McLennan, Cameron

From: Paul Smith
Sent: Friday, 6 October 2023 2:15 PM
To: Policy
Subject: Tasmanian Positive
Attachments: Making sustainability laws work while treating our addiction to growth an application of scarcity multiplier theory.pdf; Smith_Rescuing_Democracy_EBook.pdf

Submission to:

Tasmanian Positive: Our State's sustainability strategy

policy@dpac.tas.gov.au

Dear Policy Manager

Thank you for your discussion paper 'Tasmanian Positive' and the opportunity to comment on it. I very much appreciate your move to establish sustainability on a firmer footing and to involve citizens in the process.

I hereby register my interest in being involved in further consultation on Tasmania's Sustainability Strategy, including participation in workshops, roundtables or online forums on specific sustainability topics.

I attach to this submission an academic paper by Dr Vishnu Prahalad and myself (2023) that focuses squarely on this problem of producing sustainability. It assesses the task of attaining sustainability by applying scarcity multiplier theory (SMT) to Tasmania. SMT is a fairly new theory in economics, having been first published in *Ecological Economics* in 2009 and then in my book *Rescuing Democracy* in 2016. With this paper in *Australian Planner*, SMT has now passed double-blind peer review three times. In the fourteen years since its first publication, it has never been debunked, nor even contested, so it is an established economic theory.

Section 3 of the Smith and Prahalad 2023 paper observes that Tasmania has the circumstances that produce a set of dynamics known as a 'scarcity multiplier' and because of this, Tasmanians and their government are addicted to economic growth. The paper goes on to show that this addiction prevents sustainability being achieved and that in order to produce sustainability, the circumstances that produce the addiction must be removed. One of those circumstances is government failure, which is briefly explained in Smith and Prahalad 2023 and also in detail, in Part 1 of *Rescuing Democracy*, a book that I published in 2016 and also attach here. Part 2 of this book surveys institutional reforms that may cure the addiction and thereby make sustainability possible.

I contend that the new institution (the People's Forum) that is recommended in *Rescuing Democracy* is essential to producing sustainability in any liberal democracy, including Tasmania, because the policy changes that are necessary (as indicated by SMT) are too radical for current forms of democratic government to be able to implement. The addition of a People's Forum to an existing democratic government should give it the capability to make those policy changes. The core of that capability is that society and its government is free of addiction to growth. The People's Forum should enable Tasmanians and their government to cure this addiction by facilitating Community Scenario Planning, as recommended by Professor Robert Costanza in his 2023 book *Addicted to Growth* (Routledge earthscan). In addition to doing this, the People's Forum would encourage and assist citizens to deliberate an indefinite number of long-term issues, many of which would inquire into the 17 UN SDGs.

As Tasmanian Positive has been designed with no awareness of our addiction to growth it cannot cure it and its 4 consultation questions will be answered with the biases of addicts. It will therefore make crucial mistakes. I suggest that Tasmanian Positive, although admirably well intentioned, should be augmented with, or replaced by, a Tasmanian People's Forum (PF). This may cover hundreds of issues, but unlike the Tasmanian Positive process, it would run them for many years while pointing out their interconnections, to allow public deliberation on them to produce wisdom and slowly change public opinion and even the culture, in ways that are necessary if sustainability is to be achieved at a desirable quality of life.

Paul E. Smith

6/10/2023

Attached:

Smith and Prahalad 2023

Rescuing Democracy

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Making sustainability laws work while treating our addiction to growth: an application of scarcity multiplier theory

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Making sustainability laws work while treating our addiction to growth: an application of scarcity multiplier theory

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ABSTRACT

Planning laws promoting sustainable development have not stopped the depletion of natural capital and global life-support systems, fuelling arguments for degrowth and transitions to steady-state economies. To address this weakness, we employ scarcity multiplier theory (SMT) in a case study of Tasmania, Australia, where planning laws have the statutory objective of promoting sustainable development. By drawing on two seminal contributions of John Kenneth Galbraith, his *squirrel wheel* and *problem of social balance*, SMT explains how we fail to limit growth to match natural capital capacity. This application of SMT shows that new industrial developments in regions with circumstances similar to those of Tasmania produce two forms of unsustainability: 'unsustainability of satisfactions of wants' and 'unsustainability of per capita abundance of natural capital', the former producing an addiction to economic growth. We thereby argue that applications for approval of new industrial developments under Tasmania's planning laws should be rejected *unless* these expansions are countered by a commensurate contraction elsewhere in that economy. In addition, we employ SMT to identify deficiencies in those planning laws that stop them producing sustainable development, demonstrating a need to reform government (and planning) to prevent such failure.

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1. Introduction

Sustainability, as an end, and sustainable development, as a means (Goodland and Daly 1996) have been required by policy and legislation in many jurisdictions across the world since the 1990s (e.g., Howes 2000; Ross 2008). A central purpose of such legislation is that proposals for new developments must be assessed to make sure they are sustainable (Goodland 1995), according to the definitions and guidelines set within its planning tools and processes. Twenty to thirty years on, despite these laws, there has been a global deterioration in environmental, economic, social, and political conditions (Moran et al. 2008; Raworth 2017; Weidmann et al. 2020), including inabilities to make fair contributions to reducing global greenhouse gas emissions (Höhne et al. 2020) and to prevent biodiversity extinctions (Bradshaw et al. 2021). This failure has sparked a growing interest globally in degrowth (Demaria et al. 2013; Hickel 2020; Kallis et al. 2018), sufficiency-oriented strategies (Haberl et al. 2020; Heindl and Kanschik 2016; O'Neill et al. 2018) and transitions to steady-state economies (Daly 1974; O'Neill 2012).

However, the focus on degrowth and the steady-state economy has largely avoided a critical examination of the ability of existing planning legislation to achieve these objectives (for an exception, see Ruiz-Alejos and Prats 2021). These laws were specifically developed with the stated goal of promoting ecologically sustainable development, by improving 'total quality of life' whilst maintaining 'the ecological processes on which life depends' (Howes 2000, 78). Whilst the intent of this legislation was to reconcile human 'needs' (as opposed to wants) within the 'limits' of the planet, both principles, of recognising needs and limits, have been lost in the application of those laws (Gale 2022). In other words, a major problem with such legislation is that it ignores growth in consumption while merely attempting to make its supply sustainable. As Hobson (2003, 148–149) notes, despite the United Nations *Agenda 21* of the early 1990s requiring the practice of *sustainable consumption*, this 'has been publicly and politically marginalised in high-income countries such as Australia' and 'has failed to become a political or public issue.' More fundamentally, there is a lack of consideration of how to reform our political processes to make them capable of addressing challenges such as that of reducing consumption and achieving sustainability (Smith 2016). In democracies, this would require citizens to ask and deliberate questions such as 'what [do] people need for a good life[?]' (Creutzig et al. 2021, 8).

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To address these needs, this article offers a strategy for improving the quality of government in liberal democracies that have laws requiring industrial developments to be ecologically sustainable. The strategy is to use those laws to block new development projects and thereby apply pressure on the government to reform its laws and institutional structure (e.g., Reybrouck 2016; Smith 2016) to enable it to govern more wisely. Such blocks may be possible if scarcity multiplier theory (SMT: Smith 2009; Smith 2016) is utilised in legal appeals against development applications, to have them rejected as unsustainable. SMT may be able to do this, as it explains why growth in production and of the aggregate size of the economy continues, without necessarily resulting in an increase in welfare. This theory is a concise description of development motivations and processes in liberal democracies that is comprehensive enough to realistically describe their results, as it accounts for political behaviour, the behaviour of producers and consumers (and therefore both supply and want), the characteristics of natural capital and the effects of the interactions of these factors over both the short and long-term. In doing this, SMT shows how increased production can fuel an unending sequence of feedback loops that drive greater production while increasing human wants, simultaneously undermining government ability to meet public needs and depleting natural resources.

SMT is based on John Kenneth Galbraith's *Dependence Effect* (or 'squirrel wheel') and his *problem of social balance* (Galbraith 1958/1999). It inspects these dynamics in the geographic context of a particular region, as this allows their impacts to be assessed on the size of the region's population, on its natural capital and on its political decisions on industrial development. By 'industrial development' we mean any commercial, government or other activity that produces more income and employment. SMT shows that in regions with specific conditions (one of which is a relatively developed economy, or in the words of Galbraith (1958/1999), an 'affluent society'), the combined impact of Galbraith's 'Effect' and 'problem' is the 'scarcity multiplier', a positive feedback system in which new industrial developments fail to sustain their politically intended satisfactions of citizens' wants and also fail to sustain the ratio of natural capital to population. More recently, Costanza (2023) has termed this condition as an 'addiction' to growth (also see Costanza et al. 2017).

As an example of making sustainability laws work while treating our addiction to growth, we apply SMT to Tasmania. This application shows that new industrial developments cannot be the 'sustainable development' required by that State's planning laws and therefore SMT may be invoked to reject applications for developments. We also use SMT to demonstrate four deficiencies of those laws: (1) They only address the sustainability of supply, while neglecting the potential of want to destroy that sustainability; (2) they do not fully state what must be sustained; (3) they ignore the unsustainability of several types of developments; and (4) they do not require processes for public deliberation that are necessary for good public planning. We thereby argue that SMT may be applied in jurisdictions with circumstances similar to those of Tasmania to: (1) apply their own laws to reject environmentally damaging developments; (2) broaden those laws to make all development sustainable; and (3) reform their institutions of government so that all development is subject to rational democratic choice. We hope the application outlined here will help us find ways of addressing citizens' wants for more employment and income without forcing a relentless escalation of the scarcity of their natural capital. Thus, we seek to advance discussions on degrowth, the steady-state economy and sufficiency-oriented strategies in a novel way. Especially, by showing how those schemes utterly depend on government processes, we highlight the need to engage with and reform those processes, even in advanced western democracies where they have long and revered histories (Mahbubani 2018).

2. Galbraith's 'squirrel wheel' and 'problem of social balance'

In 1958, the eminent North American economist John Kenneth Galbraith (1908-2006) published *The Affluent Society* (Galbraith 1958/1999). In his opening pages, Galbraith set out to challenge what he famously referred to as the 'conventional wisdom'. One of his challenges was to characterise the modern economy as a *giant squirrel wheel*.

> Consumer wants can have bizarre, frivolous or even immoral origins, and an admirable case can still be made for a society that seeks to satisfy them. But the case cannot stand if it is the process of satisfying the wants that creates the wants. For then the individual who urges the importance of production to satisfy these wants is precisely in the position of the onlooker who applauds the efforts of the squirrel to keep abreast of the wheel that is propelled by his own efforts (Galbraith 1958/1999, 125).

Galbraith noted that this idea was of such importance

> that it had perhaps best be put with some formality. As a society becomes increasingly affluent, wants are increasingly created by the process by which they are satisfied. This may operate passively. Increases in consumption, the counterpart of increases in production, act by suggestion or emulation to create wants. Expectation rises with attainment. Or producers may proceed actively to create wants through advertising and salesmanship. Wants thus come to depend on output. In technical terms, it can no longer

> be assumed that welfare is greater at an all-round higher level of production than at a lower one. It may be the same. The higher level of production has, merely, a higher level of want creation necessitating a higher level of want satisfaction. There will be frequent occasion to refer to the way wants depend on the process by which they are satisfied. It will be convenient to call it the Dependence Effect (Galbraith 1958/1999, 129).

On the basis of research that was done well after *The Affluent Society* was published, Dutt (2008, 548) concluded that 'Galbraith's analysis [i.e., his Dependence Effect or squirrel wheel] seems, fifty years later, to be right on the mark even though at the time, the argument could not be fully developed and firm empirical evidence was not yet available.' Dutt came to this conclusion after following three lines of enquiry: (1) on the ability of firms to influence consumption through marketing and other related efforts; (2) on increases in consumption and income (driven by economic growth) that are not necessarily linked with an increase in well-being (also see Wilkinson and Pickett 2010); and (3) on the likelihood of increases in sales promotion having 'adverse long-run macroeconomic effects by increasing consumer indebtedness and inequality' (also see Douglas 2016). The net outcome of the squirrel wheel is a continued growth in production and of the aggregate size of the economy, without necessarily resulting in an increase in welfare (e.g., Kubiszewski et al. 2013), the end for which production and consumption is meant to serve as means (Daly 1974).

Galbraith (1958/1999, 101) observed that modern economies were trapped in this squirrel wheel, and it is 'only by an act of will we can hope to escape'. Since the time of his writing, that act of will has not been summoned and the assumption of an overriding need for continuous growth in gross domestic production (measured as GDP) remains core macroeconomic policy in the affluent societies of developed nations (Jackson 2011; Kallis et al. 2018; Raworth 2017; Schmelzer 2015). As Galbraith's formal term signifies, his Dependence Effect is an addiction: In this case, of society to economic growth.

The other major issue raised by Galbraith and utilized by SMT is his 'problem of social balance'. He considered this 'one of the enduring contributions of his book' (Berry 2015, 139) and described it as 'an implacable tendency to provide an opulent supply of some things [private goods] and a niggardly yield of others [public goods]' (Galbraith 1958/1999, 189, 186). More than half a century later, the 'atmosphere of private opulence and public squalor' that Galbraith (1958/1999, 191) observed in the United States is as striking as it was then. For example, the country has by far the greatest accumulation of private wealth in the world, yet its public infrastructure suffers from a chronic deficit in investment and has been rated as D + (Poor) in consecutive recent assessments (Kelton 2020).

As Galbraith's *niggardly yield* is produced by government, while his *opulent supply* is produced by the market economy, his *problem of social balance* is what is now called *government failure*. This is the failure of governments to perform the only function that we need them for (Olson 1965; Taylor 1987), which is to provide important public goods that would not be provided unless there was a government capable of doing it and willing to act. Democracies produce government failure because politicians who advocate policies favouring private goods (which they may present as public goods) over public goods tend to be more successful in elections (Leeson 2006; Mickelthwait and Wooldridge 2014; Olson 1965; Smith 2016; Tullock 1993). This is a strong finding by social scientists over the last half-century, such as in the research program of public choice economists. One of the founders of this program, James Buchanan (2003, 8) observed that in 'a very real sense, public choice became a set of theories of government failures'. The current 'deliberative turn' in political science also recognises government failure as it proceeds from two postulates: democratic governments need improving; and more effective deliberation of public policy by citizens would do much to achieve this (e.g., Fishkin and Laslett 2003; Gastil and Levine 2005; Smith 2016). In the description of SMT in the following section, government failure is referred to as the *private goods bias*, to identify its relevant effect.

3. Scarcity multiplier theory (SMT)

As noted above, SMT is a concise description of development motivations and processes in liberal democracies that is comprehensive enough to realistically predict that growth in the aggregate size of the economy continues, without necessarily resulting in an increase in welfare. It describes dynamics that are collectively called a *scarcity multiplier* (Smith 2009) and which will occur in any region, which may be multinational, national or subnational and has the following circumstances:

1. It has a *resident population* with an *elected democratic government*.
2. It is *open to migration* from and to other regions.
3. It has a *relatively well-developed economy* that provides at least a basic level of affluence (i.e., Galbraith's 'affluent society'), which has produced demographic transition, so the size of the population is controlled largely by the influence on migration of its economic and other lifestyle opportunities.

4. Some *other regions have lower indicators of quality of life* such as less per capita income (or affluence), greater inequality, less political freedom, more damaged environments, and relatively strong crowding effects (in that their per capita availability of natural capital is lower).
5. *Sales promotion* is permitted for a wide range of private goods and services.
6. Virtually all the region's *limited stock of natural capital* (both public and private) is in some type of use to some extent, so there is a degree of *competition between wants for these uses*. Many of these wants may be expressed as political or economic demands. Some of the political ones may take the form of environmental or cultural heritage activism.

It should be noted that even if these six circumstances are not all fully present in a particular region, it may still be subject to a scarcity multiplier. Each region of concern must therefore be individually assessed for its susceptibility to this dynamic and the factors driving it (e.g., more or less immigration, income). In particular, if a multinational (e.g., European Union) or subnational region (e.g., an Australian State or urban centre) is chosen, its openness to migration is an important consideration (e.g., for Sydney, see Searle 2020).

In reading the following description of the scarcity multiplier, its operation and impacts may be envisaged as occurring in Tasmania, as it clearly has the six circumstances that produce the scarcity multiplier. This description refers to Figure 1 as an aid to visualising the relevant dynamics and gives a few Tasmanian examples of these. Sections 4, 5, 6 and 7 progressively focus more intensively on Tasmania to discuss the implications of SMT there, by way of an illustrative example.

To read Figure 1 we start with its central box, labelled 'Political decisions on development proposals'. This refers to decisions by government on applications to introduce or allow state or private industrial developments and also its decisions to seek, promote and even subsidise private enterprise projects. As noted in that box and described above in Section 2, democratic governments usually have a *private goods bias*, a tendency to neglect their mission of providing public goods in order to provide the private goods produced by industrial enterprises instead.

As indicated in Figure 1 by the arrows pointing from 'Political decisions …' up to 'More Development', the private goods bias means that applications to democratic governments for official approval of industrial developments are usually successful, often despite widely recognised substantial costs for public goods such as the natural environment (e.g., Spash 2015). Although the main (and driving) purpose of these developments is to produce profit or income for their operators, which is a private good, they may also produce public goods, such as taxes levied on the sales, incomes, and payrolls of those operators (as such taxes create the fiscal space to afford public goods such as public health services, public infrastructure, education, immigration and quarantine controls and defence: Kelton 2020). As those public goods are by-products of each development and are usually less significant than the intended commercial returns from the private goods they produce, our analysis is simplified here by not considering them further.

