and optimal physical condition, causing them to play worse. This is another reason to oppose the suggestion offered in Session 276, to allow more teams to compete in the playoffs by granting long 'byes' to higher-record teams.

Question 90 (continued)

Should any individual or organization (including press, U.S. Senate, etc.) be permitted to ask such answer-proof questions?

Amended in January 2022 from personal reflection: As with cops asking us awkward questions, we should roll into a separate Q the point of what attorneys may or may not ask witnesses during trial. We now find that a lawyer should not even ask whether a witness has a diary (like the Pamela Reed character in *L.A. Law*), because that is an invitation to self-incrimination, which we don't want in this country (which we will make sure to ask separately while considering Constitutional amendments). Like the interview questions of 'have you ever', it places the witness in the awkward position of either lying or else revealing sensitive personal information which might not be relevant in the situation. Exception is if a plaintiff introduces her own diary into evidence, then the door is open for discovery and cross-examination. Other than that, leave our diaries to us alone, and don't even ask us about them.

Question 344 (continued)

If we imprison somebody, do we have an obligation to keep him reasonably well-fed, comfortable, and protected from crime?

Amended in January 2022 from personal reflection: If a prisoner refuses a promotion to a higher level because he wants to stay the boss of his level, or to be seen as tough enough to stay where he is, or to not be seen as selling out to the establishment, then clearly his current level is not punitive enough, so we shall need to demote him at earliest op, so that he will no longer be boss anyway, and so that he will more easily learn the lesson of doing well in both prison and general society if you want to do better in it, which everyone should want to do. Always try to work and improve yourself and improve your world, until you have earned a just retirement, and even then you gotta behave yourself to keep the benefits coming.

Question 694.2 (continued)

What else can Drivers do to improve traffic conditions in our communities?

r) Don't turn left out of a parking lot or side street onto a major street (with at least two lanes running in each direction) unless you have a green light giving you right-of-way, or unless no one else is around. Not only are you crossing lanes of the

traffic coming from your left, but you are also seeking to merge in with the traffic coming from your right. Both sets of drivers easily might freak out when you attempt your maneuver, and a collision could occur if things do not go exactly as planned. Besides, while you are waiting to make your dangerous left turn, cars might stack up behind you who are ready to do the correct thing and turn right. Find a less dangerous and obnoxious way (even if a bit longer) to get where you're going.

Question 682 (continued)

Do we want to keep Christmas on December 25?

Noted in Third Pass review during January 2022 that one of our reasons recorded in March 2019 for placing Christmas in the latter half of September was to provide some distance from Labor Day, but we more recently concluded for Answer 678.27 that Labor Day should be moved to May 1, so that argument will no longer be available to us. However, it still is relevant (isn't it?) to keep our big holiday season confined mostly to the Autumn as we have in the past, as well as to keep the "ember 25" part of the date in there as an homage to tradition.

Question 135 (continued)

Referring back to the listing in Answer 48 of which government functions fit best under which jurisdictions, and desiring always to maximize subsidiarity, which Departments do we recommend as existing in the revised Executive Branches of government for the foreseeable future?

Amended during the Third Pass in January 2022: We had decided for the Second Pass back in Session 295 to abandon the new agency name of 'National Lands' in favor of 'National Parks & Forests', on grounds that the longer name allegedly was "more descriptive and less kooky-sounding". However, it now reads as too cumbersome, especially when referencing it together with other agency names (such as the reference in the very next paragraph of "Agriculture and National Parks & Forests and Domestic Trade and Business/Securities"). Therefore changing back.

Question 712.6

Any protocols to recommend for supermarkets?

Added in January 2022: Supermarkets should not place kiosks in the aisle, for they are a traffic hazard. If they do have them, then shoppers should not park their carts across from them and block the aisles. Whether kiosks are present or not, shoppers should look around when they stop their carts to avoid blocking fellow shoppers.

Question 233 (continued)

Given that American English is selected to be the official language of the United States, and that the Office of Language Services is in place to provide standards of communication, shall a minimum understanding of American English (written and spoken) be a requirement of citizenship, under the terms of citizenship as discussed earlier?

We observed during the latter part of the Third Pass (January 2022) that we never did complete our analysis of this Question, which we had flagged for follow-up during

the earlier part of the Third Pass (April 2020). [The flagging process worked!] We thus finally got to it at this time.

To start, the premise about there being an “*Office of Language Services*” within the Federal government structure is no longer valid. We noted during Session 291 (April 2019) that we might get laughed at for such a recommendation.

However, we do have the institution of Citizenship restored to our model (after several attempts under Question 21 to eliminate it), so this Question is still relevant.

We have established during the course of considering Questions 220 and 222 that the only purpose for an ‘official language’ is (or should be) to be able to interact with government, and that all private communications (both oral and written) may be conducted in any desired language. However, this one purpose of governmental interaction is sufficient to derive a Yes answer to Question 233. For, if government is trying to extract further taxes from you, or if a police officer is giving you some kind of instruction, or if a judge is presiding over your criminal case, or if you wish to challenge any pending governmental action against you, then you and the government must be able to speak the same language as one another. We might be able to provide interpreters or print instructions in different languages, as resources may permit, but as previously described it might constitute an unreasonable expectation for any government to conduct business in dozens of different languages, and it might create additional problems of confusion if it were to try.

That is a big reason why we require a certain amount of Language instruction in our primary-school curriculum, to make sure that each adult citizen possesses enough working knowledge of our principal national language to understand everything in this present Final Report, for she then will probably also be able to understand everything which our national and local governments may seek to communicate.

It follows, then, that anyone wishing to obtain citizenship within this country (and thus become eligible for whatever privileges may attend to citizens, including the right to vote) needs to have (and demonstrate through testing) the same amount of language facility as we require from any primary-school graduate.

Question 238 (continued)

How shall the Disaster Relief Office be funded?

We observed during the latter part of the Third Pass (January 2022) that we never did complete our analysis of this Question, which we had flagged for follow-up during the earlier part of the Third Pass (April 2020). We thus finally got to it at this time.

Our preliminary Answer was that “Federal officials shall set budget amounts to fund the Disaster Relief Office”, but that was before we learned about Modern Monetary Theory (MMT), which holds that a government such as the Fed which issues its own fiat currency can generate as much of it as it needs to ‘fund’ all its operations, if it puts enough controls in place to keep Inflation with designated target ranges.

As we have specifically applied MMT to our model, we are aiming for Zero Inflation once we reset the currency to our designated target (which in our preference would be such that a Dollar can feed one person retail for one day, although other possibilities are possible), and we are generally aiming for a balanced federal budget

in hope of keeping the currency stable and keeping public expenses under control, but we are allowing for periodic budget variances which can be offset by adjusting tax rates (especially the Wealth Tax) rather than by governmental borrowing, until the currency pendulates back to its target value.

In that we are keeping a federal budget in our model, it follows that we should still include a reserve to deal with any widespread natural disasters, because there usually will be some somewhere, and our actual loss experience can give us a pretty good idea of how much we can expect to pay out for such occurrences on average.

If we ever need to pay out significantly more in disaster relief than we have budgeted for the year, then under MMT we get to do so, and if necessary we can also increase taxes and/or cut other spending until the currency restabilizes. If we ever need to pay out significantly less in domestic disaster relief than we have budgeted for the year, then we can consider freeing up some dollars to assist victims living in other nations, and/or we can redirect the excess funds for domestic infrastructure improvements which might have needed to sit lower on the priority list, and/or we can issue a tax rebate, again until the currency restabilizes.

Question 246 (continued)

Would such facilities be open to citizens only, or could aliens use them who wished to integrate into American society and make positive contributions?

We observed during the latter part of the Third Pass (January 2022) that we never did complete our analysis of this Question, which we had flagged for follow-up during the earlier part of the Third Pass (April 2020). We thus finally got to it at this time.

As we observed earlier, the phrasing of this Question is hopelessly 'leading', so we will fix it for the final public packaging. However, it does correctly identify our intended Answer, which is that our federal network of 'help centers' (previously referenced in this document as 'orientation centers') should be open to all local residents regardless of citizenship status.

There is an argument for giving preference to citizens over resident aliens if there is any shortage of food or beds or other amenities, but such an approach would create a number of problems. One is a simpler matter of logistics, because each user would be required to show his 'citizen ID' card at the front of the line if he has one, or if he does not then we would need to check whether anyone else in line has a 'citizen ID' card and can therefore be skipped ahead.

For another problem, what if the citizen finishes his first meal before all the aliens have been served, and what if he then calls for 'seconds'? Does he then get to go in front of all the others yet again?

For another problem, the distinction between citizen and alien can set up a 'class system' within the facilities, which can lead to rudeness and shoving and other bad things, which is one of the reasons why we were reluctant to retain Citizenship at all.

Finally, we must realize that we considered as equally important the two core reasons for establishing and maintaining our network of 'help centers', being (1) to help our own people in time of need and (2) to provide a starting-place for any immigrants who don't already have other places to go. Latter reason was partly why

we originally referred to the facilities as 'orientation centers', until we realized that they accomplish more than just orientation.

Our nation was built on Immigration, and we are stronger when we allow and facilitate aliens to enter our country and assimilate into our system. We therefore do ourselves a long-term favor by providing short-term assistance to new immigrants.

If a given 'help center' is short on resources relative to the needs of the local population, then it might be a sign that the Fed needs to direct more resources to the program generally, or else to reallocate resources from one region or district to another. It might also be a sign that some of the local users should be relocated to other regions or districts, especially if more jobs are available elsewhere for referral.

This last point might be an area where we can give preferential consideration to citizens over aliens. If the Compton center is overcrowded, but the Bakersfield center has plenty of beds and jobs available, then the regional director might arrange for a caravan of buses to transport willing users. When that happens, it might not make much sense for an alien to grab the last bus seat if a citizen is willing and able to take it. That could lead to a bad scene. It's a one-time action, and with it we are helping to relieve the ongoing issues of preferencing citizens over aliens within a given center, so yes we can give citizens first dibs on bus assignment.

Question 261 (continued)

What number of houses is recommended for the different levels of American government?

Amended for the Third Pass in January 2022: We speculated earlier on why a per-area house was not suggested in the original Constitution, if we find it so useful now. One reason is that states like Pennsylvania and Georgia which were relatively large in area were also relatively large in population; they didn't have states like Nevada and Montana and Alaska which are large in area but low in population, so they would have had little reason to make the distinction. Another reason is that most of their issues at the time were people-based; they didn't need to consider land-based issues such as where to build railroads or drill for oil or bury nuclear waste. With our much larger national area, we have more land-based issues to consider than the Founding Fathers did, so the residents and stewards of those land areas have a much greater stake in national decisionmaking than their forebears did, so we get to modify our governmental structures according to our modified national environment.

Question 647.9 (continued)

Any changes to recommend in Chess?

Amended for the Third Pass in January 2022: By this time, our ongoing experiment had modified our previous P=3 N=8 B=10 R=13 Q=24 such that Q now equals 26.

Question 701.1 (continued)

What about film colorizing?

Addressed in January 2022, following addition to the Outline last month: This debate stemmed largely from media mogul Ted Turner purchasing the rights to a

bunch of black-and-white films in the 1980's so that he could broadcast them in color on his cable networks, and hopefully secure more advertising revenue as a result.*

[*Source: <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1986-10-23-ca-6941-story.html>]

Turner argued that he owned the films being broadcast, so that it was up to him to decide which should be colorized. His opponents (including RKO Pictures, which filed suit to prevent unauthorized colorization of their films) argued that it is a "sacrilege" to modify classic pieces of cinema without the consent of the original artists.

According to our Answer 7, one of our few 'natural rights' is to property which we voluntarily create. Anyone seeking to take control of any such property must provide due consideration to the creators. Once that transaction happens, the creator is giving up creative control over the property, and keeping the money instead. Whoever has paid for the privilege of controlling the property gets to do so, or else what was the point of the sale? Thus, from a legal and philosophical standpoint, we are concurring with Turner's position here. If the original artists don't want their creations to be modified, then they shouldn't sell property rights to any second party. Joke's on them if they do.

But, even if it is legal, is it moral? Is it actually a "sacrilege" to modify MPAA-registered films, even when one has bought the legal right to do so?

We're going to take Turner's side on this one, too. Many films were shot in black-and-white because the producers simply could not afford to photograph or distribute the footage in color; in those instances, it can actually help to see what the film would have looked like (as in the case of *Miracle on 34th Street* or *Fort Apache*) if the studios had sprung extra for color photography. In some other cases (such as *Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid* and portions of *The Wizard Of Oz*), they used black-and-white photography deliberately in order to create a certain cinematic effect; in those instances, it would be an obvious degradation to violate the original cinematic intent through colorization, and very few people would choose to watch those broadcasts, and so advertising revenue could be expected to diminish greatly.

In the end, then, it's up to us as consumers: If we are willing to pay in the form of theater tickets or television advertising to see a modified version of a classic film, and if it is being shown by the legitimate owners of the property, then it must be both legally and creatively appropriate. We are enjoying the film, and the whole intent of creating the film was for people to enjoy it, so that should be good enough.

However, we do draw the line that the original black-and-white versions must also be made available for broadcast or other distribution, so that viewers have a real choice. Personally, I like watching certain films in black-and-white sometimes and in color other times. It's all good, so we should have that option. Just because you purchase a property doesn't mean that you get to destroy it (as some claim that Bolsonaro and his buddies have been trying to do with the Amazon rainforest). You may be the legal owner, but you still don't get to take any action which prevents other people from doing that which they would otherwise be able to do. That constitutes 'injury' in our book, an *infamia*.

Question 659.35

What about 'theater' and 'theatre', and any similar constructions?

Question added in January 2022, and addressed later.

Question 418 (continued)

Of these basic types, which is the fairest method of taxation, or is it appropriate for more than one type to be levied at once by a single jurisdiction?

Amended in January 2022: As to the concept of an 'advertising tax' which we both ideated and opposed last month, we are now coming down against the concept. It would add way too much analysis and bookkeeping to decide how much each advertisement is costing the public in terms of diminished visibility, and then to collect the applicable tax and direct it wherever it needs to go. Yes, it is easier if we charge a standard factor of the amount paid for the space, but there's so much freaking advertising now in America, all over the freaking place, that even with my passion for counting I would not consider undertaking that task, no.

Our opposition note from last month asked whether we could declare certain spaces as Not For Sale, and then suggested that such a declaration would be untenable in the face of higher offers from the advertisers (who seem to have no end of liquid cash available for such endeavors). However, what we 'little people' can do to stem the tide is to make a mental note of anyone who is advertising in the Senate chamber or on the back of a pitcher's mound or any other space which should be treated as 'sacred', and deliberately boycott those products and services, including by encouraging others to boycott them as well. If those advertisers begin to see reduced revenues as a result of their poor placements, then hopefully they will be moved to reconsider their advertising strategies.

Question 659.1 (continued)

What should be the correct spelling of the word currently spelled as 'judgment'?

Amended in January 2022: More on the idea proposed last month, to remove the superfluous 'e' from 'acknowledgement', and leave 'judgment' as is, we looked back at our previous notes on this general Question for refresher, and found that it's easier to add the '-ment' suffix to the infinitive without any spelling change. If the infinitive ends in 'e', then let the noun form end in '-ement'. If the infinitive does not end in 'e', then no need to stick in an 'e' before the '-ment'.