However, there is another public good yielded by industrial developments that must be taken into account, as it is a powerful motive for politicians to seek and approve them. This is the public good of satisfying at least some of citizens' wants for more employment and income. Politicians frequently cite this as a major reason for them to support industrial developments (e.g., Mishan 1967; Smith 2014). The phrase 'It's the economy, stupid' has been used to demand such action so often that it has become a cliché (e.g., Krugman 2010).

Thus, to satisfy at least some of citizens' wants for more employment and income, governments usually approve applications for new industrial projects. As intended, the construction and subsequent operation of these increase employment and income; and that tends to support a larger population (Figure 1: arrow P2 to 'Growth of Population'). Such growth in population takes place largely through migration. In our example of Tasmania, more people are attracted by the extra income and employment to live in the State and fewer are compelled to leave in order to earn a living. This is routinely recognised by the Tasmanian Government. Its 2019–2020 Budget Paper states:

> As a consequence of the strength of the Tasmanian economy, labour market conditions have been favourable over recent times, resulting in positive net interstate migration into Tasmania due to higher retention of Tasmanian workers and a greater number of people moving to Tasmania from other Australian states and territories. This has resulted in strong population growth that has further supported demand and economic activity in the State (Department of Treasury and Finance (Tasmania) 2020, 35).

As indicated by the two P3 arrows from 'Growth of Population' to 'Yet More Wants' in Figure 1, this increase in population makes aggregate wants rise in Tasmania, for both private and public goods. This growth of wants creates greater pressure to use the State's limited stock of 'Natural Capital' (upper left box in Figure 1) for both private (marketed at point of sale) and public (free access) goods. The growth of wants for more private and public goods is interpreted by government (with its private goods bias)

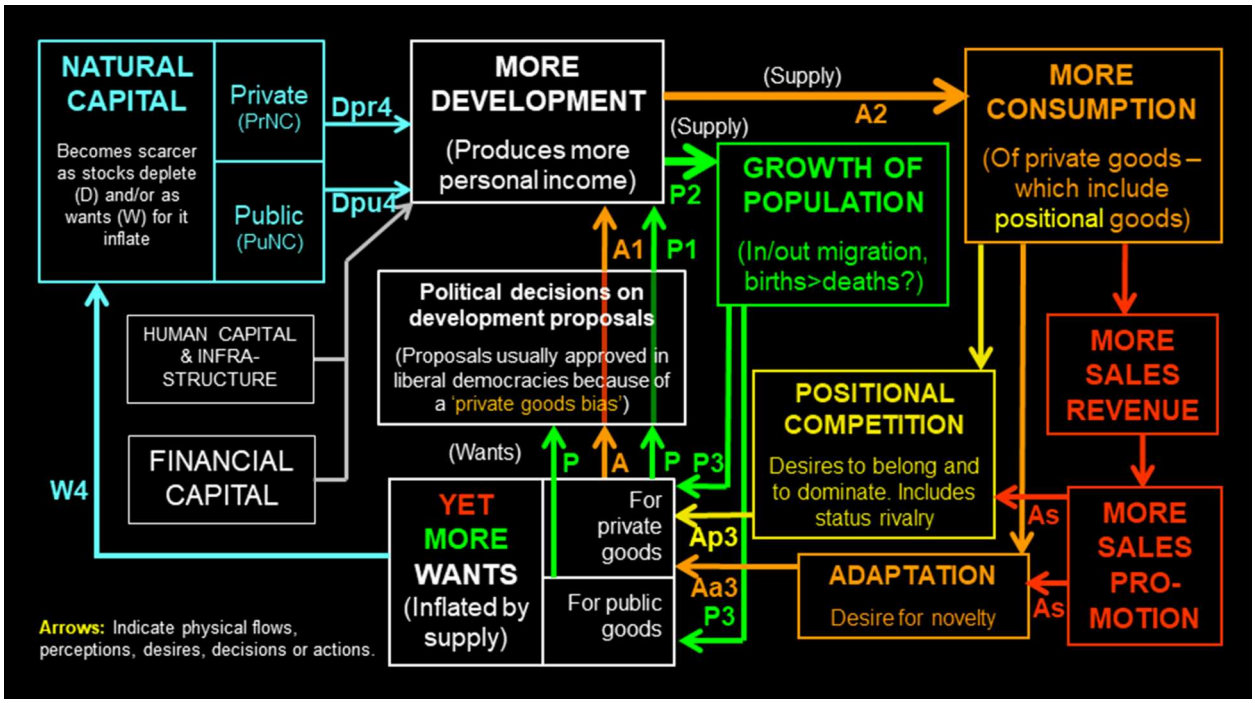

Figure 1. The scarcity multiplier – a system of four mutually reinforcing positive feedbacks, operating within a geographical/political region. System steps: 1. Political decisions; 2. Population growth (P2) and affluenza (A2); 3. Inflation of want (P3 – from population growth, and A3 – from increases in wants of each person); 4. Escalation of scarcity of natural capital from increases in wants for it (W4) and depletion of it (Dpr4, Dpu4).

to mean a more urgent need for more private than more public goods. This relative lack of political influence by wants for public goods is shown in Figure 1 by the arrow from 'Yet More Wants For public goods' halting when it hits 'Political decisions … ', whereas the arrows from 'Yet More Wants For private goods' pass through 'Political decisions … ' (shown as P1) to produce 'More Development'.

While 'More Development' produces 'Growth of Population' to produce 'More Development' then more Growth of Population and so on, 'More Development' also helps to drive Dpu4 (the conversion of public 'Natural Capital' into private goods – D meaning depletion, or escalation of scarcity) and Dpr4 (depletion of the per capita availability of private 'Natural Capital' – such as freehold land – which increases its price as there is increasing demand relative to supply). While doing that, 'More Development' encourages in-migration (Figure 1 arrow P2 to 'Growth of Population') that further increases wants for both private and public goods (Figure 1: arrows P3 to 'Yet More Wants'), which increases the perceived scarcity of the limited stock of natural capital (Figure 1: arrow W4 to 'Natural Capital').

This repetitive process is a *positive feedback*, a cycle in which the initial drive (shown in Figure 1 as 'Political decisions … ') for more development is restored (at least partially) in each cycle. How far this feedback cycles is open to question (e.g., Harvey 2017), but immigration from other regions with fewer opportunities to exploit natural capital may continue to drive it as long as that difference between Tasmania and other regions exists. Net migration may therefore overcrowd this State to the extent of overcrowding elsewhere, which would make its natural capital very scarce on a per capita basis. As this population feedback repetitively heightens that scarcity, it is called the *scarcity multiplier*.

As the negative feedback from overcrowding in Tasmania depends on the positive feedback (the scarcity multiplier), it initially has little effect in opposing the positive feedback. But in the longer term, overcrowding effects (e.g., costs of living) could likely slow population growth and thereby oppose the positive feedback (as is happening in Sydney: Searle 2020). Another negative feedback that is also subservient to the population feedback is that the increasing scarcity of Natural Capital (top left hand box) may increase public demand for political decisions to curb development in order to protect remnants of natural capital that are public goods (PuNC). Examples of such concessions made to protect or restore PuNC are common, but the prevailing effect is one of decreasing Natural Capital (e.g., Cresswell and Murphy 2017; Tasmanian Planning Commission 2009).

As can be seen in Figure 1, the scarcity multiplier also has three other positive feedbacks. As they all work in the same direction as the population feedback, they strengthen its escalation of the scarcity of natural capital. These feedbacks form a subsystem identified in Figure 1 by arrows marked A, A1, A2, As, Ap3 and Aa3, where A denotes 'affluenza' (Hamilton and

Denniss 2005, 3), or addiction to consumption. Affluenza is the current term for Galbraith's squirrel wheel or Dependence Effect. It might be considered less descriptive than Dependence Effect as it ignores the feedback implied by that term. In Figure 1 this feedback starts after More Development produces more personal income, as this allows More Consumption, which produces two psychological responses. The first is that citizens want to consume even more private goods in order to maintain or elevate their social status relative to others. This is status rivalry or keeping up with the Joneses, one of several problems that economists classify as *positional competition* (Hirsch 1977). This is a problem because as some people raise their status by consuming more, others respond by wanting to do the same (Wilkinson and Pickett 2010), even to the extent that they increase their household debt to fuel this process.

Consumption growth therefore increases the political pressure for More Development to provide more income for More Consumption. When that happens, the process is repeated and we have an indefinite positive feedback in positional competition. As Galbraith (1958/1999) was writing two decades before that term had been coined, he used the word *emulation*, after Veblen's (1899/2007) earlier seminal work. It is notable that Veblen (1899/2007, 26) had tacitly observed that 'pecuniary emulation' is a positive feedback, in which, as 'the struggle is substantially a race for reputability on the basis of an invidious comparison, *no approach to a definitive attainment is possible*' [emphasis added].

The other psychological response to More Consumption is *adaptation*. This is that people soon adapt to a raised level of consumption, no matter how high it is, by thinking that it would now be more interesting, or convenient, or in other ways pleasant, to consume even more. This has also been described as the 'the relentless pursuit of novelty' (Jackson 2011, 160). As with positional competition, adaptation produces more pressure on politicians to seek and approve More Development to produce the extra employment and income required for More Consumption, which creates more adaptation so that we have another positive feedback of indefinite persistence. One potential countervailing force that is conventionally assumed here is the law of diminishing marginal utility (Douglas 2016). This indicates that adaptation will quickly fade, as it postulates that the utility or benefit gained from the consumption of each successive unit of a good or service declines until a point of satiation is reached. But as Berry (2015, 87–88) observes, Galbraith had argued that economists:

> accept the reality of the declining urgency for individual goods, but not for goods in general. There may indeed be a hierarchy of need but no limit to what one wants. Once one set of goods is consumed, consumers move seamlessly in pursuit of a never-ending stream of new goods … Once satiety is reached in one line of consumption, plenty more lines appear … [therefore] it is not possible to say that income and wealth – the means of increasing consumption – obey the law of diminishing marginal utility. Since individuals have an insatiable demand for goods in the aggregate, then they also crave without limit the means of satisfying that demand [also see Gryshova et al. 2019].

Figure 1 shows Positional Competition and Adaptation creating, via Ap3 and Aa3, Yet More Wants for private goods – and not for public goods (Layard 2005). They continue to do this indefinitely, as Yet More Wants for private goods provoke More Development and thus More Consumption, which produces more Positional Competition and Adaptation and so on. Note that in this process, Positional Competition and Adaptation increase the public pressure for the political approval of new development projects ('Political decisions on development proposals' in Figure 1) but do not affect the private goods bias of those 'Political decisions … ' (which, as noted above at the end of Section 2 is postulated to be a structural bias that leaves democratic governments vulnerable to excessive pressures to favour private over public goods). As such public pressure and the private goods bias push in the same direction, they strengthen the political thrust for More Development ('Political decisions … ' in Figure 1).

A key enabler that accelerates both the Positional Competition and Adaptation feedbacks is the Sales Promotion feedback. This is driven by industrial enterprises promoting their sales with advertising (Redmond 2001). The resultant increased sales produce More Sales Revenue, which allows increased expenditure on More Sales Promotion, which excites Positional Competition and Adaptation (As), leading to Yet More Wants for private goods (Ap3, Aa3), leading to more political decisions for More Development resulting in more Sales Revenue, More Sales Promotion and so on. This system cycles indefinitely and as it progresses, it converts the limited stocks of free *public* natural capital (such as rivers, wilderness and even the climate) into marketed private goods (irrigation, hydroelectric dams, tourist accommodation and travel, guided walks and so on) and increases the prices of the limited stocks of *private* natural capital (such as water rights and freehold land).

In Section 2 we quoted Galbraith observing that his Dependence Effect (our affluenza) had both a passive component and an active one. The passive part comprises the two feedbacks driven by the automatic psychological responses of Positional Competition

and Adaptation. The active part is the Sales Promotion feedback, as it is driven by the deliberate efforts of producers and suppliers (Dutt 2008). With both the Growth of Population and the affluenza feedbacks operating simultaneously, the force of the scarcity multiplier may be formidable because their growths of want are multiplied together rather than added. While growth of population increases the number of people, affluenza increases the wants of each one. If the size of the population remains stable, rising per capita consumption on its own is quite effective in reducing the per capita abundance of natural capital, and usually does so despite technological improvements that increase the efficiency of its utilization, often because of the rebound effect (Herring and Sorrell 2009; Toth and Szigeti 2016; Weidmann et al. 2020).

4. The impact of the scarcity multiplier on sustainability

SMT agrees with orthodox economics that each expansion of industrial activity will satisfy some of the wants of citizens for more income and more employment. But, unlike the orthodoxy, SMT looks further ahead in time ('thinking beyond stage one': Sowell 2009), to see that in a region with circumstances conducive to scarcity multiplication, those satisfactions will be ephemeral, lasting only a few months or years. In the case of want for more income, positional competition and adaptation will soon restore it, especially as both responses are stimulated by sales promotion (Dutt 2008; Redmond 2001). So direct attempts to satisfy want for more income by supplying it, will eventually fail. In the case of want for more employment, the initial satisfactions of wants for *both* employment and income will encourage more people to migrate into the region and less out of it, increasing the population. The larger population will tend to have a larger aggregate want for more employment, so the initial satisfaction of that want is not sustained. This unsustainability is exacerbated by the larger population having unsatisfied wants for more income, leading it to want more opportunities for the employment that produces it.

SMT thereby demonstrates that in any region with the circumstances that induce scarcity multiplication, expansions of income-producing activity will eventually fail to sustain their satisfactions of citizens' wants for more income and employment and may even increase those wants, *unless* the expansions are countered by an equal, concomitant contraction in such activity elsewhere in that economy. On their own therefore, according to SMT, expansions of industrial activity in regions with scarcity multiplying circumstances are *unsustainable developments*. They fail to sustain the satisfaction of strong wants.

SMT also demonstrates another type of unsustainability: New industrial developments in a region with the circumstances that produce scarcity multiplication do not sustain, and instead diminish, the region's per capita abundance of natural capital. They do this in two ways. First, new industrial developments increase the human population (P2 in Figure 1) making the limited stock of natural capital scarcer in a per capita sense (W4 in Figure 1). This scarcity comprises crowding effects. One of these is higher *prices* of natural capital such as land and water. Another is impairment of the quality of the human *experience* of natural capital such as wildlife and fish (when stocks are diminished or exterminated by increased human activity), natural scenery and wilderness (made less natural and wild by the presence and physical impact of more people and their artefacts).

The second way in which new industrial developments make natural capital scarcer per capita is that they tend to destroy that capital (e.g., Spash 2015; Boon and Prahalad 2017), or damage it by externality effects such as pollution, fire, and wear and tear. This destruction or damage may happen for example, to air, water, soil, mineral deposits, wildlife habitat, fish stocks, natural scenery, and wilderness, leaving their quantity or quality diminished and thus scarcer in an absolute sense than they would have been, if the new industrial activities had not occurred. As there is now less natural capital (in quantity and quality) there is also less per capita (e.g., Moran et al. 2008), producing crowding effects similar to those noted above, together with its absolute reduction (e.g., Toth and Szigeti 2016), which further damages the human experience of natural capital (e.g., Soga and Gaston 2016).

Both types of per capita scarcities of natural capital (crowding and depletion) will be greater than might be anticipated from just one expansion of industrial activity, because of the conventional multiplier effect. This is that each expansion of expenditure, including those to develop existing businesses and to start new ones, increases income streams and purchases of inputs, both of which expand other businesses and initiate more new ones, which in turn have similar enlarging effects on industrial activity, and so on. Thus, even if a new industrial activity does not directly make natural capital scarcer, it will do so indirectly by boosting the financial capacity of the economy to exploit and deplete it (Harvey 2014; Moran et al. 2008; Wackernagel and Rees 1997). On top of this conventional multiplier of course, we have the scarcity multiplier, in which the failure to satisfy wants for more income and employment drives political decisions to seek and approve more new industrial developments, which then do the same again, repeating those decisions and their execution indefinitely. Each of those cycles produces an incremental

reduction in the per capita abundance of natural capital. Over time, the cumulative result of such reductions is an ongoing depletion of natural capital (e.g., with biodiversity: Cresswell and Murphy 2017; Tasmanian Planning Commission 2009), with no satisfaction of wants for more income and employment to show for it. This is evident in Tasmania, as in the 200 years since the British invaded the island, new industrial developments have been continuously added to its economy, yet its citizens' unsatisfied wants for more income and more employment are now no less, and arguably greater, than they ever were (e.g., Smith 2014). The Tasmanian Government agrees, as it declares it

> has placed a high priority on the development of infrastructure to support the provision of services to the community, support jobs and drive economic growth. As a result, the size of the Government's agency infrastructure investment program over the 2019–20 Budget and Forward Estimates period is at record levels (Department of Treasury and Finance (Tasmania) 2020, 20).

The 'unsustainability of satisfactions of wants' is not only a frustration or cost for citizens, but it also inflicts the collateral damage of addicting them and their polity to economic growth. We refer to addiction here in the sense of 'a compulsive engagement in rewarding stimuli despite adverse consequences'. It is a difficult syndrome for democratic governments to address (e.g., Costanza et al. 2017; Hobson 2003). The 'unsustainability of satisfactions of wants' addicts citizens to growth because their lack of satisfaction with each increment of growth drives them to demand more growth and when they get it, the evaporation of their satisfaction with that drives them to do it again, and again, indefinitely. This addiction converts what may be considered an insignificant reduction of the ratio of natural capital to population by one industrial development, to a virtually unstoppable series of such reductions that sooner or later culminate in dire scarcities of natural capital. The addiction also strengthens itself, as the growth of industrial activity provides more funds for sales promotion, which increasingly commercializes people's lives, focusing them more and more on trying to get satisfaction by consuming (e.g., Sandel 2012). As well as describing addiction, SMT also describes capture of the state by the market, as businesses continually try to convert public goods that the state is responsible for, into private goods that businesses can sell. This capture is enabled by government failure, as indicated in Figure 1 by 'Political decisions on development proposals'.