Question then becomes whether we should allow the infinitive forms to be spelled as 'judg' and 'acknowledg', or whether they should stay as they are for the present. We are open to further discussion, but at first glance these spellings look silly. We have no precedent in modern English to end any word with the consonant blend of 'dg', whereas the string of 'dge' appears in the middle and at the end of numerous English words, including some (such as 'edge') which do not take '-ment' as a suffix at all.

We won't object strenuously if anyone else wants to make a big push for a more phonetic spelling of English, which might result in the infinitives being spelled as 'judj' and 'acknowlej' or some other variations. Until that time, though, given that both 'judgment' and 'judgement' have been in common use for some time now, whereas we see only the one form of 'acknowledgement', we think it net-better to be both easy and consistent. In this instance, the easy part is to keep 'acknowledge' and 'acknowledgement' with no change, and the consistent part is to spell 'judge' and 'judgement' in the same manner. So ruled.

Question 258.7 (continued)

What suggestions do we have for the City agencies listed in Answer 135?

Transportation - Street & Highway Maintenance

Amended in January 2022 from personal observation: Cities should consider very carefully whether they really want to employ street sweepers which merely kick up a lot of dust, and dirtify all the nearby parked cars, as well as the next few which drive by. It's one thing if you're actually washing the street with soap and water, but those commodities are not plentiful in all areas, so some cities prefer to do a 'dry sweep', which might work in some areas where they are merely moving trash off the road. In our desert areas, however, and in other communities within range of brushfires or volcanoes, there is more natural dust on the ground than trash, so a 'dry sweep' merely kicks it up and moves it around the air, where pedestrians can inhale it and it blocks the beauty of the neighborhood. Maybe that dust is happier on the ground where it was, and where it can eventually be washed away in the next rainstorm without messing up any cars or other personal surfaces. If you have some specific environmental reason to expect that whatever you're sweeping away is more of a danger than the random dust that you're kicking up, then I guess that we will need to trust your judgment, but please consider it carefully, for the action might be creating more problems than it is solving.

Question 580 (continued)

What about for driving, voting, military service, drinking, sex, and other such stuff where we have established chronological age cutoffs in the past?

Amended in January 2022 from Third Pass review: We stated in our Answer 605.3 that we should "again refer to Answer 580" as to when individuals should be allowed to enter bars, but we apparently did not ever establish such a criterion, so did it now.

We have from earlier consideration that a secondary-school diploma should be both necessary and sufficient for an individual to drink alcohol legally. But, that practice is different from that of entering a tavern or other establishment serving alcohol. Owners of such establishments might want to make sure that all attendees have had a certain amount of growth in their lives, even if they are not actively drinking alcohol there, not only because the owners naturally wish to avoid the perception that they are 'contributing to the delinquency of a minor', but also because the presence of 'kids' in the room (again, regardless of whether the 'kids' are drinking alcohol or not) might easily detract from the adult experience which the other bar patrons are trying to enjoy.

We might require owners to accept a secondary-school diploma as being sufficient to allow entrance, but most people don't carry their diplomas around with them. Then again, we might make it a standard practice for diploma recipients to be issued some sort of 'citizen ID' card, which would establish both chronological age and educational achievement, and which therefore could be used for entrance to various venues, even if one is not driving or registered with Social Security.

Even if we do that, though, we can still imagine that some tavern owners might prefer for all attendees to have achieved a certain chronological age, regardless of intelligence level or emotional maturity or educational credentials, simply because

their adult patrons prefer to be around other adults, and thus escape for a few precious hours from the outside world with all its pre-adults running around loudly.

If we deny that privilege to tavern patrons and owners, then we might not see as many taverns around, which some folks might prefer, but as argued with the strip clubs (see Answer 605.5) a large and diverse community generally should have a variety of non-harmful businesses operating within its borders, in order to attract and retain valuable economic benefit, rather than require its citizens to drive longer distances for their adult pleasures, at greater risk to all.

Thus, our Answer here is similar to our Answer for strip clubs, that it can be legal for individuals to enter who have their secondary-school diploma, but that business owners might prefer for a variety of reasons to maintain a chronological-age cutoff as a condition of entrance. If doing so diminishes the business owner's economic revenue, then that's on him for a questionable decision.

Only caveat which we would offer here is that any such criterion of entrance should be applied consistently among all racial groups and other segments of the community. We at A2E don't want an environment in which white guys can enter at Age 25, but black guys can enter only after Age 150, because that is a level of discrimination which we hold as unacceptable for our model. But, isn't it also discrimination to establish a chronological-age cutoff for the general population? No, because all those folks will eventually be able to achieve that condition if they remain alive, whereas an individual from another racial group will stay that way forever, and should not be penalized for a situation which he cannot control or grow out of.

Question 645.6 (continued)

Can we recommend at this time any improvements in Baseball statistics?

Amended in January 2022: Pursuant to the "Fifth problem" mentioned in May 2019, that "pitchers sometimes get official credit for wins when they accomplished very little", we came across a very good example while performing our experiment on calculating the Overall Performance Index as described above. Washington starter Paolo Espino pitched five scoreless innings against Miami on 20 Jul 2021. Relief pitcher Austin Voth then proceeded to allow three runs from his first three batters. And yet, Voth got credit for the win because Washington scored three more runs in the bottom of the sixth inning, before he had a chance to be replaced, taking a lead which they never again relinquished. We claim that Espino should have gotten the win, for pitching longer and for allowing no runs.

Question 659.35 (continued)

What about 'theater' and 'theatre', and any similar constructions?

Addressed in February 2022 following introduction last month: This is another one where the Moderator/Author probably needs to abandon his precious paradigm. I was brought up to believe that the European version of 'theatre' was the more 'proper' spelling, and that the American 'theater' was a bastardization to be avoided.

As a result of working through this Project, however, I have come to realize the importance of simplifying our language whenever and however we practically can, both to make it easier for our many immigrants to assimilate into our culture, and to

facilitate the use of English as a *lingua franca* for international communications. (We don't want them to select some other language, do we, and make us learn another tongue which we might not otherwise have ever needed?) It follows that we should use the spellings which more phonetically resemble the actual pronunciations. We don't say 'thee-a-tree', so we shouldn't be spelling it like that.

Question 643.1 (continued)

Do we have continuing problems with any particular Team names, logos, colors, or other similar attributes?

Amended in February 2022: Washington's franchise in the National Football League (NFL) announced this week that they were adopting 'Commanders' as their new team nickname, to replace the racially-provocative 'Redskins' name.

To recapitulate, our group recommended 'Colonials' for a variety of reasons. They could have done a lot worse than 'Commanders', though, because at least a lot of commanders do work at the Pentagon, and the name does imply the original Washington. However, we stand by our original recommendation (largely because it is only semi-militaristic), and continue to plan on including it in our final public writeup, just in case the franchise ever changes its corporate mind in the face of ongoing public outcry.

Question 585 (continued)

What shall we designate as the 6 or 7 main disciplines to be taught in primary school in the modern environment?

Amended in February 2022 from personal reflection: We previously calculated that each of the six subject tracks of primary school should receive 50 hours of class time in each trimester. However, this arrangement presupposes a point not previously taken into evidence, but assumed rather ungracefully, that each of the tracks should receive an equal amount of overall class time. We will settle that discussion now.

Although we are not required to devote an equal amount of class time to each of the six subject tracks, we may want to do so anyway, because those are the six areas where we need coverage in order to consider someone a minimally-rounded adult, and because it might be a trap to consider or assert that any one track is more important than any other. Simply make sure that there is enough material in your lesson plan to cover the full time allotment for each track.

Question 405 (continued)

How shall we deal with the Social Security program?