The 'unsustainability of satisfactions of wants' and 'the unsustainability of per capita abundance of natural capital' described by SMT mean that, in any region with the circumstances that permit a scarcity multiplier, new industrial enterprises and expansions of existing ones would not be 'sustainable developments', *unless* their contributions to the growth of the economy of that region are countered by reductions in pre-existing industrial activity elsewhere in that economy. This compensatory economic contraction allows for the rational re-allocation of finite resources towards those activities deemed to be improving 'total quality of life' whilst maintaining, and now restoring, 'the ecological processes on which life depends' (Howes 2000, 78). Possibilities for such planned economic contraction have been discussed in the degrowth literature (e.g., Hickel 2020; Mastini, Kallis, and Hickel 2021) and what we propose here, in the following sections, is a planning avenue for such trade-offs.

5. Applying scarcity multiplier theory to make sustainability laws work

As we have seen, Tasmania has circumstances that induce scarcity multiplication (Section 3) and this produces two types of unsustainability (Section 4). We now inspect the State's sustainability laws to see if they prevent both types and are thereby effective.

In the early 1990s, the Tasmanian Government introduced new legislation to create a Resource Management and Planning System (RMPS) that would 'achieve sustainable outcomes from the use and development of the State's natural and physical resources' (Resource Planning and Development Commission 2003, 6). Several statutes form the framework of the RMPS, of which the most important is the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* (LUPAA) (Castles and Stratford 2014). Under LUPAA, local councils are designated as *planning authorities* for preparing, amending and administering planning schemes; assessing and approving land use and development; and enforcing planning scheme provisions and permit conditions (Resource Planning and Development Commission 2003). A key agency in the RMPS is the Tasmanian Planning Commission (TPC), an independent statutory authority that has several functions such as, assisting local councils to administer LUPAA, advising on new amendments to planning rules and directives, and reporting on State-wide planning policies.

Relevant clauses of LUPAA are inspected here to show how its sustainability requirements would be violated by any new industrial development in Tasmania, unless the income and employment producing potential of that development is countered by an equal and concomitant reduction in such production elsewhere in the State's economy. We start with Clause 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 of LUPAA, which states:

The objectives of the resource management and planning system of Tasmania are –

(a) to promote the sustainable development of natural and physical resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity; and
(b) to provide for the fair, orderly and sustainable use and development of air, land and water; and
(c) to encourage public involvement in resource management and planning; and
(d) to facilitate economic development in accordance with the objectives set out in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c); and
(e) to promote the sharing of responsibility for resource management and planning between the different spheres of Government, the community and industry in the State.

To establish what is meant in Clause 1(a) and (b) by 'sustainable development', Clause 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 of LUPAA defines it as 'managing the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources in a way or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural well-being'. As SMT shows that each new industrial development in Tasmania will not *satisfy citizens' desires for more income and more employment* but inflame them (by fuelling the addiction described above in Section 4), these developments prevent rather than enable the provision of 'social, economic, and cultural well-being' in this State. They therefore fail to meet this statutory requirement for the sustainability of new industrial developments based on natural and physical capital.

Furthermore, as SMT demonstrates that new industrial developments in Tasmania *diminish the per capita abundance of natural capital* (by both their own impacts – as described in Section 4 – and by fuelling the addiction) they will also prevent Clause 2(a) of Part 1 of Schedule 1 from being met. Such diminution is the opposite of Clause 2's '(a) sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations'. This failure 'to meet … needs' has been apparent for many decades in Tasmania, as evidenced by incessant public protests about the misuse of natural and physical resources, such as anti-hydroelectric public marches and blockades, arrests of anti-logging protestors, climate rallies, protests against fish farms and Extinction Rebellion demonstrations (e.g., Beresford 2015; Gee 2001; Thompson 1984).

Reduction of the per capita abundance of natural capital by the scarcity multiplier also means that new industrial developments and the expansion of existing ones prevent Clause 2(c) of Part 1 of Schedule 1 from being met, as it specifies '(c) avoiding, remedying or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment'. Reducing this per capita abundance produces the 'adverse effects' of crowding and the loss of experience noted above in Section 4 (from both increase in population and reduction of the quantity and quality of natural capital). Therefore, in these three ways (Part 1: Clause 2, 2(a) and 2(c)), according to the Tasmanian planning system's definition of sustainable development, new industrial developments that are subject to that planning system should be rejected on the grounds that these proposals contravene its sustainability objectives.

Part 2 of Schedule 1 of LUPAA states that the objectives of its 'planning process' are to support the objectives set out in Part 1 of Schedule 1. In Part 2, both Clause (a) 'to require sound strategic planning … ' and Clause (c) 'to … provide for explicit consideration of social and economic effects' call for environmental, social and economic dynamics such as those described by SMT to be carefully considered by those who apply the Tasmanian planning system to approve or reject development applications. As such approval or rejection is often politically controversial, public involvement is crucial for good democratic decision-making and for this, the public should understand SMT in broad outline, because it corrects conventional wisdom by showing that supplying wants may have more costs than benefits (Smith 2009). Indeed, such public education may be interpreted as being required by sub-clause (c) of Clause 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 ('(c) to encourage public involvement in resource management and planning'). We suggest that this 'public involvement' be facilitated with legal appeals against developments that utilise SMT to argue that those developments would violate the objectives of the State's planning laws. This approach is discussed in Section 7 below.

Further, as Clause (i) of Part 2 of Schedule 1 requires 'a planning framework which fully considers land capability', it also means that SMT considerations should be included in this framework. This is because the land capability that SMT takes into account includes the limits of its area and quality (within Tasmania) along with the limits of the entire stock of natural capital in the State. As SMT identifies addiction to growth, it shows that these limits are being ignored by growth and that the current planning framework does not 'fully' consider land capability.

The main body of LUPAA provides for its Schedule 1 provisions to be implemented in several Sections, such as 5, 12B(4)(b) and 15(2)(b). Section 5 states, under 'Objectives to be furthered', that 'It is the obligation of any person on whom a function is imposed or a power conferred under this Act to … further the objectives set out in Schedule 1'; that is, to promote sustainable development. Sections 12B(4)(b) and 15 (2)(b) requires Tasmanian Planning Policies (TPPs) and State Planning Provisions (SPPs) respectively, to do the same. To do this, both the agents (such as the local councils, Tasmanian Planning Commission, and the Minister for Planning) and the instruments

of LUPAA (such as TPPs and SPPs) should consider the unsustainability implications identified by SMT.

For some development applications the Tasmanian RMPS requires an environmental impact statement (EIS) before a development can be approved and this must demonstrate the sustainability required under LUPAA (EPA 2019). The part of the planning system that stipulates this is the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994* (EMPCA). Under this statute, an 'EIS should provide: Information for individuals and groups to gain an understanding of … the *need for the proposal*' (EPA 2019, 1, emphasis added). A legally arguable interpretation of this is that an EIS must explain how the proposal would satisfy at least some of citizens' wants for more income and more employment (e.g., Smith 2014). As we noted in Sections 2 and 3 of this article, politicians (not to mention developers) routinely seek and support such proposals with that claim. As SMT shows that no new industrial development can do this and will, to the contrary, tend to violate that objective *under current circumstances* in Tasmania, it means that all EISs for such developments in this State should recommend that applications for them are rejected unless their income producing potentials are to be countered by equal, concomitant reductions of income and employment elsewhere in the State's economy.

As we have just implied, new industrial developments may also be made to meet the sustainability requirements of the Tasmanian RMPS by removing the circumstances that drive the scarcity multiplier in this State. However, as can be seen from our list of those at the beginning of Section 3, it is inconceivable that Tasmania's current form of democratic government would be able to do that, as it requires stopping migration into the State (which would require secession from the Commonwealth), eliminating most sales promotion, and largely transitioning to a steady-state economy (Demaria et al. 2013). However, such moves may become possible if the State's system of government was restructured to remove its private goods bias and also to give it a democratic capacity to competently manage such complex strategic issues (Smith 2016).

6. Gaps in planning laws that stop them producing sustainability

As an instrument for achieving its objective of promoting the sustainable development of natural and physical resources, the Tasmanian RMPS not only fails because its clauses are currently not interpreted with the aid of SMT, as outlined in the preceding Section 5, but also because it has four major gaps, the most fundamental of which is the absence of public participation procedures that are capable of supporting good planning. These gaps and their implications are outlined here and the concluding Section 7 investigates the possibility of utilising SMT to produce the public participation needed for good planning.

6.1. The system focuses on supply and ignores want

Tasmania's RMPS cannot produce sustainability because it is restricted to trying to ensure that the supply of goods and services is sustainable, while it ignores want, leaving that free to grow to levels that would destroy sustainability, as they are supplied (Goodland and Daly 1996; Moran et al. 2008). It may be anticipated that the sustainability objective of the planning system would prevent such unsustainable levels of supply, but in view of the private goods bias of government and the public perception that economic growth is of paramount importance (e.g., Smith 2014), three other scenarios are more likely. These are that the planning system's rules will be interpreted to allow more supply of private goods at unsustainable levels (which is the current situation), or they will be rewritten to redefine sustainability, or they will be rewritten to remove references to sustainability.

The Tasmanian planning system's focus on supply is its focus on approving or rejecting resource developments. Its neglect of want is its neglect of both population size and per capita consumption (affluenza) (Moran et al. 2008), together with its neglect of the private goods bias of government, which dampens the political registration of want for public goods. As SMT considers want as well as supply (of both private and public goods) it helps to identify this gap in Tasmania's RMPS. By considering political decisions on want and supply, SMT also draws attention to the private goods bias as a crippling block to sustainability. As consumption is increasingly skewed towards private goods rather than public goods, there is a need remove this bias by limiting sales promotion and making political participation more attractive and effective for citizens in order to balance their focus on private goods with more consideration of public goods. As this 'social balance' (Galbraith 1958/1999) is essential for competent planning, the RMPS should be amended to specify that a participation process be established to facilitate the public deliberation necessary to determine and continually reassess that balance.

6.2. The system does not state the per capita level of natural capital that must be sustained

The Tasmanian RMPS does not attempt to specify the levels of per capita supply of natural and physical resources that are desirable. These levels may not be quantifiable, but it is suggested that they may be

determined by a public deliberation process and its polling or survey results, as discussed below in Section 6.4. Such desirability objectives should mean that the stock of natural capital provides all citizens with satisfying opportunities for diverse, quality experiences (sometimes referred to as *quality of life* or *liveability*, e.g., de Haan et al. 2014) and adequate resources for industry. Its significance is suggested by SMT with W4 in Figure 1 and is discussed above in Section 4, where the impacts of restricted per capita levels of natural capital are classified as depletion impacts and crowding impacts. The public discussion, determination, monitoring and adjustment of what is socially accepted as 'desirable' per capita levels of natural capital requires a deliberative democratic political process of a more capable type than is currently in place (Smith 2016).

6.3. The system ignores the unsustainability of developments that do not directly impact natural and physical capital as well as some that heavily impact it.

As LUPAA and the other elements of Tasmania's RMPS define 'sustainable development' as describing only the utilisation or protection of 'natural and physical resources' (Clause 2, Part 1, Schedule 1 of LUPAA), they ignore the potential of new industrial developments that would not directly utilise these resources, to destroy sustainability. In addition, LUPAA specifically excludes mining, forestry and marine farming from its objective 'to promote sustainable development' (see LUPAA s11 (3)), as these industries are covered by their own regulations outside RMPS. But as we have argued with SMT, new industrial developments in this State (whether based on those resources or not) will continue to destroy the sustainability of both the *satisfaction* of wants for more income and employment and the *per capita abundance* of natural capital.

6.4. The system does not provide the deliberative political participation required for rational planning.

Any one of the preceding three deficiencies in the design of Tasmania's RMPS is sufficient on its own to prevent this system from producing sustainable development for the State. Their correction, as noted in several places above, requires institutional reform that facilitates the political participation required for rational planning (Smith 2016). In 2001, the Tasmanian government attempted to address this with a program of public consultation on strategic public policy called Tasmania *Together*. This was more participatory than any other program of similar intent in Australia, and more comprehensive and better politically supported than the processes on which it was based in Alberta, Washington, Oregon, and Minnesota. However, as its cooptative design and management could not generate popular legitimacy, successive Tasmanian governments have quietly abandoned it (Beresford 2015; Crowley 2009), resulting in no resolution of the three gaps we have identified above.

There is a large literature on the failure of participatory models and we suggest the problem arises from inadequate diagnoses of government failure. An exception, however, is a diagnosis at a fundamental institutional level produced by Smith (2016), which indicates a deliberative prescription that should be more effective than current alternatives. This is the People's Forum (PF) and its promise comes from a comparison with eight other designs of broadly similar purpose (Smith 2016). The PF would address a very large number of issues simultaneously, which should help citizens understand their interconnections (as in SMT, Figure 1). This capability should mean that as citizens engage with the PF they would, with some issues, be doing community scenario planning (CSP), which Costanza (2023) recommends as a remedy for addiction to growth. The PF may take many years to resolve issues, but that would allow time for public opinion and the culture to develop the necessary sophistication for competent and stable social choices.

7. Conclusion: steps to making sustainability laws work and treating our addiction to growth

In this paper we address the fundamental planning issue of our time: how to restrict growth to match the limited natural capital capacity of the planet. By employing SMT, we have sought to make planners (and the public) aware of how sustainability limits are exceeded and of planning's existing and potential role in this, using Tasmania as a case study. The unsustainability implications we have identified could provide powerful arguments to force governments with laws mandating sustainability, such as that of Tasmania, to publicly acknowledge and take account of the scarcity multiplier in public policies and legislation. This would open up the possibility of actually achieving sustainability. Such opportunities arise in Tasmania when approval is sought under its RMPS for new developments. If such approval is withheld by government, or appealed against by citizens, on the ground that, according to SMT, those developments would not be sustainable, it would draw society's attention to SMT and its implications. Such action would inform citizens of the presence and nature of the scarcity multiplier and the vulnerability of their region to it. We deem this to be important given the acknowledgement that such public

education is essential for developing sensible long-term public policy in fundamental areas such as population size, economic growth, jobs, incomes, taxation, urban development, and the protection of natural and cultural assets (e.g., Burnheim 2016; Coghill and Wright 2012; Gardels and Berggruen 2019; Gastil and Levine 2005; Ginsborg 2008; Fishkin and Laslett 2003; Smith 2009; Smith 2016; Yankelovich 1991).

If citizens use SMT to appeal against a development application, they should do so knowing that it contradicts not only the conventional wisdom of politicians and developers, but that of some environmentalists as well. The job-creating, income-producing industrial developments that they advocate are precisely those that drive the scarcity multiplier. If environmentalists use SMT to argue against a development application, for example to show that the proposed development is unsustainable, then they cannot also use economic arguments such as 'this development would be uneconomic and unviable as there is no market for its product' or 'its financial costs would outweigh its returns' or 'its financial returns would go to investors outside the State'. Such conventional arguments try to discredit the proposal as a hindrance to economic growth at home. But according to SMT that hindrance would be a benefit, as it would produce a more sustainable domestic outcome.

We propose three purposes for SMT-based appeals against development applications. The first and most immediate purpose is to block a specific development to prevent it damaging environmental, cultural, or other public assets. A current case illustrating this in Tasmania is the proposed Robbins Island wind farm in the far northwest of the state and its transmission line seeking to export surplus energy to mainland consumers (UPC 2021; Mountain and Percy 2020). This proposal required an EIS demonstrating 'the need for the proposal' as part of its development application to the local planning authority, the Circular Head Council. As noted above in Section 5, SMT demonstrates that the politically conventional concept of the 'need for the proposal' is not valid in Tasmania because the proposed project's satisfaction of wants for more income and employment would not be sustained. In addition, the project would further erode the State's per capita abundance of natural capital and elicit other developments that would do the same, indefinitely. On both counts, this development would not be the sustainable development required by the Tasmanian RMPS and should therefore be blocked on these grounds.

A second and longer-term purpose for an appellant to block developments by invoking SMT may be to apply pressure on the government to take seriously the objectives of Tasmania's planning laws (of promoting sustainable development) (e.g., Ruiz-Alejos and Prats 2021). Until the State government specifically factors SMT considerations into its policies and legislation, it is not taking its Schedule 1 objectives seriously and the apparent spirit of the words about promoting sustainable development is mere posturing. Of course, the conventional wisdom is so dogmatic on the absolute imperative for growth that the government may prefer to respond to appellants who invoke SMT by redefining or deleting the objective of its planning laws. This may provoke an intense public debate on whether society wants to sustain anything and if it does, then what. As Galbraith (1958/1999) had hoped, such debate might see the public summoning the 'act of will' to halt the squirrel wheel.

This second purpose of getting the primary objective of planning laws taken seriously also means that they should be broadened to give them the capability to prevent *all* new developments from feeding the scarcity multiplier, not just those that directly impact natural and physical resources. Those new laws would either *remove the circumstances* that produce this multiplier (mostly growth of population, promotion of sales and the personal difficulties for individuals to choose public goods compared to their ease of choosing private goods) or *block the industrial developments* that feed it, such as by requiring closures of existing industries to prevent growth of the economy from new industries. Both these ways of broadening planning laws would control wants for private goods to keep them within limits that allow supplies of both private and public goods to be sustained at desirable levels (e.g., with demand-side solutions: Creutzig et al. 2021). This would help address Galbraith's (1958/1999) 'problem of social balance'.