Amended in February 2022: We noted in December 2021 that one reason to tie retirement benefits with salaried work is to encourage people to seek 'legitimate' employment from 'legitimate' employers. However, we overlooked the value of unwaged labor such as housework and childcare. We'll address it now.

When assessing the value of unwaged effort such as housework and childcare, to calculate your retirement benefit, okay to use community-property rules to divide total community wages by number of persons in the community. We may require a

certain proportion of wage disparity for the rule to kick in (*e.g.*, it may not be that important if one household member is making \$60k per year and another is making \$100k, the rule is really for families where someone heavily supports the domestic infrastructure and has little or no outside employment), but selection of the rate would be pretty arbitrary, and again we have that pesky problem (as with age cutoffs) of a completely different paradigm applying if you are slightly above or below some given line. May be better to apply it consistently, or at least allow the option, but then maybe should allow for communities larger than two.

Question 644 (continued)

Shall we allow/encourage or prohibit/discourage the 'designated hitter' rule?

We were sad to read in February 2022 that Major League Baseball had decided upon a universal Designated Hitter, contrary to the recommendation in our omnibus agenda for keeping the rules different in the two leagues. We will continue our quixotic quest for #NoDHinNL

Question 686 (continued)

Who should have the primary authority of establishing speed limits?

Amended in February 2022: We have been thinking for some time that certain cities should reconsider their speed limits, some of which seem unreasonably restrictive given the narrow width and low traffic of the streets in question. Maybe they should perform a survey of how all interested citizens feel about those limits, both those who live in the area and those who ever have occasion to drive through. Maybe we can chart their responses according to street width or other factors, to get a better sense of which limits are most reasonable under which conditions.

Question 661.2 (continued)

Any other suggestions to make on quotation marks?

Amended in February 2022 as part of the Third Pass: We observed last month that we had utilized different text-enrichment formats for titles in this document, so the time had now come for us to survey our past usages, to get a better sense before we close this document of how we should ideally end up.

We did not capture quite all the various occurrences during our quick skim, but we seem to have gotten most of them, enough to have a pretty good idea where to go.

Following uses apparently received unanimous treatment in this document: Double quotes went to articles, artworks, episodes, letters, and plays. Italics went to court cases and journals/newspapers.

Nearly unanimous were as follows: Straight text went to websites (15/16). Double quotes went to songs (3/4). Italics went to films (23/25). After that, it got kooky.

TV series and miniseries changed usages no less than 13 times in this document, summarized as straight text 1, single quote 9, double quote 5, italics 6.

Books changed usages no less than 26 times in this document, summarized as straight text 3, single quote 6, double quote 14, italics 18.

There was no clear consensus in the latter two categories, at least not taken by themselves, and no real trending over time, but we can now derive a consistent usage in the context of the other categories.

Because the feature films were nearly always italicized, that intuitively seems the best approach; we clearly want to set off for easy spotting those references which have such lasting impact in our culture that they are found to be relevant for social-reform documents like this one. Books were referenced numerous times also, but it makes some sense to apply a different usage to them, in order to distinguish them more easily from the feature films; specifically, if we apply double quotes to book titles, then we can apply single quotes to individual sections and chapters. We can apply a similar approach to TV series and miniseries, applying double quotes for the main titles, and single quotes for individual episodes, making it consistent for any titled work which has titled components.

We realize that this approach deviates from the practice of certain TV episodes and feature films to use double quotes in their own original presentations, but they didn't have the Answers To Everything back then, and might have adopted a more consistent usage if they had.

In summary, then, we recommend the following standard usages, notwithstanding any previous recommendations or alternate usages within this document:

Straight text - websites

Single quotes - chapters, episodes, songs

Double quotes - albums, articles, artworks, books, plays, series

Italics - court cases, films, periodicals

Websites are clearly websites without any text enrichment. Single quotes can be used for subsets of works which get double quotes. Double quotes can be used for subsets of works which get italics. Meanwhile, we save italic usage for the longest-lasting cultural contributions. Are we finally done with this topic?

Question 707.9

Anything else regarding the Internet?

Added in February 2022 following a level of frustration experienced by the Moderator/Author in the course of his 'day job': Thanks for requesting our feedback on various online platforms and services. However, once we tell you, quit asking. It makes extra work for us to either complete another survey or click out of it, and it makes us suspect that nobody's paying attention when we write.

Question 645.6 (continued)

Can we recommend at this time any improvements in Baseball statistics?

Amended in February 2022: This will be the Last Thing for this Final Report. Having now finally finished (!!!) the final read-through of this Final Report (did you locate any spelling or punctuation errors? thought not....), we are ready to close with an

update of this ongoing experiment which the Moderator/Author has been advancing concurrently with the finalization of this report. This is for what we call our Overall Performance Index (OPI), first mentioned here in June 2021, and which would better summarize each player's total productivity regardless of defensive position(s) played.

They have Offensive Player of the Week/Month/Year, and Defensive Player of the Week/Month/Year, and a Most Valuable Player who is selected rather subjectively, often with excessive emphasis of offensive stats over defensive performance. They also have something called Wins Above Replacement (WAR), which compares team records between when a given player is in the roster versus when he is not, but we feel that this places too much emphasis on team outcome, which can suck even when the individual player is performing well, as well as the other way around.

We feel that we need a more objective measure, one which takes into account all the offensive and defensive actions involving each player during each game, regardless of whether that player's team ultimately wins or loses that game.

It would also help if we can apply a common evaluation schematic to all players on the roster, both pitchers and fielders, starters and relievers, everyone. In the end, how much are you net-helping your team, or perhaps net-hurting it?

These are the objectives which our Overall Performance Index seeks to achieve.

The experiment is ongoing, and probably will take some further years before completion, because on average we are giving it only one hour of attention per day, so that we can keep it moving while advancing the main A2E effort. However, we have by now gotten a bunch of work done on it, enough to present here a pretty good approximation of where things are likely to end up. This will serve as a starting point in case for some reason I can't complete that project as planned, and if somebody then wants to pick it up from the point described here.

Sample games are taken from the 2021 regular season, because the 2020 season was shortened for the pandemic, and because they were beginning in 2022 to enforce the Designated Hitter (DH) variation in both leagues. We use only games involving two teams from the National League, so that we never need to deal with the DH variation, or with any team which typically lives in that world. With that.....

We start from the premise that this is Baseball, and that the principal object of the game is to generate Bases. Every time that you generate an offensive base, for either yourself or a teammate, you are helping your team, so you should get some amount of credit for it. Conversely, if you generate an offensive out, then you are hurting your team, so you should get some level of penalty.

Opposite for defense: When you allow other guys to reach base or advance or score, then you are hurting your team, and you should be penalized. When you generate a defensive out, you should get some credit for helping your team.

As it turns out, the number of offensive bases generated in a game is on average approximately equal to the number of defensive outs generated in a game. Easiest approach therefore is to credit one (1) point for every offensive base or defensive out, and to deduct one (1) point for every offensive out or base defensively allowed.

We have heard it argued that we should award and deduct higher rates of points, in order to more fairly allocate credit and disgrace among multiple players who are involved in a given play, but the scale tends to lose perspective if we start awarding four points for this and five points for that. Easier and clearer to keep the standard rate at one point per base or out.

We have also heard it argued that the one point per base or out should in some cases be allocated among the multiple players involved in a given play, but we reject that argument too: There is no such thing as a fraction of a base, or a fraction of an out, so it makes little sense to assess partial points to players as if there were.

Easiest approach (and hopefully fairest in the long run, because it is far less arbitrary) is to 'round off' the one point for each base or out to the player most deserving of the plus or minus assessment. When multiple bases or outs are involved in a given play, then they can be allocated as applicable.

Next factor to consider is that, while as we noted the numbers of bases and outs per game are approximately equal, they are not exactly so. Bases exceed outs by around 8 per game on average. (We are still measuring this factor.) Earlier versions of our experiment revealed that not correcting for this differential means that the OPI is weighted too much by offensive performance, whereas we would ideally like the offensive and defensive influences to be balanced. On average, players spend half their time on offense and half on defense, so we should figure out some way of increasing the total number of defensive points which get awarded to players.

We theoretically could accomplish this by prorating all the defensive credits upward by a factor equal to the actual ratio of bases to outs, but again that gets us into fractional (or actually decimal) assessments for bases and outs, which on its face seems unreasonable and unnecessary.

Better approach is to identify certain game situations in which it is appropriate to give 'extra credit' to the defense for getting out of a tough jam. And, because we want to keep our basic 'zero sum' rule of assessing equal numbers of offensive and defensive points on each play (because anything accomplished by the defense is being allowed by the offense, and the other way around), we assess an equivalent number of penalty points to the offense for screwing up in those key situations.

There are several possible ways to go here, and part of our ongoing experiment is to determine how many penalty points should be assessed for different kinds of screwup situations, as well as how those points should be allocated as defensive bonuses. We did a lot of trial-and-error in the early stages of our experiment, and we are not completely confirmed yet, but we have settled upon a system which seems to work pretty well. Specifically, we are assessing 1 penalty point for screwing up with two runners on base, 1 point for screwing up with three runners on base in the middle of an inning, 3 points for screwing up with three runners on base to end an inning, and 2 points for screwing up to end the game.

For this purpose, 'screwing up' means not only generating an out, but failing to advance any existing runner. Thus, you can hit into a triple play to cause the runners on first and second to get out as well as yourself, but if the runner on third scores in the meantime, then you have not screwed up.

We are systematically testing other coefficient sets as we continue to catalog and count screwup situations in our database, by looking at all 225 combinations where each coefficient is between 0-4, and where the three-runner screwup is at least as big as the corresponding two-runner screwup, and where the end-inning screwup is at least as big as the mid-inning screwup. So far, there are several viable alternatives, no clear standout, but most of them involve either a 0 (which seems too lenient for those situations) or a 4 (which seems too harsh), although a few do not.

We have tried different arrangements for allocating those extra screwup points as defensive bonuses, and the combination which seems most net-robust is as follows: Each 1-point bonus goes to the first uncredited fielder in an assisted play, to the sole fielder if the play is unassisted, to the pitcher for a two-runner strikeout, or to the catcher for a three-runner strikeout. Each 2-point bonus is split between the closing pitcher and the winning catcher (that is, the catcher who played longest during the game). Each 3-point bonus is split with one point to current pitcher and two points to current catcher. Multi-runner and game-end penalties can apply additively.

Now that we have the offensive and defensive influences approximately equated, we must figure out how to allocate all the remaining offensive and defensive credits and deductions. Offensive side is pretty easy: Batter generally gets credit for all bases generated as a result of his at-bat, and gets charged for all the outs generated in the play. Runner will get a credit for any stolen base or a deduction for any pickoff, as well as credit for any base advanced on a balk (because presumably the runner helped to instigate the balk). Out is assessed to any runner who tries unsuccessfully to advance to an unforced base. Other than that, it's all on the batter.

Trick is how to allocate credits and deductions to the defense based on what the offense does. Multiple possibilities are possible, and a big part of the experiment to date has been to try different combinations in order to balance what seems logically reasonable with what delivers equal overall totals for all positions.

For, a big hypothesis of our experiment is that on average each position contributes net-equally to the team, when offensive and defensive influences are combined. We know from years of observation -- going back to Babe Ruth and probably earlier -- that some positions (especially Pitcher and Shortstop) tend to be more actively engaged in the defense than others, that the heaviest hitters are not always the most agile on defense, and that as a result sluggers are often assigned to defensive positions (especially First Base and Right Field) where they can do the least damage.

This factor is borne out in our ongoing experiment. With 266 sample games in our database, total offensive credit under our current rules amounts to +287 for First Base, +244 for Right Field, +138 for Second Base, +77 for Left Field, 0 for Third Base, 0 for Shortstop, -28 for Center Field, -114 for Catcher, and -621 for Pitcher.

If we are to hold to our hypothesis that all positions net-contribute equally (for, they otherwise would have eliminated long ago any positions which significantly dragged down the team, or else added new positions to help cover the weak spots on the field, right??), then our defensive credits and charges not only must make intuitive sense by themselves, but in aggregate must also result in offsetting the above offensive factors until the overall position totals are close to equal.

Trick is how best to do this.

Looking at outs is easier, so let's do that first. In general, credit for a defensive out goes to the fielder who caught the ball, and if necessary threw it wherever it needed to go. Again, there's an argument that the fielder (usually at First Base) who caught the thrown ball deserves some share of credit, but again it's easier to award only one point for the out, and to give it to the player who worked harder on the play, and it's much harder to stop a tricky grounder and throw it quickly and accurately, than it is to stroll over casually and catch a ball being thrown directly at you. That's why Boog Powell and Albert Pujols and other men of size so often played at First Base.

Double plays are slightly trickier. If three or more fielders are named in the official record of the play, then the first two names each get a point. If only one or two fielders are named, then both points go the first fielder, because it usually means that he caught the ball *and* stepped on a base to force someone out *and* made a good throw to nail the second guy; if only a second player is involved, then his role in the play is usually pretty passive.

However, as noted above, if any assisted play results from what we call a 'screwup situation', then the applicable bonus point goes to the first uncredited player.

Exception for the 'infield fly rule', which always involves at least two pre-existing runners, and which therefore automatically qualifies for a 'screwup situation' if the batter pops out with nobody advancing. Instead of awarding two points to the infielder who caught an easy fly ball, and who according to the 'infield fly rule' would get credit for the out even if he dropped the ball, we award the bonus point to the Catcher for helping to manage a tough situation.

Strikeouts usually go the Pitcher, except Catcher gets credit if he needs to tag or throw out the runner from a dropped pitch in order to complete the strikeout. But, we observed in the most recent samplings that Pitchers were collectively ending up with over +100 points in total OPI, while Catchers were at nearly -100, and all other positions were hovering at their target just above zero. (Target can't be exactly zero, because Pinch Hitters get out more often than they reach base, and they have no defensive credits to offset their lousy offense, so they are consistently negative overall, so the 'zero sum' rule provides that all other positions should be slightly positive in order to offset the differential.) We recently solved this problem by awarding credit to the Catcher instead of the Pitcher, *if* it is the third strikeout of the inning, *and if* the same Battery has played the entire inning, *and if* the Catcher has not already received a point on that play or earlier in that inning.

Whoever throws the ball to pick off a runner, or to prevent a stolen base, gets credit for the out.

Now comes the fun part, laying blame for defensive screwups.

First, we need to dispel a common myth. Pitcher is usually charged with the number of hits which he 'allows', and with Earned Runs if those players manage to score without any errors intervening. However, we tried that approach with a primitive version of this experiment using only Dodger games from 2015, and good pitchers such as Kershaw and Greinke were ending up with insanely negative scores, which would on face seem to belie their nine-figure contracts.

It occurred to us as a result that Hits must generally be assessed to some combination of Fielders, not to the Pitcher. For, we know from long experience that

no Pitcher at the MLB level can deliver 27 strikeouts in a single game. The rest of the time, he must generate outs by inducing the Batter to hit the ball to where a Fielder is able to make a play on it. If the Fielders are playing where the Batter is going to hit the ball, and if they make the plays, then the Pitcher looks better according to the current official statistic. But, if the Pitcher induces the exact same action from the Batter, and if the Fielders are out of position or otherwise fail to make the play, then it often goes against the Pitcher's record. We hold that the Pitcher shouldn't be penalized for the ineffectiveness of the Fielders, so it is generally the Fielders who are to be charged for any Base Hits.