The third purpose for SMT-based appeals under Tasmania's RMPS against developments is to apply pressure on the State government to reform its institutional structure so that it becomes much more capable of developing and executing rational long-term policy. In doing this, such reform should help citizens consider and choose the purpose of the human project in Tasmania. Choosing this purpose may seem unrealistically ambitious, perhaps because institutional reform with that potential has, to our knowledge, never been tried. However, as indicated at the end of the previous section, collective deliberation with such capability appears possible and if successfully established in Tasmania may prompt similar institutional reform for the nation as a whole and then in other nations around the world.

Assistance may be given for executing this third purpose in Tasmania if sceptics ask appellants: 'Why do you apply the scarcity multiplier objection to this particular project when we have many others happening all over the State, some of which do not directly affect natural and physical resources, or otherwise do not need planning approval, such as expanding an

existing business?' Appellants may reply that legal objections are much more likely than non-legal objections to arouse public discussion, as they may produce highly publicised legal hearings and carefully reasoned judgments (such as in McNeill 2021). Such publicity should help voters and politicians recognise the scarcity multiplier and perhaps even the private goods bias that permits it. This may motivate government to reform its institutional structure to eliminate its private goods bias and its addiction to growth (Costanza et al. 2017) and, more generally, to become much more competent at identifying, valuing, and providing public goods. That reform would be a response to the call by D'Alisa and Kallis (2020, 1) for a 'radical change of the political and economic system' so that 'economies may prosper without growth.'

The public debates that these three purposes for appellants should arouse may, in our example of Tasmania, make citizens and the State government see more clearly than LUPAA Schedule 1, Part 1, Clause 2 tells them, what it is that 'sustainable development' should sustain. Those debates should do this by answering questions such as: Does sustainable development require the social choice of:

- a particular average level of per capita income and wealth?
- a limit to inequality in personal wealth and incomes?
- a set of minimum levels of particular public goods?
- a certain size of population (the desirable per capita abundance of natural capital, or in other words, the desirable human carrying capacity – DHCC – for Tasmania)?
- a steady-state economy for the State and if so, is it to be bigger, smaller, or its current size?
- a 'certain *rate of growth*' (emphasis added) – which is how 'sustainable tourism' has been defined by the Tasmanian Government (2020, 91)?

Answering such strategic questions via a continuing, open process of public deliberation may produce rational democratic planning (e.g., Smith 2016). Such strengthening of the democratic process through public involvement is necessary to effectively address the feedbacks that incite consumption and constitute the 'structural imperative for growth' (Weidmann et al. 2020, 1), which renders us, as Costanza (2023) puts it, 'addicted to growth'. Until democracies reform their institutions to give them the capability to effectively address these strategic issues, sustainability will remain an elusive goal.

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PAUL E. SMITH
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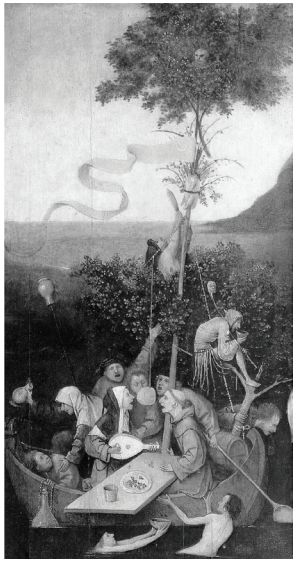

Fig. 1. Hieronymus Bosch, *Ship of Fools* (1490–1500)

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PAUL E. SMITH

RESCUING DEMOCRACY

How Public Deliberation Can Curb Government Failure

To my grandchildren
Jet, Thomas, Ella and Lila.
May their generation — and those that follow
— govern themselves better than ours does.

Contents

List of figures and tables 14
Acknowledgements 15
Synopsis 19

1. Signs of failure **35**

PART I
Diagnosing dysfunction

2. Democratic dysfunction from fundamental structure . **55**

2.1 The function of democratic government 56
2.1.1 Social choice by democratic government 64
2.2 Ambiguous delegation 69
2.2.1 Obstructions to communicative democracy 75
2.2.2 Citizens as directors 81
2.2.3 Ignorant directors 84
2.2.3.1 Fairly stable motivations of citizens' ignorance of public goods 88
2.2.3.2 Relatively dynamic motivations of citizens' ignorance of public goods 92
2.2.4 Unconscious directors 95
2.2.5 Failure in accountability and legitimacy 102
2.2.6 A less fundamental type of ambiguous delegation — supermajoritarianism 105
2.2.7 An objection to ambiguous delegation being seen as a major problem 106

2.2.8 An overview of ambiguous delegation · · · · · · · 108
2.3 Excessive competition · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 109
2.3.1 Competition distracts politicians from producing public goods · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 114
2.3.2 Competition tempts politicians to sell legislation · 115
2.3.3 Political competition intensified by commercial competition · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 120
2.3.4 Exacerbation of political competition by ambiguous delegation · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 121
2.3.5 Minimizing the damage from competition · · · · · 122
2.4 Excessive compromise · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 123
2.5 Triple dysfunction · 126
2.6 Checking the hypothesis by backward mapping from two democratic failures · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 129
2.6.1 Neglect of the long term in Australian politics · · 130
2.6.2 Recurrence of environmental policy failures · · · · 134
2.7 Summary and implications · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 137

3. Susceptibility to dysfunction: Types of democracy · · · 141

3.1 The Nordic democracies · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 142
3.2 The case of the United States · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 146

4. Susceptibility to dysfunction: Types of issue · · · · · · · 159

4.1 Issue characteristics that create problems for liberal democratic governments · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 160
4.2 Three cases of irresponsibility by liberal democratic governments · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 167
4.2.1 Size of population · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 170
4.2.2 Global warming · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 176
4.2.3 Unemployment · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 186

5. A pervasive symptom of dysfunction: Escalating the scarcity of natural capital · · · · · · · · · 191

5.1 Illustrating the problem · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 194

5.1.1 Characteristics of the choice on economic growth that confuse democracies · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 196
5.2 Two key concepts for the scarcity multiplier analysis · · 198
5.2.1 Inflating want by supply · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 198
5.2.2 Private goods bias · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 203
5.3 The scarcity multiplier · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 206
5.3.1 The mechanism · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 207
5.3.2 Extreme scarcity from the private goods bias · · · 218
5.3.3 Three reinforcements of the scarcity multiplier · · 219
5.3.4 The influence of each IWS system and their control · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 223
5.3.5 Motivators of the scarcity multiplier other than political decisions to privatise public natural capital · · · 224
5.3.6 Costs and benefits of the multiplier · · · · · · · · · 228
5.4 Implications of the scarcity multiplier · · · · · · · · · 234
5.5 Conclusions for Part I · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 242

PART II
Prescribing a remedy

6. The People's Forum: A deliberative aid for liberal democracies · · · · · · · 247

6.1 The mission, strategies and shape of the People's Forum · 250
6.1.1 The focus of the Forum · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 253
6.1.2 The structure of the poll · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 255
6.1.3 Voting process · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 256
6.1.4 Ballot paper · 258
6.1.5 The execution of the Forum's strategies · · · · · · · 260
6.2 Evaluating democratic institutions · · · · · · · · · · · 262
6.2.1 Political equality goods · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 266
6.2.2 Governmental goods · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 268
6.2.3 Institutional goods · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 270
6.2.4 Evaluating goods of democratic institutions · · · · 274
6.3 Five major functions of the People's Forum · · · · · · · 275
6.3.1 Public deliberation of issues · · · · · · · · · · · · · 275

6.3.2 Deliberating what is to be deliberated · · · · · · · · 277
6.3.3 Examining basics · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 278
6.3.4 An element of meritocracy · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 280
6.3.5 Economizing citizen effort · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 285
6.3.6 Summary of anticipated contributions by five major functions of the Forum · · · · · · · · · · · · 286
6.4 Initiating and running the Forum · · · · · · · · · · · · 289
6.5 The People's Forum compared with principles and designs for deliberative democracy · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 291
6.5.1 The People's Forum compared with principles for deliberative democracy and public management · 292
6.5.2 The People's Forum compared with other proposed deliberative designs · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 297
6.5.2.1 The Popular Branch · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 297
6.5.2.2 The People's House · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 301
6.5.2.3 Pyramidal democracy · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 305
6.5.2.4 Comparing the four designs and observations on five more · 311
6.6 Perspectives on the promise of the People's Forum · · · 320

7. Design details of the People's Forum · · · · · · · · · · · 325

7.1 Twelve functions of the People's Forum · · · · · · · · · 325
7.2 Elements of the design of the People's Forum and why they should produce its twelve functions · · · · · · · · · · · 327
7.2.1 Twenty-two elements of the design · · · · · · · · · 327
7.2.2 Function 1 · 329
7.2.3 Function 2 · 342
7.2.4 Function 3 · 343
7.2.5 Function 4 · 349
7.2.6 Function 5 · 350
7.2.7 Function 6 · 354
7.2.8 Function 7 · 355
7.2.9 Function 8 · 355
7.2.10 Function 9 · 355
7.2.11 Function 10 · 360
7.2.12 Function 11 · 361

7.2.13 Function 12 · 363
7.3 Comments on design element E1 — the ballot paper · · 372

8. Likely reactions to the Forum · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 381

8.1 A closer look at the differing reactions of liberals and conservatives · 383
8.2 The applicability of the People's Forum to the polarized politics of the USA · 394
8.3 General prospects for the Forum · · · · · · · · · · · · · 397

9. Supporting devices, performance indicators and trialling the People's Forum · 401

9.1 Devices that may synergize with the People's Forum · · 402
9.2 Performance indicators for the People's Forum · · · · · 415
9.2.1 Indicators of achievement of mission (indicator types i & ii) · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 417
9.2.2 Indicators of execution of the first strategy (indicator type iii) · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 418
9.2.3 Indicators of execution of the second strategy (indicator type iv) · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 419
9.3 The inadequacy of small-scale trials of the People's Forum · 420
9.3.1 Simulation instead of small-scale experiment · · · 424

10. Conclusion · 427

Afterword. A method for designing political institutions · · · 439
The five strategies of the method · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 442
"Pushing and pulling" as science · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 448
Applying the five strategies · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 452
The method as a theory of institutional design · · · · · · · 454

Appendix. Population growth and the scarcity multiplier in Tasmania · 457
References · 469
Index · 501

List of figures and tables

Figures

2.1 The triple dysfunction hypothesis · · · · · · · · · · · · 126
5.1 The scarcity multiplier · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 211
8.1 Theoretical model of relations among ten motivational types of value · 386
A1. An historical overview of Tasmania's natural increase and net migration · 459
A2. Components of Tasmanian migration for the past 40 years · 459
A3. Tasmania's journey to 500,000 · · · · · · · · · · · · · 460
A4. Unemployment rates in Tasmania and Australia · · · · 462

Tables

2.1 Behavioural biases that generate environmental policy problems and suggest solutions · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 135
6.1 Anticipated contributions to PF strategies and goods by five PF functions · 287
6.2 A comparison of goods anticipated from four institutional designs · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 312
8.1 Definitions of motivational types of values in terms of their core goal · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · 386

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tive from his father, a carpenter, prospector and farmer who observed that, as a rough rule of thumb and especially for complex and long-term issues, 'the majority is always wrong'.

Tasmania's wilderness has given a strong motivation to write this book. To grow up learning to appreciate the beauty and challenge of wild places and then seeing them being progressively dismembered is a harrowing experience — but it made me think. For twenty-five years I was in a good place to do this, for I worked as a planner and district administrator in Tasmania's Forestry Commission (now Forestry Tasmania), a government agency that was, and remains, a major force in the destruction of wilderness and other natural values. My acknowledgement of the contribution of wild places to the work presented here is made very seriously. It seems to me that such sources of inspiration drive thinking that may not otherwise occur. In their absence one can be blind to ways in which humanity can flourish.

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Synopsis

This overview of the book serves as an introduction and also as a compact explanation of the design and intended function of the new institution it prescribes as a remedy for democratic dysfunction. That explanation should help those who want to understand this design without reading the whole book, as well as those who do read it but then find they need a summary to help them judge the potential of this prescription.

To begin then, we might observe that it has long been recognized by academics and others, including many experienced politicians, that democracies tend to be seriously dysfunctional. For half a century, 'public choice' economists have theorized that the structure of liberal democracies makes their governments underprovide public goods. By 'public goods' these scholars basically mean goods and services that are available to any citizen to use or to benefit from, for free or without direct, individual purchases. Public goods may be concrete things like public roads and also more or less abstract things like the security of a nation from attack, or social capital such as a general atmosphere of trust between citizens. 'Public goods' contrast with 'private goods' largely by the latter being 'excludable', that is, owned by individuals or private entities like corporations — having been obtained by these owners by direct purchase, or by receiving them as gifts, or by making these goods for themselves.

Public choice scholars theorize that the purpose of governments — and the only justification for having them — is to provide important public goods that would not be provided or protected if there were no government to do it. They therefore

regard underprovisions of public goods as 'government failure'. In addition to the observations and ideas of these economists, over the last three decades political scientists have implied that government failure is a serious problem with their focus on theory and experiment in 'deliberative democracy'. The main idea here is that the performance of democratic governments would be improved if citizens could be induced to deliberate public issues more effectively. In these and other ways, social science has been giving us, for some time now, observations of symptoms of democratic illness and diagnoses of it. Political scientists and others have proposed many prescriptions to cure this, but all of these are ineffectual because they are either far too small in scale to affect the quality of government, or if they are big enough they are virtually impossible to implement as they require dysfunctional governments to do this. To try to overcome these problems, this book sketches a systemic diagnosis of government failure and then uses it to devise a prescription with the following crucial characteristics: (1) by diagnosing systemic failure it tackles the problem of scale to address government failure at state, national and even higher levels; and (2) it is capable of being implemented in the real world of democratic politics.

The diagnosis is dubbed 'triple dysfunction theory' because it postulates that three causes of government failure are produced by the fundamental structure of modern democracies. That structure is the selection of political representatives by means of elections. The three causes of failure are named *ambiguous delegation, excessive competition* and *excessive compromise.* Ambiguous delegation is an inherent uncertainty in the electoral transfer to representatives, of the democratic authority and responsibility of citizens to govern themselves. The result is basically that no-one is in charge. Some of the responsibility for making optimal provisions of public goods is therefore neglected. Elections produce this irresponsibility because their frequency and the usual eligibility of incumbents for re-election mean that when citizens vote, they do not fully transfer their democratic authority to govern. They largely retain it to exercise at the next election. However, it is very well known in po-

litical science (as elaborated at the end of this synopsis) that an overwhelming majority — something like 80% — of citizens are deeply ignorant of public affairs and policy. In view of this, it is imperative for good government that candidates and representatives make themselves well informed. But if they do and then act accordingly, most voters are likely to misunderstand them and (exercising citizens' authority to govern) refuse to elect and re-elect them. So candidates and representatives focus on understanding the wishes of their constituents rather than on understanding society's needs for public goods. To an important degree, then, nobody governs: citizens delegate the job to politicians who cannot fully do it, as they want to get elected and re-elected. The delegation fails to some extent, and government with it.

This government failure (failure to carefully choose public goods) is anticipated to occur mainly in government's choice of strategic policy. That is because politicians' concerns for their constituents' desires tend to constrain them to produce policy and legislation that addresses the short-term and personal issues that are of most interest to most citizens. Strategic problems are therefore neglected. One example of this neglect is that 24 years after global warming was internationally recognized as an existential threat by the establishment of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, little has been done to limit global greenhouse gas emissions — and their rate *continues to increase.* A related but more general consequence of failure in strategic policy is explored below in Chapter 5. This is that democracies are incorrigibly addicted to economic growth, despite the fact that infinite growth on a finite planet (and also within finite national territories) is obviously impossible and must do incalculable damage before that damage halts the growth. Of course some of this damage is starting to be produced by global warming. At its root, addiction to growth is a short-term focus by voters on the personal benefits of more jobs, more income and their freedom to reproduce. This myopia ignores the longer-term costs of providing those benefits, which are that natural

capital is made progressively scarcer by consuming it and also by increasing the number of people trying to use what's left.

The second element of 'triple dysfunction', excessive competition, takes place between politicians. It is intense, pervasive and incessant because of the frequency of elections, the eligibility of incumbents for re-election and the political lethality of failure, in which politicians are ejected from politics (at least temporarily) if they fail to get enough votes. This competition is excessive because it makes politicians fight each other to attract votes instead of learning about public goods and carefully deliberating amongst themselves to choose those they will provide or protect. The third element of triple dysfunction, excessive compromise, is the compromising of the political influence of the views of relatively well-informed citizens with the political influence of those who are badly informed. It arises largely from universal franchise and equality of the vote. This compromise is excessive because, as noted above, the overwhelming majority of citizens are badly informed. Long ago in ancient Greece, Plato recognized this as a crippling problem for democracy.

A popular conception of why democratic governments fail to perform well is that it is due to manipulation by wealthy private interests. Although this effect is alarmingly strong and well documented (e.g. Gilens 2012, Ash 2015) it is not a cause of government failure, but a result. When government fails to function because its structure is incompetent, powerful private interests are able to take advantage of its attention deficit disorder (in respect of public goods) to make it serve their purposes instead. As triple dysfunction theory analyses inadequacy in our current electoral systems of democratic government, it does not look for inadequacy in anything external to those systems. These external things, such as people and corporations trying to acquire private goods, are parts of the environment within which government must produce and maintain important public goods. To do this it must have a structure that enables it to do so in that environment.