Exception for outside-the-park Home Runs, though, because of course no Fielder has an opportunity to influence those plays. However, when we previously charged all four bases to the Pitcher, he ended up with insanely low overall totals. We therefore now have one of the four bases being charged to the Catcher, on grounds that he called the pitch resulting in the homer, or at least one which was close enough to it.

If any runners are on base at the time of the Home Run, then the bases which they advance as a result of the homer are not necessarily charged to the Pitcher or Catcher, but rather to the Fielders who originally allowed them to reach base. If the Pitcher can't be held responsible for the base which the Batter earned by singling to Center Field, then he also shouldn't be held responsible for any subsequent bases advanced by that runner from a Home Run. Those bases would never have been advanced if the Center Fielder hadn't allowed the guy on base in the first place.

Walks and Hit-By-Pitch are charged against the Pitcher. However, as with the case of Home Runs, any bases advanced by pre-existing runners as a result of a Walk or Hit-By-Pitch are charged against the Fielders who allowed them to reach base.

Similar deal for a Wild Pitch or Passed Ball, the extra bases being charged against the Fielders who originally allowed those batters to reach base. Balls are thrown wild by the Pitcher or deflected by the Catcher all the time, and if nobody is on base then there is no penalty other than a Ball for the batter's count. It's when runners are on base that those situations are problematic, so it's the Fielders who allowed them to reach base who should get charged for their subsequent unforced advances.

Balks are charged against the Pitcher, even if somebody else originally allowed that batter to reach base, because the Pitcher specifically did something bad to allow the runner to advance freely.

Stolen Bases are charged against the Catcher, whose job it is to throw those guys out, as Johnny Bench did practically every single time. However, the so-called 'defensive indifference' is charged instead against the applicable baseman, who -- as we noted for this Question back in May 2019 -- really should not have been 'indifferent' in the first place; at least make an effort, you jerk.

Sometimes, a play involves both one or more outs generated and one or more bases advanced, such as when a Batter hits a grounder to the First Baseman, who steps on the bag for the force-out, but the previous runner advances from First to Second. In a case like this, the Batter is awarded/charged with the difference of (bases minus outs), regardless of whether or not the play technically counts as a Sacrifice according to the current official rules. Corresponding charge/award goes to whichever Fielder touched the ball first. That same Fielder is then charged for any bases advanced by that runner as a result of a Home Run or Walk or Hit-By-Pitch or

Wild Pitch or Passed Ball. It might not always be the technically applicable way to go for a given play, but we find it to be the net-easiest approach for such complicated situations, and hopefully it works out accurately on average.

We can now get more specific about how Base Hits are charged to the Fielders, and then that will be it for our experimental rules.

When any play is recorded as an Error, or when the ball was "deflected by" any particular Fielder, that Fielder is charged with all the bases resulting from the play.

When the line score announces that a given hit was otherwise allowed by an Infielder (including the Pitcher or Catcher), that defender gets charged for all the bases resulting from the play.

Starts getting trickier for grounders to the Outfield. We previously had it that the Outfielder touching the ball first was responsible for all the bases generated on the play, but the Outfielders were ending up with insanely negative totals, and it later occurred to us that the Outfielders should be held harmless for any ground balls reaching them, for it is the Infielders who should have stopped those balls first.

That leaves the question of which Infielders should be charged, and in what proportion. We did a lot of trial-and-error on this one, and for a long while kept track of all the applicable situations so that we could correct them when we settled upon a different penalty scenario. Combination which has tended to result in the closest overall position totals is as follows:

Grounders to Right Field are charged entirely to the First Baseman. Grounders to Center Field are charged first to the Second Baseman, then to the Shortstop. Grounders to Left Field are charged first to the Shortstop, then to Third Base.

When we say "charged first" to one position, and "then to" another, what we mean is this: An even number of bases is split evenly, but for an odd number the extra base goes to the first player named in the combination. Then, if that runner subsequently advances any bases as a result of a Home Run or Walk or Hit-By-Pitch or Wild Pitch or Passed Ball, then each extra base is charged to the first player in that combination if the players have been charged equally, or if not then to the player with the fewer points previously charged for that batter-runner. In this way, the charges remain approximately close between the two players, but with a defined order of succession giving slightly more aggregate weight to the player with the heavier responsibility.

Ground-Rule Doubles are charged entirely to the Outfield. All bases get charged to a single Outfielder if the line score indicates that the ball was hit to Left or Right or Center Field. Bases are split if the ball was hit to Left-Center or Right-Center Field, and in that instance any odd extra base goes to Center Field just for uniformity.

That leaves us with what we call 'flylines', which is any Fly Ball or Line Drive hit to an Outfielder according to the line score. Singles with bases empty are simply charged to the applicable Outfielders, on grounds that they should have been in position to catch those balls. Singles with runners on, and any extra-base hits, are typically charged to some combination of fielders, according to their respective levels of responsibility for allowing different runners to advance. This is where we have a lot of flexibility to fine-tune the overall model in such a way as to generate a nearly-equal total of OPI figures for each position, because there are numerous flyline

situations each of which has numerous logical possibilities for assessing the allowed bases among different defenders.

We have been tracking the number of times that each flyline situation occurs in our game sampling, and we have catalogued all the occurrences in our record. Every so often, after a particular position has become insanely high or insanely low in aggregate OPI, we will examine our 'flyline chart' to look for situations which can be reallocated logically such as to produce more nearly-equal totals. We then go back and modify each such occurrence in our database, and thus keep the numbers fairly close at all times. The different flyline allocations thus tend to evolve toward an optimal configuration, but that process is still ongoing as we conclude this report.

Following is a summary of our 'flyline chart' as of February 2022. Each entry contains two elements. First element is what happens on the play, including first how many bases the batter advanced, then which fielder touched the ball first according to the line score, then what happens with any existing runners; first digit is the base where the runner started, second digit is the base where he ended up. Second element is the proposed allocation of defensive charges; when two or more positions have the same number of bases charged, the order is important, because any extra bases advanced from Home Run or Walk or Hit-By-Pitch or Wild Pitch or Passed Ball go to the listed defenders with the least charges amassed so far for the batter-runner in question, tie broken by whoever is listed earliest.

Idea here is that we have determined through evolution that some players have approximately-equal liabilities at our given rate of one point per base, but would be slightly different if we had charged any higher rate than that, so we recognize the difference by emphasizing any of those nominally-tied defenders for any extra bases.

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1b cf 12 - cf1 2b1 | 1b rf 12 24 - 1b3 rf1 | 2b lf 23 34 - lf2 cf1 2b1 |
| 1b cf 12 23 - cf2 2b1 | 1b rf 12 24 34 - 1b3 rf1 pi1 | 2b lf 24 - ss1 lf1 cf1 3b1 |
| 1b cf 12 23 34 - cf2 ss1 2b1 | 1b rf 12 34 - 1b2 rf1 | 2b lf 24 34 - ss2 3b2 lf1 |
| 1b cf 12 24 - cf2 2b1 ss1 | 1b rf 13 - rf1 ss1 3b1 | 2b lf 34 - lf1 ss1 2b1 |
| 1b cf 12 24 34 - cf2 rf1 ss1 2b1 | 1b rf 13 24 - 1b3 rf1 2b1 | 2b rf 0 - rf1 2b1 |
| 1b cf 12 34 - cf2 2b1 | 1b rf 13 24 34 - 1b3 rf1 cf1 pi1 | 2b rf 13 - rf3 2b1 |
| 1b cf 13 - cf2 3b1 | 1b rf 23 - rf1 cf1 | 2b rf 13 24 - 1b3 rf1 2b1 pi1 |
| 1b cf 13 24 - cf2 rf1 2b1 ss1 | 1b rf 23 34 - 1b2 rf1 | 2b rf 13 24 34 - 1b4 rf1 2b1 pi1 |
| 1b cf 13 24 34 - cf2 ss1 2b1 pi1 3b1 | 1b rf 24 - 1b2 rf1 | 2b rf 13 34 - rf1 ss1 2b1 1b1 pi1 |
| 1b cf 13 34 - cf2 ss1 3b1 | 1b rf 24 34 - 1b3 rf1 | 2b rf 14 - 1b3 rf1 pi1 |
| 1b cf 23 - cf2 | 1b rf 34 - rf1 1b1 | 2b rf 14 24 - 1b4 rf1 2b1 pi1 |
| 1b cf 23 34 - cf1 ss1 2b1 | 2b cf 0 - cf1 2b1 | 2b rf 14 24 34 - 2b2 1b2 rf1 ss1 cf1 pi1 |
| 1b cf 24 - cf2 2b1 | 2b cf 13 - cf1 rf1 ss1 2b1 | 2b rf 14 34 - 1b3 rf1 2b1 pi1 |
| 1b cf 24 34 - cf2 ss1 2b1 | 2b cf 13 24 - cf2 rf1 ss1 2b1 pi1 | 2b rf 24 - 1b2 rf1 2b1 |
| 1b cf 34 - cf2 | 2b cf 13 24 34 - cf2 ss2 2b2 3b1 | 2b rf 34 - 1b2 rf1 |
| 1b lf 12 - lf1 2b1 | 2b cf 13 34 - 2b2 cf1 ss1 rf1 | 3b cf 0 - cf2 ss1 |
| 1b lf 12 23 - ss1 lf1 3b1 | 2b cf 14 - cf2 rf1 2b1 ss1 | 3b cf 14 - cf3 rf1 2b1 ss1 |
| 1b lf 12 23 34 - lf2 ss1 3b1 | 2b cf 14 24 - 1b2 2b1 ss1 rf1 cf1 lf1 | 3b cf 14 24 - cf4 ss2 2b2 |
| 1b lf 12 24 - 3b2 ss1 lf1 | 2b cf 14 34 - cf3 rf1 ss1 pi1 | 3b cf 14 34 - cf4 rf1 ss1 2b1 |
| 1b lf 12 24 34 - 3b2 lf2 ss1 | 2b cf 23 - cf2 2b1 | 3b cf 24 - cf2 rf1 2b1 ss1 |
| 1b lf 12 34 - ss1 lf1 2b1 | 2b cf 23 34 - cf2 rf1 2b1 | 3b cf 34 - cf2 lf1 3b1 |
| 1b lf 13 - lf2 3b1 | 2b cf 24 - cf1 rf1 2b1 ss1 | 3b lf 0 - lf1 cf1 3b1 |
| 1b lf 13 24 - ss2 3b2 lf1 | 2b cf 24 34 - cf2 rf1 2b1 ss1 | 3b lf 14 - cf2 3b2 lf1 ss1 |
| 1b lf 13 24 34 - lf2 3b2 ss1 pi1 | 2b cf 34 - cf2 2b1 | 3b lf 24 - cf2 lf1 ss1 3b1 |
| 1b lf 13 34 - 3b2 ss1 lf1 | 2b lf 0 - lf1 2b1 | 3b lf 34 - lf2 cf2 |
| 1b lf 23 - lf2 | 2b lf 13 - lf1 ss1 3b1 cf1 | 3b rf 0 - rf2 2b1 |
| 1b lf 23 34 - ss2 lf1 | 2b lf 13 24 - ss2 3b2 lf2 | 3b rf 14 - 1b2 rf1 cf1 2b1 pi1 |
| 1b lf 24 - lf1 ss1 3b1 | 2b lf 13 24 34 - 3b3 lf2 cf1 ss1 | 3b rf 14 24 - 1b3 rf2 2b2 pi1 |
| 1b lf 24 34 - ss2 lf1 3b1 | 2b lf 13 34 - ss2 lf2 3b1 | 3b rf 14 24 34 - 1b4 rf2 2b2 pi1 |
| 1b lf 34 - lf1 ss1 | 2b lf 14 - ss2 3b2 lf1 | 3b rf 14 34 - 1b3 rf2 ss1 pi1 |
| 1b rf 12 - rf2 | 2b lf 14 24 - ss2 3b2 lf1 2b1 cf1 | 3b rf 24 - 1b2 rf1 2b1 pi1 |
| 1b rf 12 23 - rf3 | 2b lf 14 24 34 - 3b3 ss2 lf1 2b1 cf1 | 4b lc - cf1 lf1 ss1 2b1 [Harper hit the only inside-park HR in our sample!] |
| 1b rf 12 23 34 - 1b3 rf1 | 2b lf 14 34 - 3b2 2b1 lf1 ss1 cf1 | |

Now that we know all the rules in our experiment for rewarding offensive bases and defensive outs, and for penalizing offensive outs and defensive bases, let's look at a brief sample of how we apply them in analyzing a single game:

Sample shown here is the most recent one which we added where the Dodgers won. Dodgers defeated the hated Giants 8-6 on Tuesday, July 20, 2021. Chris Taylor had a monster game, with two Home Runs, a Double, and three Runs Scored, netting him +12 in offense and +15 for the game overall.