As the triple dysfunction diagnosis blames electoral systems for government failure, it suggests that one way of fixing this

might be to replace elections with some other type of representation, such as sortition, the selection of representatives by lot from all those citizens who are eligible to vote (in other words, sampling by random selection) (e.g. Burnheim 1985 and 2016). If those representatives could be prevented from being bribed by powerful private interests, then some variant of sortition may indeed minimize triple dysfunction. However, all forms of this process have a fatal problem: they need existing governments to get them running and then to step aside and let them take over. But it is hardly conceivable that politicians who are successful in an electoral system will see any need to replace that system, including themselves. Reforms such as sortition that require strong government support for their implementation are therefore virtually impossible to implement. We need some other prescription, one that not only addresses the diagnosis but can be implemented in the face of government inertia, indifference or even hostility.

If a prescription is to be feasible to implement, it seems it must be one in which the people have a strong stake, for then they might force their representatives to establish it, or — if the prescription is such that this is possible — they might do it themselves. One way of giving citizens such a stake is to give them more power over policy. This would also address triple dysfunction, as it would minimize the *ambiguity in delegation* by reducing the area of governing that is attempted to be delegated from citizens to their representatives, which would leave the people more clearly in charge (and the system more directly democratic). This might be achieved with a new institution that allocated them an especially powerful area of public policy. Strategic policy meets this criterion, because as well as covering the establishment of long-term goals for the development of the nation, it also determines the range of options for future medium-term and short-term policies. Moreover, as indicated above, attending to strategic policy would tackle the major area of governance that is conjectured as being neglected by democratic dysfunction.

An institution that might give citizens this responsibility and authority and also be feasible to implement is a new type of poll or referendum, if it were designed to (1) be possible for citizens or NGOs to establish and run; (2) address strategic issues; and (3) develop strong political influence. The first of these objectives would be met by having its voting voluntary, as citizens and NGOs can establish and run polls but not compel people to vote. As will be seen later, the type of voluntary voting required is not only that citizens could choose whether they voted in this poll but also that they could restrict their vote to any questions they cared to choose from all those on the ballot paper. The second objective would be met by confining the poll's questions to strategic issues and, as we will see, a potential to meet the third would be created by making the vote repetitive. Because carefully chosen, crucial questions on strategic issues may remain highly relevant for years, such a poll might be repeated without changing its questions for a decade or more. A cycle of annual repetition should allow public debate on those questions to produce some learning by citizens between polls and consequent changes in their results, so that after a few years trends would emerge in these, as voters learnt from each other and developed their views. As the general public would gain some awareness that the voters in this poll were becoming wiser on its questions, the public status of its voting trends should rise and that should start to produce some political influence for them.

If the vote was not only voluntary but entirely self-selective, the poll would develop a public visibility that should strengthen its political influence. 'Self-selective' means that the poll relies on the initiative of each citizen to decide to vote and also to choose which questions they vote on. The public visibility that self-selection should generate would make this design very different from conventional random sample opinion polling as the latter does not make the general public aware of its operation before and as it takes place. The only citizens that random sampling notifies are those in the minuscule section of the population that is selected to be the sample — and they get no prior notice. The bulk of the population only learns about conven-

tional random sample polling after the results are published, which is too late to excite public argument to try to influence that outcome. In contrast, voluntary, self-selective voting would raise the public profile of the poll before the vote is held and especially as the time for this drew near, because this type of voting must be advertised to attract voters — at least until it becomes well-established in citizens' minds as an annual public event. In addition, the self-selective poll website would have its ballot paper on permanent public display, so that citizens could debate its questions at any time and well before they voted. This should result in citizens learning from each other and searching for more information on those specific questions. In addition, if they could choose any time within, say, a week in which to lodge (and revise) their ballot paper, additional publicity for the event would be generated by media reports of the progress of the voting on each day of that week. As this occurred, citizens — perhaps especially those whose concerns are faring badly in the daily results — would use the time remaining before the poll closed to make sure they voted and to urge potential allies to vote as well.

Similar interaction and learning would occur year-round, between polls, as repetitive self-selective voting gives citizens an incentive to engage in continuing public discourses on the ballot questions. Their motivation would be to try to build voter support for their views before the next poll. This incentive should be significant because the self-selective nature of the poll means that such public conversation and argument does not have to influence the views of the whole population, as it must if it is to affect the results of a conventional, random sample opinion poll. It only has to affect the views — and the desire to vote — of the small, relatively politically engaged proportion of the population that might vote in a self-selective poll. Moreover, public argument would be helped to develop the views of voters — and to some extent, of onlookers — by the ballot paper tightly focusing on fundamental questions and by those questions generally remaining unchanged for many years. Voters — and also non-voting citizens who merely observe the process — would thus

be stimulated to inform themselves and develop their views on these crucial questions. After a few years of polling this should start to produce trends in the way the voters in this system were developing or maintaining their views on each question. At the same time, as relatively disengaged citizens observe the process, they should increasingly accord those voting trends that were publicised, some public status and thus political influence. Citizens in general would be learning that voluntary, self-selective voting produces relatively informed and deliberated results and that it does so in two ways: first, it reflects only the views of citizens who are interested in the issues (they are the ones who are concerned enough to vote) and second, many of these voters are becoming better informed and wiser as they engage with the public debates about the ballot paper's questions. Such increasing sophistication and growing political influence of the vote would create a potential for it to ameliorate the third element of triple dysfunction, *excessive compromise*.

Where the trends of this new poll's voting consistently run against existing policies or laws, and especially where they show such demands for new policies or laws to be getting stronger, then many people (whether they vote in this system or not) are likely to start calling for the government to make those changes. They will argue that not only do these trends show the views of those citizens who are interested in these issues, but that their views are comparatively well-considered. This political influence will be strengthened before elections by the poll's managers publishing 'report cards' that compare their polling trends with the policies of parties and individual candidates. Another possible heuristic from this new poll that might generate political influence is that its voting trends may influence the responses of some citizens when they are sampled at random by conventional opinion polls.

In this environment, the government is likely to declare that unless the poll's next ballot reverses trends that have, for some years, persistently demanded changes in policy or law, then it will make those changes. It will do this rather than act without prior notice, so that it avoids getting ahead of *mass* opinion to

the extent that it becomes vulnerable to electoral backlash. Such challenges to citizens from their representatives should increase participation in this poll because those who become worried by the prospect of a change to law or policy will start to argue in public against it and begin to vote in the poll. Others who previously voted for or against that change — together with citizens who are now starting to agree with them — may intensify their participation in the ballot and in the public debates about its questions to try to accomplish or prevent the change. This should further strengthen the poll's public profile, its public status, its political influence and the wisdom of its trends.

If voluntary, self-selective voting is to attract a healthy turnout, it must be made as easy as possible for voters. It will therefore be done by phone and internet, for which it seems that adequate security and privacy would be feasible. These modes of voting will also facilitate electronic tabulation and analysis. As noted above, citizens will have a week in which to lodge and revise their vote and the resultant media coverage during this period will remind them to act. The ballot paper will be available free of cost, both in hardcopy and on the poll website; each of its questions will have the widest possible menu of answers for voters to choose from; it will give a brief, balanced description of each strategic issue it addresses; and there will be no limit to the number of these on the ballot paper, so that as many citizens as possible will find something of interest in it and also so that its treatment of strategic policy is comprehensive, allowing it to draw the attention of voters (in its descriptions of issues) to important relationships between issues.

In its first year or two of operation this new poll is unlikely to produce strikingly wiser results than those of random sample opinion polls, despite the fact that self-selective voting excludes the ignorance of those with little interest in (and knowledge of) the issues it addresses. This is expected because those who are interested enough to vote will be a mixed bunch, ranging from thoughtful, informed types to those who are prejudiced, dogmatic and fanatical. However, there are three ways in which the poll design should overcome that problem. The first is that ir-

rational poll results will enrage many rational citizens who have hitherto neglected to vote, provoking them to try to swing the results in wiser directions by making sure they and their allies vote in future polls. These relative newcomers to the process will also tend to ramp up their engagement with the public discourse on the ballot questions, to try to expose what they see as ill-informed thinking and deluded dogma. The second way in which domination of the poll by irrational types might founder is that on some questions they may comprise different factions with conflicting views that tend to cancel each other in the voting results. This may leave rational voters with a stronger voice in those results. The third way by which dogma should fail to prevail is that, as discussed above, the pertinence and persistence of the questions through successive annual polls should assist those who engage in the public discourses on these (whether or not they actually vote in the polls) to develop more knowledge and wisdom on those specific questions. Such growing sophistication should increasingly marginalize those who persist with irrational dogma, in both the poll's results and in the broad realm of mass public opinion. Dogmatists will be less and less likely to dominate the poll results, and even where they manage to do so, those results will be less and less likely to be acceptable to the general public and to their political representatives as guides to new public policy and legislation.

In addition to these three ways by which this poll should encourage deliberation, it has another feature that should assist. This is that, where it can be done with a menu of answers, the ballot paper would ask for the motivations behind the voters' selections of answers to a previous question on an issue. There may be two types of these motivational questions: 'mechanics questions', which ask voters to explain how their preferred policy would work; and 'justification questions', which inquire into the voter's reasons for their preference. Responses to these questions would be statistically analysed and published to stimulate public argument and deliberation on their wisdom and morality. For example, it may be found that particular views on issues were rarely accompanied by responses to motivational

questions, whereas voters with other views on those issues often gave answers on their motivation. In addition, the types of motivation that are declared will arouse public debate over their appropriateness and the rationality of the views they motivate. Of course, although this poll may arouse more argument than careful deliberation, the argument will provide much of the energy that is needed to drive deliberation and engagement in the poll.

This self-selective serial poll thus has three major functions that may ameliorate two parts of triple dysfunction: (1) registering only the opinions of those citizens who are interested in the issues it treats (potentially reducing *excessive compromise*); (2) creating political influence for those opinions (reducing *ambiguity in delegation* by reducing the area of responsibility that is attempted to be delegated from citizens by elections), and (3) facilitating the development of both these opinions and the opinions of many citizens who do not bother to vote (reducing *excessive compromise*). As the function of this design is distinguished from that of conventional polls and referendums by its registration of relatively developed public opinion (1 above) and the further development of both this opinion and mass opinion (3 above), it is called an 'opinion development poll'. The organisation that would establish and manage it is dubbed the 'People's Forum' and it would conduct the poll in ways that encourage citizens at large to recognize it as: (1) impartial, (2) asking incisive questions that are fundamental to society's future, (3) assisting citizens to exchange pivotal points of view and to learn from each other, (4) showing how the opinions of its voters are changing over successive polls, (5) developing choices for collective action, and (6) pressuring government to execute those choices.

As the People's Forum would position citizens who choose to vote in it as those who develop strategic public policy, it would give them the potential to be the 'directors' of government. If this potential was realised by the Forum becoming politically influential, politicians would be relegated to the role of executives — those who implement the strategic policy of directors. In that role politicians would choose appropriate tactical policy (which is of medium range in terms of time, geographical reach

and impacts on other issues) and also devise operational policy that helps to execute tactical policy (operational policy being of the shortest range in time and space and of minimal impact on other issues). This clarification of the roles of citizens and their representatives would reduce the damage to governance that is inflicted by *excessive competition* between politicians, as it would have citizens doing some of the policy work that these agents neglect as they fight with each other. This effect should be powerful as that policy work — the development of strategic policy — would arguably be the most important in government. Thus, if the Forum worked it would ameliorate all three parts of triple dysfunction.

As we have noted, this design can work only if it attracts strong public esteem, not only from those citizens who vote in it, but also from most of those who don't. This latter effect is plausible, as political scientists observe that most citizens are quite happy to let others ponder public policy and vote, as long as they know they can step in and contribute whenever they want to (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002, 239). This design invites them to do that, with its self-selective voting and accessible, repetitive ballot. If a strong public status did develop for the Forum as it operated, it would then realize its potential to make citizens the directors of government and politicians their executives. If that happened we might then learn to stop calling our political agents our 'leaders'. Although democracies have a vague division of labour that is arguably already along these lines (of voters as 'principals' or leaders and politicians as their 'agents' or executives), it is confused by the electoral process (as argued at beginning of this synopsis) and further obscured by *Homo sapiens'* social or tribal nature, which makes citizens instinctively regard presidents, prime ministers and other politicians as their 'leaders'. Citizens therefore do not even try to perform their democratic role of leadership and the 'strategic' policies they impose on politicians (by electoral rewards and punishments) lack thought, being merely the wider implications of the short term, local and narrowly focused policies they usually demand.

We thus appear to have an institutional design that could not only curb triple dysfunction but be implemented in the face of it. We now give some thought to whether the Forum's managers would actually prosecute its mission and also to how this new institution could be introduced into politics and government.

The voluntary, self-selective voting of the Forum provides citizens with a power of boycott that would make it highly vulnerable to public criticism. Adverse comments by journalists, academics, NGOs, think-tanks and citizens in general could easily discredit it unless quickly countered by strong arguments from credible sources. With little or no real evidence, public criticism might be able to portray the Forum as a biased tool of self-interested manipulators who are trying to corrupt government even further, for their own ends. The result could quickly be that its polls become objects of public ridicule and virtually nobody votes in them. This power of boycott should ensure that the managers of the Forum keep their ballot paper relevant, incisive and impartial. It will encourage them to post a standing notice at the head of this paper, inviting citizens to suggest alterations to it such as corrections of issue descriptions, new issues, new questions and new menus of answers. One obvious requirement, if the Forum is to develop a high public regard, is that it must attract a 'respectable' number of voters, which might be most of those in the polity who could be expected to have interests in the issues on the ballot. This proportion is not likely to be anywhere near a majority of citizens who vote in the Forum and it would be a much smaller proportion that votes on any particular question.

Another requirement for the Forum to work is that it must present incentives for its managers to restrict it to strategic issues. It would do this in two ways. First, the repetitive function of opinion development polling means that it can only pose questions that will be relevant for many years — and these tend to be those that address strategic issues. Second, if the Forum, is to have political influence it must have a high public status and that will depend largely on citizens seeing that it seriously focuses on very important policy and also on policy that is cur-

rently neglected by democratic governments. On both counts, this is strategic policy.

As the success of the People's Forum depends on its strategic focus, it can only work in a polity whose citizens consider has some prospect of implementing such policy. Small scale trials, perhaps at the level of local government, are therefore likely to give misleading results. Trials of the Forum must be carried out at the scale for which it is designed, that of large jurisdictions capable of applying (or influencing) strategic policy. These are national, multinational and global systems of governance. By the same principle, the Forum could also be viable in states and provinces within federations, as they should have considerable influence on national strategic policy and law. One strategic issue that guarantees such influence is that of secession, which separatist citizens may see as a precondition to solving other strategic issues.

To introduce the Forum into a polity it is not essential to have widespread popular appreciation of its potential, nor that government takes the initiative. If enough philanthropists or other citizens are sufficiently intrigued by this design to raise perhaps $10–20 million to establish and run it for a few years, then that public exposure might make it widely considered to be an essential part of government. Such an achievement in one democratic state or country could set a precedent that sees People's Forums established as a formal part of many governments around the world. In addition to the executive, legislative, judicial and administrative branches of democratic government, this new institution would constitute a totally new branch, one that is dedicated to helping public opinion to develop. Arguably, the current lack of such branches in all democratic governments is a crippling gap in their structures. As those governments run on public opinion (e.g. Druckman and Jacobs 2015, 30), it is absolutely crucial that this opinion be well informed and well deliberated. The fact that it isn't is recognized by political scientists as one of the firmest findings in all of the social sciences (e.g. Bennett 2006). Over the last half century, surveys have repeatedly shown that large majorities of citizens in democracies are

very badly informed on politics and public policy. The editor of *Critical Review* has observed: 'The chief prescriptive implication is, I believe, that the will of the people is so woefully uninformed that one might wonder about the propriety of enacting that will into law' (Friedman 2006, iv, v).

As the People's Forum would address long-running issues it might determine not only strategic policies and legislation, but also reform and innovation in political constitutions, conventions and institutions. One of these innovations would of course be the Forum itself, as the new branch of government recommended above. Others might be: as indicated above, a new convention that the choice of secession is a right for separatists to exercise (subject to safeguards for minorities in separatist regions); the establishment (where needed, such as in the USA) of nonelected electoral commissions for redrawing the boundaries of electoral districts without partisan gerrymandering; the installation of multimember electoral districts instead of single-member ones, in order to have minority views proportionally represented in the legislature; to support this effect by introducing preferential voting for representatives; to have the upper house (such as the Senate or the House of Lords) abolished, if its function is deemed superseded by the People's Forum; and even, perhaps, to replace electoral representation with some form of sortition, especially if this is assessed as either compatible with the People's Forum or rendering it unnecessary.

1
SIGNS OF FAILURE

On Friday 10 February 2012, a panel of scientists met in London to prepare a statement for the Rio+20 Earth Summit that was scheduled for June, 20 years after the original Earth Summit. All of the panellists were winners of the prestigious Blue Planet prize, often seen as the Nobel Prize for environmental science. They concluded that we can forget about fixing the planet's ecosystems and climate until we have fixed government systems. The chair of the meeting, the UK government's chief environmental science advisor Bob Watson (cited in Pearce 2012a), declared: 'We are disillusioned. The current political system is broken … Essentially nothing has changed in 20 years. We are not remotely on a course to be sustainable'. He identified the top environmental priorities as ending the fossil-fuel era to curb climate change and investing in limiting population by making contraception available to everyone. But neither is likely to happen because, as climate modeller Syukuro Manabe (Pearce 2012a) of the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration observed, 'the political system is not motivated to worry about the future'.

Four months later in June at Rio+20, AFP (2012) reported that

> veteran observers who watched the 10–day event drag to a close yesterday shook their heads in dismay.

> To them, it was a fresh failure by the United Nations system, after the near-disastrous 2009 Copenhagen climate summit, to respond to eco-perils that are now approaching at express speed.
>
> 'It's a demonstration of political impotence, of system paralysis, and it makes me feel pessimistic about the system's ability to deliver,' said Laurence Tubiana, director of the French think-tank, the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations.

These negative assessments of the performance of governments around the world include democracies as being dangerously incompetent. Three years later, the 2015 Paris climate summit gave little reason to change this view. Although this Conference of the Parties expressed a desire to limit global warming to 1.5°C above preindustrial levels (rather than the riskier target of 2°C), it was noted by Michael Grubb of University College London (cited in Le Page 2015) that: 'All the evidence from the past 15 years leads me to conclude that actually delivering 1.5°C is simply incompatible with democracy.' The abandonment at Paris of legally binding national targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in favour of voluntary targets (Intended Nationally Determined Contributions or INDCs) might be taken as confirming Grubb's assessment — that governments have given up on effectively addressing the problem. The INDCs pledged at Paris are expected to lead to warming of around 3°C, but this is hoped to be avoided by a 'ratchet mechanism' in which INDCs may be voluntarily increased at five-year intervals. Although a high and rapidly rising price on carbon is needed to deter fossil fuel use and drive emission reductions, the Paris agreement does not require any nation to implement this measure (Le Page 2015). The reaction of climate scientist James Hansen (cited by Le Page 2015) to the Paris agreement was: 'It's just worthless words. There is no action, just promises. As long as fossil fuels appear to be the cheapest fuels out there, they will be continued to be burned.'

A forecast of such government failure might have been seen more than a decade before in an observation by Eran Vigoda (2002, 530), political scientist at the University of Haifa:

> Constitutions, legislatures, federal and local structures, as well as electoral institutions are in slow but significant decline in many Western societies. They suffer from increasing alienation, distrust, and cynicism among citizens; they encourage passivism and raise barriers before original individual involvement in state affairs.

Many other scholars have expressed similar views on democratic government. Political scientists April Carter and Geoffrey Stokes (2002, 2) have stated that despite 'general agreement on the political benefits of liberal democracy, there is a widespread sense that its present institutions are not operating satisfactorily'. Nine years later, political sociologist Claus Offe (2011, 447) wrote: 'Democracies, and by far not just the new ones among them, are not functioning well.' Before any of those observers, sociologist Anthony Giddens (2000, 90) had described the problem in these terms:

> Democracy is spreading around the world … yet in the mature democracies, which the rest of the world is supposed to be copying, there is widespread disillusionment with democratic processes. In most Western countries, levels of trust in politicians have dropped over the past years. Fewer people turn out to vote than used to, particularly in the US. More and more people say they are uninterested in parliamentary politics, especially among the younger generation.

In Australia, political scientists Janette Hartz-Karp and Lyn Carson (2009, 10) have noted that

> the recent *Democratic Audit of Australia* and other studies tell a story of falling confidence in our political system. Symptoms include low levels of citizen engagement, apathy, and cynicism toward politics, declining membership in and public support for political parties, and growing numbers of young Australians seeking to avoid mandatory voter registration. (Australia makes voting compulsory at all levels of government.) Some observers trace the malaise to a 'democratic deficit' — institutional arrangements and conduct that appear at odds with the normative ideals of democracy, including

> factionalism within parties, the intentional polarization of issues by political partisans, the over-simplification of issues in the news media, and the short time horizon of the policy-making process.

President Emeritus of Harvard, Derek Bok (2001), has written a detailed analysis of why the federal government of the United States has fallen into disrepute and offers many approaches to reform. However his proposals are piecemeal and he doubts their potential to fully address the problem. Public policy scholar at Yale, Peter Schuck (2014), has written a comprehensive analysis of the failure of US federal governments to implement existing domestic programs, but does not address failure to produce adequate law, policy and programs. According to the Quality of Government Institute at Sweden's University of Gothenburg, dysfunction at this deeper level can be minimized only by installing institutions that are impartial and competent (Rothstein 2011). One precondition for competence is that the whole system of institutions is simple, so that the voting public can easily see who is responsible for existing policies and laws and respond accordingly at the next election. As discussed later, this precondition is not well provided by the US system.

Concerns about democratic government are expressed not only by social scientists, but also by some politicians in liberal democracies. Former Vice President of the US, Al Gore (2007) has declared that democracy is broken and needs fixing. In a farewell speech to Congress, Senator Bill Bradley (cited in Dalton 2004, 2) gave an alarming assessment of American democracy.

> Democracy is paralyzed not just because politicians are needlessly partisan, although we are. The process is broken at a deeper level, and it won't be fixed by replacing one set of elected officials with another… Citizens believe that politicians are controlled: by special interests who give them money, by parties which crush their independence, by ambition for higher office that makes them hedge their position rather than call it like they really see it, and by pollsters who convince them that only focus-group phrases can guar-

> antee them victory … Voters distrust government so deeply and so consistently that they are not willing to accept the results of virtually any decision made by this political process.

Ex-leader of the Australian Labor Party, Mark Latham (Barns 2007) has urged young people not to become politicians. The finance minister in the Australian Rudd and Gillard governments, Lindsay Tanner, abandoned politics in the lead up to the 2010 Federal election and subsequently complained that it was a deceptive 'sideshow':

> The creation of appearances is now far more important for leading politicians than the generation of outcomes. This produces a good deal of deception, and … a collective mentality of cynicism and manipulation. Policy initiatives are measured by their media impact, not by their effect … I am very pessimistic about the future of Australian politics, as the sideshow syndrome seeps ever more insidiously into every tiny corner of government … (Tanner 2011).

Barry Cohen (2008, 3), Federal Minister for the Environment from 1983 to 1987 in the Australian Hawke government, has lamented that 'governments never connect the dots between increasing population numbers and the 'crises' that daily beset our citizens'. In looking at the 2006 UN forecast of a world population of 9.2 billion by 2050, Boris Johnson (2008), who was elected as the Conservative Party's candidate for Mayor of London in 2008 and 2012, expostulated:

> How the hell can we witter on about tackling global warming, and reducing consumption, when we are continuing to add so relentlessly to the number of consumers? The answer is politics, and political cowardice … It is time we had a grown-up discussion about the optimum quantity of human beings in this country and on this planet.

Many scientists recognize that problems are neglected or made worse by liberal democratic governments. For example, social

epidemiologists Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett (2009, 4, 5) express concern at their neglect of inequality:

> Mainstream politics no longer taps into these issues [of unsatisfied social needs] and has abandoned the attempt to provide a shared vision capable of inspiring us to create a better society. As voters, we have lost sight of any collective belief that society could be different. Instead of a better society, the only thing that almost everyone strives for is to better their own position — as individuals — within the existing society.

Economics Commissioner on the UK Sustainable Development Commission, Tim Jackson (2009, 167–8), describes liberal democracies as 'deeply conflicted' with 'institutional schizophrenia' that compels them to promote economic growth while they struggle to protect public goods from that growth. He declares that a 'new vision of governance … is critical.' Eminent Australian economist Ross Garnaut (cited in Spratt 2011, 30) has called his country's political response to global warming 'The great Australian complacency'. Kevin Anderson, director of the UK Tyndall Centre for Climate Change, and his colleague Alice Bows (cited in Spratt 2011, 29) have expressed alarm at political incompetence: 'Put bluntly, while the rhetoric of policy is to reduce emissions in line with avoiding dangerous climate change, most policy advice is to accept a high probability of extremely dangerous climate change rather than propose radical and immediate reductions.'

Early this century in the United Kingdom, persistently poor voter turnouts at elections prompted the Joseph Rowntree Trusts to conduct an inquiry. This reported that membership of the three main parties in the UK in 2001 was less than 25 per cent of its 1964 level (POWERInquiry 2006, 46) and that 'two separate studies found significant aggregate falls in party membership across thirteen and sixteen established democracies respectively since the 1950s' (POWERInquiry 2006, 51). Similarly, Danish political scientists Jorgen Goul Andersen and Jens Hoff (2001) found that in the Scandinavian democracies, participation has

declined in conventional forms of politics, such as turnout at elections and membership of parties. However, they also found that, in an informal sense, interest in politics is not diminishing because Scandinavians are turning to single issue forms of participation and 'small democracy' in the workplace. This turn from party politics to issue politics is noted by Sian Kevill (cited in Smith 2005, 96), one of the directors of the BBC iCan website that facilitates citizen involvement on public issue campaigns in the UK. 'People don't approach politics through party allegiances any more … they approach it through an issue, and this site [BBC iCan] makes it easier for people to connect into politics through an issue.' Kevill's view is supported by Australian political scientist Judith Brett (2007, 12):

> Party identification was once the strongest predictor of how a person would vote, for the great majority of the electorate … Partisanship was habitual and it simplified the political world … party rhetoric at election time reminded people of their traditional allegiances, activating the existing party loyalty that would deliver the vote. The electorate still contains such people, but their numbers are declining. Across the western world, partisanship is on the wane and electorates are becoming more volatile. People change their vote between elections, between state and federal, between lower and upper houses. People identify with a party but vote for another as a protest. Or people identify not much with any party but make up their minds once the campaign is underway, based on issues and their judgements of the leaders.

In surveying democratic politics in Australia, environmental scientist David Yencken and legal scholar Nicola Henry (2008, 17) have assessed that

> Australians are generally satisfied and proud of their democracy, but … There is widespread evidence of voter cynicism about politics and politicians in Australia and elsewhere. Opinion poll after opinion poll has shown low confidence in the standing of politicians and in the confidence of Australians in political institutions … [research

> shows] a one-third decline of belief in the moral standards of members of parliament over the preceding two decades.

Yencken and Henry offer several possible causes of this lack of confidence: a blurring of differences between the major parties as each seeks to cater to the mainstream majority of voters; the rarity of bipartisan concern for the country, as each party declares the others incompetent; apathy and retreat by citizens worn out and wearied by a myriad of issues; and disenchantment with governments that are neither transparent nor accountable and that do not facilitate meaningful public participation.

Robert Reich, who was US Secretary of Labor in the Clinton Administration, notes the growth of a similar cynicism and sense of powerlessness in his country. In 1964, 36 per cent of Americans felt 'public officials don't care much what people like me think' (Reich 2007, 5). By 2000 that sentiment was shared by more than 60 per cent. In 1964, almost two-thirds of Americans believed government was run for the benefit of all and only 29 per cent said it was 'run by a few big interests looking out only for themselves' (Reich 2007, 5). But by 2000, the ratio was almost reversed: only 35 per cent believed government was run for the benefit of all, while more than 60 per cent thought it was run by a few big interests.

In surveying the fortunes of democracy around the world over the previous four decades, the founding coeditor of *The Journal of Democracy,* Larry Diamond (2009, 20), noted that a 'wave of liberation began in 1974 in Portugal'. At that time barely a quarter of the world's states were democratic in the minimal sense of choosing their politicians by regular, free and fair elections based on universal suffrage. Over the next twenty years, dictatorships were replaced by freely elected governments in southern Europe, then in Latin America, followed by East Asia.

> Finally, an explosion of freedom in the early '90s … spread democracy from Moscow to Pretoria … In recent years, however, this mighty tide has receded … [starting] in 1999, with the military coup in Pakistan, an upheaval welcomed by a public weary of endemic

> corruption, economic mismanagement and ethnic and political violence … Many emerging democracies were experiencing similar crises … . Thanks to bad governance and popular disaffection, democracy has lost ground. Since the start of the democratic wave, 24 states have reverted to authoritarian rule. Two thirds of these reversals have occurred in the past nine years — and included some big and important states such as Russia, Venezuela, Bangladesh, Thailand … Nigeria and the Philippines. (Diamond 2009, 20–21)

Diamond also noted that democratic government was facing difficulties in Bolivia, Ecuador, Turkey, South Africa and Ukraine. Although observing some successes such as Indonesia, Brazil, Ghana and, very tentatively, Pakistan, he concluded that around 60 democracies were insecure, that many could fail and 'need deep reforms to strengthen their democratic institutions and improve governance' (Diamond 2009, 22).

Several organisations provide comparative rankings of the democratic qualities of national governments. One of the most respected is that of *The Economist* Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index (EIUDI), and it supports Diamond's claims by indicating that although almost half of the world's 165 independent states and two territories (excluding 27 micro-states) can currently be considered democracies, only 26 of these are rated as 'full democracies', while 53 are 'flawed democracies'. Of the remaining countries, 33 are assessed as 'hybrid regimes' (authoritarian but with some democratic features) and 55 as 'authoritarian regimes' (*Economist* 2010, 1). Comparing this assessment with its previous survey of 2008, *The Economist* (2010, 1) observed: 'Now democracy is in retreat. The dominant pattern in all regions over the past two years has been backsliding on previously attained progress in democratisation.' The US-based non-governmental organisation (NGO) Freedom House also finds a serious reversal in the recent fortunes of liberal democracy, with 2007 being the second year in succession in which 'freedom retreated' (*Economist* 2008b, 12). A large part of this has been the rapid reversal of democratic reforms made in the aftermath of the breakup of the

Soviet Union. However, this experience in Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States is not unique.

> Major reversals have taken place before — a democratisation wave after the second world war ended with more than 20 countries subsequently sliding back to authoritarianism. That sort of rollback is not currently evident, but the threat of backsliding now greatly outweighs the possibility of further gains … But trends such as globalisation, increasing education and expanding middle classes would have tended to favour the organic development of democracy. These underlying forces, even if developing at a slower pace than in the recent past, suggest that the retreat from democracy will not be permanent. (*Economist* 2010, 21).

Only a few months after this assessment, its optimistic side appeared to be finding justification as authoritarian regimes in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain and other middle east and north African countries were shaken or toppled by popular resistance. However, as the revolutionaries tried to install and maintain democracy, they apparently found that the necessary dialogue, compromise and inclusiveness was incompatible with their revolutionary and religious sentiments. A few years later, as this is written, only Tunisia has made a successful transition.

Evidence that many established democracies are in trouble is accompanied by theoretical predictions of democratic failure, at least in terms of competence if not of viability. Scholars working in the research program of 'public choice' (which uses the 'rational choice' method) are prominent in having 'elaborated a long list of arguments for why democracy fails to deliver 'good' policy' (Leeson 2006, 357). One of the founders of public choice, James Buchanan (2003, 8), observed that, in 'a very real sense, public choice became a set of theories of governmental failures.' Public choice economist Bryan Caplan outlines one of these theories:

> In economic jargon, democracy has a built-in *externality*. An irrational voter does not hurt only himself. He also hurts everyone

> who is, as a result of his irrationality, more likely to live under misguided policies. Since most of the cost of voter irrationality is external — paid for by *other people,* why not indulge? If enough voters think this way, socially injurious policies win by popular demand. (2008, 3, Caplan's emphasis)

Economists Charles Blankart and Gerrit Koester (2006) have suggested that government failure is predicted, identified and explained much more in public choice than in mainstream political science because the scholars in each area ask different questions. International relations theorist Hans J. Morgenthau (cited in Blankart and Koester 2006, 189) has observed that political science 'deals with the nature, the accumulation, the distribution, the exercise, and the control of power on all levels of social interaction, with special emphasis upon the power of the state'. Blankart and Koester (2006, 190) therefore note that

> political scientists ask: What are the institutions and constraints that allow the accumulation, distribution, exercise, and control of power here and now — and not under some alternative, not yet existing framework? And they focus on the coercive power of the state … [But for public choice scholars] the relevant question in constitutional analysis is not limited to what effects existing institutions have … public choice focuses on suggestions for institutional improvements based on constitutional analysis.

In addition to the work of public choice theorists, that of comparative political scientists implies that many democratic governments fail in some ways, for a major purpose of their comparisons is to assess which forms of democracy function best (e.g Lijphart 2012; Rothstein 2011). Further recognition by political science of this failure is the development over the last thirty years of the theory that democratic government would be improved by more public participation, provided that it is deliberative. Political scientist Graham Smith (2001, 72) has observed that 'deliberative democracy is fast establishing itself as a new orthodoxy within contemporary democratic theory', and the

motivation for this appears to have been expressed by political philosopher Iris Marion Young (2000, 132): 'All existing representative democracies could be improved by additional procedures and fora through which citizens discuss with one another and with representatives their evaluation of policies representatives have supported.' So the deliberative orthodoxy in political science not only views democracies as being dysfunctional to some extent, but identifies a deficit of competent input by citizens as a major cause.

This 'deliberative turn' in democratic theory has been preceded and accompanied by a host of practical attempts by both concerned citizens and political scientists to facilitate constructive political participation by the public, many of which are listed in *Participedia* (www.participedia.net). Some of these attempts are simply to increase participation and others include, or focus on, the facilitation of public deliberation. The latter effort has been mainly to develop and implement forums that conduct facilitated deliberation of a specific issue for a limited time. A very large forum of this type is that of America*Speaks,* which has run one in which five thousand citizens took part. Other deliberative designs, such as consensus conferences, citizen juries, citizens' assemblies and deliberative opinion polls, convene smaller groups so that it is easier for their participants to hear, question and consider the views of the other members of the group. In the US, the National Issues Forums run by the Kettering Foundation invite citizens to gather in groups up to the size of a town hall meeting, in which they discuss issues framed by carefully written booklets.