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z | |
|----|-----------|------|-----|-------------|-----|-----------|-----|------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|--|
| | team | runs | bat | name | pos | off | def | perf | t1 | b1 | t2 | b2 | t3 | b3 | t4 | b4 | t5 | b5 | t6 | b6 | t7 | b7 | t8 | b8 | t9 | b9 | |
| 1 | giants | 6 | 1 | wade | 1b | 2 | 1 | 3 | -1 | | | | 4 | 1 | | 1 | -1 | -1 | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | ruf | 1b | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | -2 | | | | | 2 | |
| 3 | | | 2 | posey | ca | 0 | -2 | -2 | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | | | | 1 | -1 | | -1 | -2 | | | | -1 | -1 | |
| 4 | | | 3 | yastrzemski | rf | 2 | -1 | 1 | -2 | 0 | | | -1 | | | -2 | 7 | 1 | | | -2 | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | 4 | flores | 3b | -1 | -3 | -4 | | | 2 | | -1 | | | -1 | | 1 | | | -3 | | | -1 | | | |
| 6 | | | 5 | dickerson | lf | 3 | 1 | 4 | | | 6 | | | | -1 | | | | | -1 | -1 | | 2 | -1 | | | |
| 7 | | | | mcgee | pi | 0 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| 8 | | | | rogers ty | pi | 0 | -11 | -11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | -11 | |
| 9 | | | 6 | solano | 2b | -2 | -1 | -3 | | -1 | -1 | | | 1 | -1 | -1 | | | | -1 | | | 1 | | | | |
| 10 | | | 7 | tauchman | cf | -3 | -1 | -4 | | -1 | -1 | | | | -1 | | | | | -1 | | | | | | | |
| 11 | | | | garcia j | pi | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | | | | duggar | cf | -1 | 0 | -1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | -1 | | | | |
| 13 | | | 8 | estrada | ss | 3 | 0 | 3 | | 0 | -1 | | | | | | 4 | | | | -3 | 1 | 1 | | 2 | -1 | |
| 14 | | | 9 | wood | pi | -2 | -1 | -3 | | | | 1 | -1 | -1 | | 2 | | -1 | -2 | | -1 | | | | | | |
| 15 | | | | brebbia | pi | 0 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| 16 | | | | slater | cf | 2 | 0 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | |
| 17 | | | | slater | lf | -1 | 0 | -1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | -1 | |
| 18 | | | | off net | | | | 2 | -2 | | 5 | | 2 | | -3 | | 9 | | -3 | | -3 | | -2 | | -1 | | |
| 19 | | | | def net | | | | -16 | | -2 | | 2 | | 1 | | -1 | | -2 | | -8 | | 3 | | 3 | | -12 | |
| 20 | | | | def gross | 51 | off gross | 76 | 1 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 5 | 12 | 5 | 0 | 13 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 12 | | |
| 21 | dodgers | 8 | 1 | taylor | ss | 12 | 3 | 15 | 1 | 2 | | | | -1 | | | | | | 4 | 6 | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | |
| 22 | | | 2 | turner j | 3b | 0 | 0 | 0 | | 0 | | | | 1 | | | | | -1 | | | | | | | | |
| 23 | taylor | 4 | | beaty | rf | 1 | 0 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| 24 | seager | 2 | | beaty | 3b | 2 | -2 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | -2 | 2 | |
| 25 | pollock | 2 | 3 | muncy | 2b | 2 | -1 | 1 | | 2 | -2 | | -1 | 2 | | | 2 | -1 | | -1 | | | | | | | |
| 26 | smith | 2 | | cleavinger | pi | 0 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | |
| 27 | mckinstry | 2 | | kelly | pi | 0 | 2 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | |
| 28 | muncy | 2 | | sherfy | pi | 0 | 2 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | |
| 29 | buehler | 1 | | smith | ph | 9 | 0 | 9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 9 | |
| 30 | kershaw | 1 | 4 | pujols | 1b | -4 | 2 | -2 | 1 | -2 | | | | -2 | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | -1 | | | | |
| 31 | betts | 1 | 5 | pollock | lf | -2 | 1 | -1 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | -1 | | -1 | 1 | | 1 | -1 | -1 | | | | |
| 32 | turner j | 1 | 6 | bellinger | cf | -2 | -1 | -3 | | | -2 | -1 | | | | -1 | | | | 1 | | -1 | | | 1 | | |
| 33 | turner t | 1 | 7 | barnes a | ca | 4 | -2 | 2 | | | -1 | -1 | -1 | | 1 | 1 | -2 | | | | 5 | 1 | | -1 | | | |
| 34 | | | 8 | mckinstry | rf | 3 | 3 | 6 | | | 1 | -1 | 2 | | | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 35 | | | | mckinstry | 3b | -2 | 0 | -2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | -2 | | | | | |
| 36 | | | | mckinstry | 2b | -1 | -1 | -2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | | -1 | -1 | | |
| 37 | | | 9 | nunez d | pi | 0 | -2 | -2 | -1 | | -1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 38 | | | | gray js | pi | -3 | -7 | -10 | | | | | -2 | -1 | 2 | -2 | -9 | | | 2 | | | | | | | |
| 39 | | | | reks | ph | -2 | 0 | -2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | -2 | | | | | |
| 40 | | | | reks | rf | -1 | 0 | -1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | -1 | | |
| 41 | | | | off net | | | | 16 | | 2 | | -2 | | -1 | | 1 | | | 2 | | 8 | | -3 | | -3 | 12 | |
| 42 | | | | def net | | | | -2 | | 2 | | -5 | | -2 | | 3 | | | -9 | | 3 | | 3 | | 2 | 1 | |

Puzzle enthusiasts are invited to look up the line score of this game on mlb.com, and apply the rules described above to see whether you come up with the same figures.

Reader will observe that we have separate lines for whenever a player switches positions during the game. Contrary to how things are listed in mlb.com, we show someone as a Pinch Hitter only if he never plays defense at all, or if the player whom he is succeeding in the field is still in the active lineup during his at-bat.

Row 20 in this sample is where we track offensive bases generated in each half-inning, and compare the total of offensive bases with defensive outs, so that we know how many points we need to assess as defensive bonuses and offensive

penalties in order to near-equalize the total number of offensive and defensive points earned by all players combined. It also acts as a check to make sure that each half-inning is logged correctly: Each half-inning subtotal is equal to the total offensive credit for that half-inning, plus the three outs of the half-inning, plus any penalty points assessed to the offense in that half-inning. It is also equal to four bases for each Run Scored, plus a number of bases for each runner left on, adjusted for any special situations where a runner is put out before the end of the inning. It is also equal to the total of offensive bases earned by each individual player in that half-inning, which you can see if you record the numbers for the different plays as formulas in the spreadsheet, such as when Justin Turner's 0 in the bottom of the first inning was actually a "=1-1" formula in the spreadsheet, to account for both the base that he advanced and the out that he generated. When anything doesn't match up, a correction needs to be made somewhere, so the overall database is accurate.

Box inset on the lower-left shows the number of MVP stripes earned by the players in the Dodger wins sampled up to that point, pursuant to our recommendation in Answer 645.3 to enhance fan interest by letting us track the progress of different team leaders throughout the season, but specifically by using this Overall Performance Index (OPI) as the defining indicator of each victory's MVP, with any tie in most points for that game broken first by whoever has the fewer stripes so far that season, and second by who got his most recent stripe earliest.

Taylor is already well ahead of his teammates in stripes earned, and after the first 43 game dates in our sampling he had +74 points of OPI overall, which was highest in the National League, followed by Crawford SF and Machado SD at +65, Duvall AT-MM at +59, Albies AT at +56, Soto WA at +55, Segura PH at +50, Riley AT at +48, Peralta AZ at +47, and Tatis SD at +45. Brad Miller of PH had the lowest score in the league at -55, being 11 points lower than the second-worst player, ouch, armed with this stat I would have known to send him back to the minors much earlier.

Oh yeah, and in accordance with our Answer 645.2, we are currently ignoring any extra innings for this purposes of this index, because again they lately have been doing that thing, where they start as an automatic runner on second base whoever was put out last in the previous inning. This makes it too easy to generate additional offensive bases, so it throws off our carefully-balanced game statistics. If a game goes into extra innings, then we do not apply any game-end bonus in our stats. We hope that they will eventually observe our recommendation to reverse this dumb rule, at which time we can begin including the entire games in our stats.

CONCLUSION

Question 714

There, did we miss anything?

If so, then please feel free to send an e-mail to a2e.reformproject@gmail.com or a Direct Message (DM) by Twitter to [@a2e_project](https://twitter.com/a2e_project) sooner rather than later, and we will do what we practically can to add it to our final package before it gets published to the 'real world'.

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That's it. We have done the Impossible.....

As we noted back in Session 200, Bjorn Liljeqvist -- serving in 2013 as Mensa's International Director of Development -- was quoted at that time in the national *Mensa Bulletin* to have postulated: "Anyone may have a vision of what society should be, and dream of the road to get there, but there is simply no way a master plan can be imposed top-down, detailing everything." Some of our own SIG participants likewise expressed severe doubts that we ever could or would get to the End of this Project.

But, behold, we have done it.

This model may not be totally complete yet (or maybe it is), and it may not be qualitatively perfect yet (or maybe it is), but at the very least it is a working and integrated vision of how to manage every Political, Economic, and Social issue which our members have been able to think of over 25 years. Even if it is not complete or perfect yet, it still appears to be something not previously created in human history, and it can be used as a basis for creating an even bigger or better model.

In the event that the Moderator/Author is for any reason unable to complete the subsequent Passes of this Project, and to generate a streamlined public version of our agenda which is reflective of all four of our debate panels, so that the final package can be formally adopted and implemented within our real world, I hereby implore my Mensa colleagues to curate this present document, by maintaining "Answers To Everything" as an ongoing correspondence SIG within the Los Angeles chapter of Mensa, so that this report and the matching General Summary can remain posted indefinitely on the chapter website, where someday someone might discover the documents who will be willing and able to take the Project the rest of the way.

Many deep thanks to everyone who helped this Project along in any manner and to any extent. We have done well. We have reached the Unreachable Star.

Good luck to us.

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