To encourage participation rather than deliberation, on-line polling is employed by NGOs such as MoveOn in the US, Get-up! in Australia and Avaaz and Change.org internationally. A more hands-on form of participation is participatory budgeting (PB), which was initiated by the city of Porto Alegre, Brazil. This enables citizens to decide how their public funds are to be spent, and it is now used in about 180 Brazilian municipalities, one Brazilian state and a number of other cities across Latin America. As the PB system delegates executive power to citizens

rather than legislative power, it tends to be participatory rather than comprehensively deliberative. The German 'delegative' experiment of Liquid Democracy tries to facilitate participation by enabling citizens to delegate their vote to other voters. In Tasmania, Australia, a community consultation process based on Oregon Shines, called Tasmania*Together,* monitors development goals for the period 2000–2020 that it devised for the state at the outset of that period. Although Tasmania*Together* was intended to engage citizens, it has virtually no deliberative capacity (Crowley 2009), and after a few years was quietly sidelined by the government that introduced it.

In all liberal democracies, the rather passive public participation produced by public opinion polls is accorded high political status by both the public and politicians. Many business associations and other special interest groups (including NGOs such as Greenpeace, The Wilderness Society and Amnesty International) provide indirect participation with lobbying services for their members and sympathizers. In Washington the number of lobbyists has grown enormously since 1970, so that by 1999 there were more than 60,000, spending almost US$2 billion a year, while a 'similar tide of corporate lobbying has engulfed other global capitals in recent years' (Reich 2007, 136). The amount spent on lobbying the American federal government in 2009 has been estimated to have been US$3.5 billion (*Economist* 2011a). By 2012 all government lobbying in the US was thought to employ around 100,000 lobbyists spending US$6–8 billion per year (Loomis 2013).

Most of these activities, whether deliberative or participatory or both, are attempts to provoke responses from democratic governments on issues concerning public goods. As political scientist Francis Fukuyama (2014, 482–4) notes, some of these attempts are intended to promote what their organisers and lobbyists consider is in the public interest, and others are aimed at obtaining private goods for special interests at the cost of public goods (see §2.1 below for definitions of those types of goods). These activities can all be considered to make democracy more participatory, shifting it a little from representative

towards direct democracy. An obvious problem with moving in this direction is to make sure that the opportunity to influence government is distributed equally to all citizens, so that each has the same democratic ability to say which public goods are to be provided and to what degree their private goods are to be surrendered to make this possible. Another problem is to make sure that this democratic voice is informed by public deliberation about the benefits and costs of specific public goods.

Many scholars focus on erosion of political support as a major problem for democracy. Political scientist Russell Dalton (2004, 199–200) has described this as a 'pattern of 'dissatisfied democrats' or 'critical citizens' who want to improve the democratic process, rather than one of anti-system critics of democracy.' Instead of starting with an analysis of the causes of such dissatisfaction, this book begins by investigating liberal democratic governments' failures to provide public goods. If this reveals such failure and why it occurs, it should indicate how it might be prevented. Any success with such measures might then help to restore political support, but the primary aim here is to achieve better government rather than less critical citizens.

Reich has given a view of democratic failure that contrasts with the view taken in this book. His interpretation of the growing sense of political powerlessness in American citizens is not so much that this is a sign that democracy is failing, but that capitalism has become extremely good at what it does, so that it has now become 'supercapitalism' and is therefore increasingly able to assert itself over government. He states that the 'triumph of supercapitalism has led, indirectly and unwittingly, to the decline of democracy' (Reich 2007, 224). However, it is argued here in Chapter 2 that it is more useful to view the causality as reversed — to view this decline as a failure of democratic government to provide public goods, which as pointed out in §2.1, includes intangible things such as cooperation and prudent restraint of self-interest. In order to produce public goods, government (as also discussed in §2.1) must compete for the necessary resources with those who would use them to produce private goods. These resources include many public goods, so govern-

ment must compete against capitalism to prevent it converting them into private goods. So this 'decline' should be seen as failure by democratic government, which allows capitalism to win the competition and grow into 'supercapitalism'. This increased capacity of capitalism focuses the people's interests more firmly onto private goods, so public goods are further neglected and government failure consolidates.

Several decades ago, economist Fred Hirsch (1977, 18) surveyed the interaction of the market and politics, noting that

> the market provides a full range of choice between alternative piecemeal, discrete, marginal adjustments, but no facility for selection between alternative states … By contrast, the political mechanism, through which preference between alternative states could in principle be posed, has not yet developed a satisfactory system for such decision [making]… [Hence] both the market and the political system … cannot deliver on what the public takes to be their promise.

So Hirsch blamed the political system for making decisions that limited the welfare that could be gained from public and private goods. Economists Luis Carvalho and Joao Rodrigues (2006, 344) observe that the 'contradictions touched upon by Hirsch 30 years ago have not yet been surpassed. On the contrary they are probably operative in a new phase of capitalism … which took root in the 80s and consolidated in the 90s.'

There are, therefore, signs from many sources that liberal democracy malfunctions to a serious degree. Perhaps the spectacle of these difficulties encourages authoritarian behaviour such as the democratic backsliding of Russia under Vladimir Putin and Dmitry Medvedev, the continuation of repressive control by the Chinese Communist Party and the restrictiveness of government in Singapore, which fails to rate as even a flawed democracy, being classed as a hybrid regime by the EIUDI (*Economist* 2010, 5). Consistent with that rating, Kishore Mahbubani (2008, 18, 21), Dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, has given qualified support to authoritarian government for societies in difficult circumstances, by emphasizing that social order

contributes more to the freedom of citizens than their freedom to express themselves politically. Perhaps the challenge for liberal democracy is to restructure itself so that it provides freedom of political expression in a way that enhances, rather than threatens, social order. Political journalist and author Fareed Zakaria (2003, 255–6) has called for this type of reform:

> The greatest danger of unfettered and dysfunctional democracy is that it will discredit democracy itself, casting all popular governance into a shadowy light. This would not be unprecedented. Every wave of democracy has been followed by setbacks in which the system is seen as inadequate and new alternatives have been proposed by ambitious leaders and welcomed by frustrated people … It is worth remembering that the embrace of communism and fascism in the 1930s did not seem as crazy at the time as it does now … As we enter the twenty-first century, our task is to make democracy safe for the world.

Zakaria's call has been virtually ignored, with one consequence arguably being the global financial crisis of 2007–08. This demonstrated fundamental weaknesses in democratic systems, for they had steadily accumulated dangerous levels of debt by deregulating banking and expanding entitlements. Disillusionment with democratic governments then increased as they 'bailed out bankers with taxpayers' money and then stood by impotently as financiers continued to pay themselves huge bonuses' (*Economist* 2014a, 48). In contrast to this frustration, the

> Chinese elite argue that their model — tight control by the Communist Party, coupled with a relentless effort to recruit talented people into its upper ranks — is more efficient than democracy and less susceptible to gridlock. The political leadership changes every decade or so, and there is a constant supply of fresh talent as party cadres are promoted based on their ability to hit targets …
>
> Many Chinese are prepared to put up with their system if it delivers growth. The 2013 Pew Survey of Global Attitudes showed that 85% of Chinese were 'very satisfied' with their country's direc-

> tion, compared with 31% of Americans. Some Chinese intellectuals have become positively boastful. Zhang Weiwei of Fudan University argues that democracy is destroying the West, and particularly America, because it institutionalises gridlock, trivialises decision-making and throws up second-rate presidents like George Bush junior … Wang Jisi … of Beijing University, has observed that 'many developing countries that have introduced Western values and political systems are experiencing disorder and chaos' and that China offers an alternative model. Countries from Africa (Rwanda) to the Middle East (Dubai) to South East Asia (Vietnam) are taking this advice seriously. (*Economist* 2014a, 48–49)

Former Science Counsellor at the US embassy in Beijing, Deborah Seligsohn (2015, 43), adds weight to these assessments of the competitiveness of the Chinese system with her observation that the 'Chinese government is good at collecting taxes, and does not have to deal with the same political opposition to taxation as the US and Europe.'

As the examples given in this chapter indicate, our focus is on democratic governance at large scales, such as national and global, rather than local. Part 1 now follows, looking for features common to all democracies that seem likely to cause government failure. If we can identify such features, we then have a diagnosis that might indicate a general prescription for improving democratic performance. As we shall see, that diagnosis emphasizes the significance of failure at large scales.

PART I
DIAGNOSING DYSFUNCTION

2
DEMOCRATIC DYSFUNCTION FROM FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE

This chapter offers the hypothesis that liberal democracies must fail to some degree because their basic institutions tend to generate dysfunction in three specific ways. The most significant of these ways is conjectured to be that 'government by the people' is neglected, indeed avoided, by the people. Although institutions play a crucial role in this, human nature also provides a strong drive. As deeply social animals, people have a biological urge to look for leaders. As they do this they tend to abdicate their democratic role of governing by expecting their leaders to do it for them. In the process, citizens look for charisma instead of thinking carefully about public policy. As Hitler and many other leaders have demonstrated, this can produce bad policy, and in difficult times it can destroy democracy, replacing it with repressive regimes.

This threefold prediction of dysfunction diagnoses the democratic failure sketched in Chapter 1. As it is deduced from the fundamental structure of democratic governments, it describes failure that causes more failure at higher (consequential) levels of government structure. This method of investigation may therefore discover sites for remedies of dysfunction that are systemic because corrections made at basic levels should permeate up causal chains through the whole system. If remedies are not feasible to implement at fundamental causal levels, consequential parts of the causal chain may be inspected for sites that are

more amenable to correction. If such interventions also seem impossible or too difficult, then any remedies must be direct alleviations of symptoms. The findings of this 'forward mapping' procedure (Head and Alford 2008) are compared later in this chapter with the findings of two backward mappings that start from symptoms of government failure and follow their apparent origins back through causal chains to try to find a feasible site for correction. Those backward mappings investigate the neglect of long-term issues in Australia and repetitive mismanagement of biodiversity conservation in the USA. In a backward mapping, the first causes that are identified are the least likely to be fundamental, so their correction is unlikely to produce systemic solutions. However, if backward mapping is pursued far enough, it may provide a check on whether the forward mapping of dysfunction is accurate and significant.

2.1 The function of democratic government

A search for dysfunction in the governments of liberal democracies must start with a clear idea of what the function of this type of government is. Primarily, it is to govern a state, the meaning of which is explored in the next paragraph. Further, as a government that is *democratic,* then by definition it has the people doing the governing. As a *liberal* democratic government, it must satisfy criteria such as the five specified by political scientist David Beetham (1992, 41–2). These are that it provides: (1) freedoms, such as those of expression, movement and association; (2) separation of powers between the executive, the legislature and the judiciary; (3) representative assembly ('the most effective device for reconciling the requirements of popular control and political equality with the exigencies of time and the conditions of the modern territorial state'); (4) 'limited' function, in that the state does not restrict private goods unless this is necessary to provide for the public good; and (5) 'that the only criterion for the public good is what the people, freely organized, will choose'. Beetham's definition of liberal democracy incorporates his notion that democracy has two basic ingredients,

popular control and political equality of citizens as they exert this control (see also Saward 1998, 9). As discussed later in §6.2, political scientist Robert Dahl has interpreted political equality as equality of the opportunity for control rather than as equality of exercised control. I follow Dahl (see Saward 1998, 17) in considering that equality of opportunity for control is required by justice, not because it is assumed that most citizens will wisely exert that control.

It was stated above that the primary function of a liberal democratic government is to 'govern a state'. To clarify the meaning of 'govern a state' I use Mancur Olson's (1965, 15) public choice view that the 'fundamental function' of a state is to provide public goods. Political theorist Michael Taylor (1987, 1) concurs with this, observing that the 'most persuasive justification of the state is founded on the argument that, without it, people would not successfully cooperate in realizing their common interests and in particular would not provide themselves with certain public goods.' This is not to suggest that states provide only public or collective goods. They often provide individual (private) goods like electric power, for example by selling such goods on the market as private firms do. However, if it is necessary for a state (i.e. a government) to do this it is because by doing so it is also providing a public good, such as preventing a market failure like monopoly exploitation, or alleviating an inability to raise the capital to develop a commercially viable production of a private good that would be useful to many citizens. It is therefore assumed that to 'govern a state' means to provide public goods and that this is the only reason why citizens need governments, which is consistent with Beetham's (1992) fourth criterion of the 'limited' state. This view of government allows us to be specific about the objective of our inquiry. As implied at the beginning of this chapter, that objective is: To analyse failure in democratic government and then use that diagnosis to design a remedy for the failure. This can now be restated as: To analyse why liberal democratic governments underprovide public goods and then use that diagnosis to indicate what might be done to improve this provision. The judgement of whether a provision of pub-

lic goods is an 'underprovision' is to be made by the people, as specified by Beetham's fifth criterion for a liberal democratic government, which is 'that the only criterion for the public good is what the people, freely organized, will choose'. 'Freely organised' will be taken here to include the time, the facilities and the information that the people need if they are to make competent choices of public goods.

This outcome-based assessment of government failure or success requires the meaning of 'the public good' and 'public goods' to be clear. The defining characteristic of public goods is that they are freely available to all members of a 'public'. The economist's term for this is that they are goods or services that are 'non-excludable' in their consumption or use by the members of a public. Two examples of publics might be the citizens of a nation, and all of humanity. Public goods may or may not be 'divisible' (often termed 'rival'), which is the property that their use by some diminishes the quantity available for use by others. If they are indivisible they are referred to as pure public goods. Public goods may be material things such as roads, street signs, lighthouses, bridges and clean air; and they may also be more or less intangible things such as national security, domestic security (including law enforcement and the system of property rights), the general level of trust between citizens, and opportunities for citizens such as those to earn income and to use public schools and national parks. A wide provision of the public good of opportunity is essential if a democracy is to be considered liberal, for this produces freedom and equality for its citizens. In contrast to public goods, private goods are excludable, which means their availability to all may be controlled by an individual or an entity, that is, the owner of the private good.

Some scholars doubt that the sole function of government is to provide public goods and therefore doubt that its effectiveness must be assessed by how well it does this. For example, political scientists John Gerring and Strom Thacker (2008, 168–170) are sceptical because (a) it seems difficult to determine which public goods are worth providing (and also in what quantity and quality); and (b) few public goods are enjoyed equally

by all members of a polity. Their first observation does not mean that democratic government must not be evaluated in terms of its provision of public goods, just that this is difficult to do. In a democracy it is citizens who must make that evaluation, and this poses problems of collective choice and action. Gerring and Thacker's second problem does not appear relevant. Public goods are non-excludable, so their provision presents the opportunity for all to use them. If the people decide that such an opportunity is a public good that they want, then they must provide or maintain the public goods whose existence produces that opportunity.

Another approach to judging whether government fails or succeeds is taken by the Quality of Government Institute at the University of Gothenburg, which was established in 2004 by political scientists Sören Holmberg and Bo Rothstein (2012). After considering several criteria for defining quality of government they selected the impartiality of their institutions. However, this is only one aspect of the adequacy of governmental procedures and may not be enough to ensure the optimal provision of public goods. Other aspects such as public access to adequate information and effective, politically influential public deliberation are also essential for government performance in democracies, so the criterion of good outcomes (i.e. the optimal provision of public goods) is used here, rather than good process. Referring to optimal provision of public goods is direct and although it may be difficult (perhaps impossible) to measure, it can be applied in the diagnosis of dysfunction that follows, as may be seen in its summary in §2.5. The focus on outcomes also invites case studies of outcome failures as is done later in Chapters 3, 4 and 5, and these provide examples of the significance, interrelatedness, complexity and persistence of such failure. Details of this type help to identify the type of remedy that is required.

A crucial feature of issues about the provision, protection or elimination of public goods is that these issues usually involve private goods as well. For example, the provision of a national defence force, which is a pure public good, requires the taxing of each citizen, which is a reduction of their disposable income,

a private good. Another example is the river damming proposal discussed in Chapter 5 under the heading of 'The scarcity multiplier', where the protection of the public goods of beautiful scenery, a population of rare native animals and opportunities for river-based recreation compete with the provision of the private goods of water rights, hydro-electricity and the employment and income that these create. The fact that 'one man's right to private property in the antebellum South was another man's slavery' (McGann 2006, 105) is another example of this competition, in this case between slaves as private goods and the public good of freedom for all. This compound nature of most public goods issues means that a government making a choice on these issues is likely to be choosing between private and public goods. The production or protection of one type of good generally restricts the production or protection of the other. In this competition for existence, private goods usually have the advantage because demands for these are facilitated by the market, by self-interest and by the speed and decisiveness with which an individual or an entity can choose them. The challenge for democracies is to make their collective choices equally easy, quick and decisive, otherwise crucial public goods will be foregone for the production of private goods.

The competition between private and public goods has fundamental implications for democratic government. As the quality of this government depends on the quality of public opinion (not just as a theoretical ideal, but also, as we shall see later in this chapter, as an empirical finding) then it is absolutely crucial that public opinion develops without distortion by those who are far more interested in private goods than public ones. Accordingly, for good democratic government to be possible, it appears necessary to make it illegal for people or bodies with financial interests in a public issue to publicly comment on that issue — and also illegal for them to pay others to make such comments. Failure to pass such legislation has produced severe underprovision of public goods in such areas as damage to health from sales of tobacco and committed future damage to the climate and to at least a metre rise in sea level, due to past (and continuing) sales

of fossil fuel. The enactment of such law appears too difficult for current democracies and it may therefore become an urgent task for the new institution that is proposed here later, in Part 2.

For a democracy, the choice of public goods is a collective or *social* choice, a choice made by the members of the group. Social choice may be direct, via some form of aggregation of the choices of all eligible citizens, or indirect, through choices made by their representatives. To assess the adequacy of direct or indirect social choice by liberal democratic governments we must investigate primarily whether these governments are likely to (a) recognize those issues where there is a need for social choices to be made and (b) make good choices on these issues. To perform in these respects government must be able to make its social choices for its group prevail over any *individual* choices within the group for private goods that conflict with these social choices. From the perspective of a democratic group, individual choices within that group are those of individuals, or of entities such as corporations, or of other sub-groups within the group. It may be helpful to note here that 'government' does not include the market economy, as this system is not concerned with making social choices of public goods for a whole society. The market economy uses institutions that facilitate individual choice of private goods. On the other hand, government is the apparatus that makes and implements choices of public goods for the members of the group it governs. A corporation is an entity that is a group comprising employees, shareholders, managers and directors so it needs its own government (a board of directors and CEO) to make choices of 'public goods' for that group. Although these are choices of public goods for those within that group (the corporation), the same choices are choices of private goods for that group as far as the greater group (such as the state or nation) is concerned. Part of the social choice task of democratic national government is to decide whether to regulate the activities of entities within the nation such as individual citizens and corporations so that their individual choices of private goods contribute to, or do not unduly interfere with, the public goods that the government considers necessary for the nation. If

national governments have difficulty in doing this, then to that extent they are dysfunctional.

From this it may be seen that a term such as 'capitalist democracy' refers to two different systems with different purposes. The first is the market economy, a system for facilitating individual choice of private goods; and the second is government, a system for making social choices of public goods for a group such as a nation. Hybrid terms such as 'capitalist democracy' may therefore encourage different institutions and their functions to be confused with each other. The widespread occurrence of such confusion and the importance of minimizing it have been noted by Reich (2007, 224–25). As he concluded an argument that democratic government has been overwhelmed by capitalism he declared that for clarity of thought 'the two spheres must be kept distinct.' Democratic government must be clearly understood to be an organization run by the members of a group to provide public goods for those members. One very important public good for a nation is its market economy. This is 'public' because it is available for any citizen of that nation to use: It is a non-excludable good. Part of the job of democratic government is to make sure — if citizens want a market economy — that it exists and operates effectively.

The quite different functions of government and market mean that a failure to prevent public goods being excessively damaged by pursuits of private goods is a failure of government to control these pursuits: it is not a failure of the market. As eminent economists Paul Samuelson and William Nordhaus have observed: 'Before we race off to our federal, state or local legislature, we should pause to recognize that *there are government failures as well as market failures*' (cited in Shaw 2002, 6–7, their emphasis). An example of conflating these types of failure is the statement by economist Sir Nicholas Stern (2007, viii) that anthropogenic global warming is 'the greatest market failure the world has ever seen.' In saying this, Stern was using the conventional terminology of economics (e.g. Stiglitz 2012, 34), but it is suggested that as markets are neither structured nor intended to choose public goods, they should not be regarded as failing in

that case. Instead, it is government that must be regarded here as failing, as it is not protecting the climate (a public good) from the market's pursuit of private goods. In this case, government fails primarily because there is no global government that might provide the global public good of a stable climate by controlling the global market that has a major role in the production of greenhouse gases. Perhaps this tendency to blame markets for deficiencies in public goods arises because it seems easier to correct markets than governments. This is especially the case for a global public good, as there is no global government to be corrected — and establishing one seems impossible. But viewing global warming as a market failure may be a crucial misdiagnosis, for it may divert us from focusing on two essential objectives: reforming national governments and creating a competent global one.

The different functions of market economies and governments may be further clarified by defining 'economics'. The eminent economist Lionel Robbins (1935, 16, 24) defined economics as 'the science which studies human behaviour as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses.' This definition is still widely accepted and might be abbreviated to 'economics is the study of choice'. As Robbins' version covers ends and means that may be private or public goods, it views economics as encompassing both market economics and the part of political science that studies the effectiveness of government in choosing public goods. Much of that part of political science is undertaken by the research program known as 'public choice'. Following Robbins, then, the political side of economics may be described as the part of political science that studies human behaviour in institutions (governments) that facilitate the choice of *public goods as ends,* where those goods must be produced from scarce means that may be private or public goods and which have alternative uses. Market economics differs from the political side of economics by studying human behaviour in institutions (markets) that facilitate the choice of *private goods as ends,* where those goods must be produced from scarce means that may be private or public goods and which have al-

ternative uses. This division of functions between governments and markets gives governments the responsibility of choosing whether public goods are eliminated, either by allowing them to be destroyed or by converting them into private goods by allocating private rights for their use. As economics is the study of choice it does not cover the part of political science that is concerned with power, which tends to be the focus of mainstream political science, as discussed in Chapter 1. The study of choice is very closely related to ethics, so it is not surprising that the father of modern economics, Adam Smith, was a professor of moral philosophy. We now look more closely at the function of democratic government, by inspecting its procedures for social choice.

2.1.1 Social choice by democratic government

Until the latter part of the 20th century most political scientists and economists considered that the quality of democratic government depended on its ability to combine the preference orderings of the members of the governed group in a way that was fair to all members. The preference ordering of a member is the order of her choices among available public goods: a first preference for one public good, a second preference for another and so on. A procedure for combining the individual choice orderings of all members to produce a social ordering for their group is called a social welfare function. In 1951, Kenneth Arrow, who was subsequently awarded a Nobel Prize in economics, produced his famous (or for some, notorious) logical proof that no single social welfare function can perform this translation in a way that satisfied four rather mild and apparently indisputable democratic requirements. This theorem caused many scholars to conclude 'that democracy is meaningless or that it can only be defended in the most minimalist terms, in that it merely ensures that governments can sometimes be removed (as argued most notably in Riker 1982)' (McGann 2006, 9). There have been many subsequent attempts to investigate Arrow's gloomy conclusion, and these resulted in similar 'impossibility theorems'. Then Nobel laureate economist Amartya Sen (1999) demon-

strated that Arrow's 'impossibility theorem' is of limited significance because social welfare functions oversimplify democratic social choice by ignoring interpersonal comparisons of utility. If the various strengths of each individual's wants for different goods can be accounted for in the aggregation of individual wants into wants for the whole society, then Arrow's and other similar results are avoided.

More recently, political scientist Anthony McGann (2006, 9) has produced another argument that social welfare functions oversimplify social choice. He points out that these functions, by definition, must produce transitive results, which means that Arrow, in requiring that a social welfare function makes a social choice, had stipulated five rather than four conditions for this procedure. Transitivity is the property that if an individual prefers (or is indifferent to) A over B, and also prefers (or is indifferent to) B over C, then she must prefer (or be indifferent to) A over C. Intransitivity means that 'cycling' of preferences occurs, such as that A is preferred to B, B is preferred to C, C is preferred to A and there is no single choice. McGann argues that the requirement of transitivity for social choice by Arrow's impossibility theorem is an unrealistic, indeed an undemocratic requirement. While cycling may be nonsensical for an individual, it is quite rational for a society: 'social reason is inherently different from individual rationality. A socially reasonable outcome is one that balances a plurality of different claims, not one that maximizes a single criterion' (McGann 2006, 122). The social need to balance a plurality of claims may be pursued by citizens forming many different coalitions, each working for one claim or a parcel of these. In this situation a group that gathers around a coalition of groups to win on one issue may later be defeated by a new coalition forming around another issue. This means that a minority group may not always be beaten, for it may be able to construct a majority coalition to win on some of its concerns. This will tend to preserve democracy, for minorities will be motivated to persist with this form of government by seeking new coalitions instead of trying to overthrow democracy by taking up arms. In addition, majorities will consider the

needs of minorities, for part of the majority coalition may need their cooperation to form future coalitions in voting on other issues. This process of forming and reforming different coalitions also promotes the deliberation of issues, which facilitates the development of the views of citizens and representatives and also helps to develop the menu of political choices on which they vote. Intransitivity in social choice thus enables public goods to be more effectively distinguished from private goods and more clearly compared with private goods and other public goods that compete for the same resources. Far from being a problem for democratic government, intransitivity makes democracy possible and helps it work.

The problem of distinguishing public from private goods and vice versa is a real one. In some cases, citizens may have a great deal of difficulty in doing this and much disputation may occur before a widespread appreciation emerges that what was widely considered to be a private good or a bundle of these actually includes important public goods. Slavery provides a dramatic illustration. In Britain and America this issue generated much confusion, argument and strife for almost two centuries before a widespread appreciation developed that slaves as well as (other) citizens should all have the same liberties. In effect, over many generations citizens slowly recognised that these freedoms were public goods of such importance that the competing private good of slave ownership must be obliterated. The idea of human equality as a public good has now been extended widely but not completely in democratic societies, in terms of race, sexual orientation, gender, religion and broad degrees of personal wealth. As a general rule, the provision of the public good of equality requires the restriction of the private good of being able to discriminate against others.

If public opinion about a particular public good becomes significant in a democracy, citizens or their representatives may need to decide the issue with a vote, either by referendum or by representatives voting in the legislature. Any such vote requires a menu of the most important choices involving the good that is at stake. Eminent political scientist Elmer Schattschneider

(1960) has emphasized that politics is primarily conflict, not choice, and that a central objective of the battle is to define the alternatives for choice, for whoever succeeds in this has the advantage. Political scientist Albert Weale (1992) recognizes this by rejecting the use of social welfare functions and emphasizing the need for the battle to be civilized into a contest of ideas via public debate and deliberation, which then culminates in a vote. This view is consistent with McGann's argument that social welfare functions are irrelevant for the social choice of public goods because they produce social welfare orderings that are, by definition, transitive. As Weale expresses it, effective social choice should be seen not

> as a process of preference aggregation, in which there is a mapping from a set of individual orderings to a social ordering, but as a process of dialogue in which reasons are exchanged between participants in a process that is perceived to be a joint search for consensus … [This procedure would work] not with fixed preferences to be amalgamated, but with preferences that were altered or modified as competing reasons were advanced in the course of discussion … There are other values that we expect political institutions to satisfy apart from efficient preference amalgamation; for example, procedural fairness, lack of corruption and tolerable problem-solving capacity. (Weale 1992, 215, 227)

It seems clear, then, that mathematical procedures such as that employed by Arrow 'should help to design voting systems to elect politicians, rather than to choose policies' (Stretton and Orchard 1994, 61). McGann (2006) argues that the seat allocation rule (the voting system for electing politicians) should produce proportional representation and the social decision rule (for choosing policies) should be simple majority vote. These twin approaches are seen as necessary in three ways: for equality among citizens, for deliberated choice of policies and for the protection of minorities. McGann specifies that, ideally, the simple majority vote excludes all devices that produce some degree of supermajoritarianism, examples of which are federal-

ism, bicameralism, presidentialism, judicial review, referenda, the filibuster and voting rules that require a supermajority to pass a motion.

With these requirements for social choice in mind, the consequences of five fundamental features of liberal democracies are now inspected, to see whether they inhibit or promote effective social choice of public goods. These features are common to all representative democracies and are as follows: (1) the regular holding of elections; (2) high frequency (on the timescale of the human life-span) of these elections; (3) eligibility of incumbents for re-election; (4) universal franchise; and (5) equality of the vote. In liberal democracies, these elements of electoral structure function within a recognition that citizens are fundamentally free and equal. This includes: equality before the law; protection of minorities; the right to private property and privacy; and freedom — of speech, of assembly, of the media and of the formation and operation of independent political parties.

In the next three sections of this chapter (§2.2, §2.3 and §2.4) it is argued that these five elements of electoral structure tend to create dysfunction in liberal democratic government, debilitating it with confusion, conflict and ignorance. The confusion arises because the first three of these five elements (elections, their frequency and the eligibility of incumbents) produce doubt about whether government is directed by politicians or citizens. This means that neither party has unambiguous incentive to fully shoulder the responsibility of choosing public goods, an effect that is here called ambiguous delegation. The same three elements of electoral structure also produce severe conflict in the form of pervasive, sometimes intense competition between politicians for votes, which further cripples the provision of public goods by distracting politicians from that task. The last two of the five elements of electoral structure (universal franchise and equal votes) compel politicians to make social choices of some ignorance, as they often must follow a constituency by compromising the informed opinions within that group with its narrow and ill-informed opinions. This analysis of dysfunction arising from the fundamental structure of liberal democratic govern-

ment may not seem to offer anything new in that it reviews the well-known problem of the 'electoral cycle' or the 'dynamics of the electoral contest'. However, its focus on three effects of this cycle — confusion, conflict and compromise — together with its emphasis on confusion, may be a significant innovation.

2.2 Ambiguous delegation

It is proposed that democracies are significantly confused about who chooses public goods because of ambiguity in their system of delegating authority and responsibility. Such ambiguity is a fundamental problem for any group, because uncertainty about who is delegated to choose its public goods will allow many of these to be neglected and perhaps other such goods to be over-provided.

It might be thought that democracies devote plenty of attention to delegating the authority and responsibility for choosing public goods as they hold elections in which the people delegate leadership to representatives and presidents, who then further delegate leadership by appointing prime ministers, ministers and heads of agencies. Agency heads further delegate to their subordinates and so on. However, the first link in these chains of delegation is ambiguous. When voters elect politicians, they tend to assume those they elect will give them leadership, but this is not wholly the case, because the voters themselves provide much of the leadership by choosing to follow those politicians. Nobel laureate economist George Akerlof (Haslam et al. 2011, xiv) describes this effect in his foreword to *The New Psychology of Leadership*:

> Leadership has been perhaps one of the most written about subjects in all of history … But … there is something missing in the previous works … Leadership is … only partially about individual personality traits (the elementary psychology approach …). Leadership is also only partially about setting the right incentives (the elementary economics approach …) … It is not just about what leaders say and do; it is about what they say and do in the context of their follow-

> ers' willingness to identify as a we, who accordingly accept or reject what the leader wants them to do.

The followers' collective self-identification 'as a we' is their social identity and what they see this as being directs them in a more fundamental way than a leader can. So, to the extent that voting in elections encourages the people to think they are delegating leadership for their group, they are largely mistaken. After the people vote, they essentially remain in charge because their social identity has not only determined the type of leaders they have elected, but it also determines whether they will 'accept or reject what the leader wants them to do'. Their ultimate expression of acceptance or rejection will usually be at the next election and, until then, the mere prospect of this expression does much to control the leaders, whether they are members of the legislature, prime ministers or presidents.

Of course a leader may try to expand her influence by interpreting the social identity of her followers, but it is they who have the last word by accepting or rejecting the interpretation. Leadership, therefore, is produced by both leader and followers. For the leader's part, it is about getting people 'to *want* to do things … [It] is about shaping beliefs, desires and priorities. It is about achieving influence, not securing compliance. Leadership therefore needs to be distinguished from such things as management, decision-making and authority' (Haslam et al. 2011, xix, emphasis in original). For the followers' part, they only accept as a leader one of their group who embodies its social identity. This *prototypicality* of the group

> gives leaders authority to interpret the nature of social identity and its application to specific circumstances. Someone who encapsulates the group position should be in a position to tell us what being a group member means — but only up to a point. This means that even the most prototypical leaders cannot go against clear, consensual, and long-standing group norms without throwing their prototypicality into question and sending their leadership into decline.

> Leaders can be ahead of the group, but never so far ahead that they are out there on their own. (Haslam et al. 2011, 106)

In this sense it is followers who secure compliance, not leaders. But when followers choose leaders in elections, two types of confusion are produced if those elections are frequent relative to the human life-span and if they allow incumbents to be re-elected. One confusion is about whether *any, or how much,* responsibility and authority has been delegated from citizens to those they elect, and the other is about its specific area, that is, the *ambit or type* of responsibility and authority that citizens have delegated. The first confusion, about how much is delegated, arises because voters tend to assume that by electing someone they have selected a leader who will exercise the responsibility and authority of choosing public goods for their group. However, as we have seen, leaders cannot provide leadership on their own: it is 'a relationship between leaders and followers *within a social group*' (Haslam et al. 2011, 45, 73, emphasis in original). What the delegation (the election) does, therefore, is merely establish this relationship by identifying who leads and who chooses to follow. The nature of that leadership then emerges as leader and followers relate to each other. However, if the followers do not realise that their role in leadership is pivotal or are not in a position to do much about this, then they will fail to contribute to that relationship and it is likely to be dysfunctional.

While elections indicate to citizens that their vote delegates responsibility and authority to those they elect, the prospect of the next election indicates to elected politicians that citizens have actually retained much or all of this responsibility and authority. As this is not clearly and urgently obvious to citizens, who in any case individually lack the incentives and tools to do much about it, they fail to contribute effectively to their leadership.

The second confusion from ambiguity of delegation — vagueness about the type of responsibility and authority that is intended to be delegated — is also important because, for the leadership relationship to work well in choosing and executing an

optimal provision of public goods, each party (the citizens or 'principals' and their 'agents', the elected politicians) must know (or have incentives to behave as if they know) what type of these goods they should specialize in choosing. This will help these parties make an effective division of labour, so that one does not repeat choices that the other makes, that they address all of the essential choices and that they make these in the right sequence, such that, for example, the choices of each party support or do not obstruct the other.

As noted above, what appears to be accomplished by elections is that while citizens think they delegate much responsibility and authority, they actually delegate much less, for their attitudes and values have a pervasive influence on public policy. As discussed below in §2.2.2, this influence affects policy whether it is short term (which will be referred to here as 'operational' policy and covers something like the next few months or years — such as annual budgets as discussed in §6.5.2.3) or medium term ('tactical' policy, encompassing perhaps three to twenty years into the future) or long term ('strategic' policy, which addresses the future beyond tactical policy). As well as varying in their range across time, these categories of policy also tend to have similar ranges across space (geography) and across other issues, so that strategic policy tends to affect a wide area and many other issues, while operational policy tends to be local and affect few other issues. It is the influence of citizens on tactical and especially strategic policy that often creates the big problems, for while they might think effectively about the public goods they currently need, they are much less likely to consider carefully those they and their descendents need for the longer term. Not only are these needs less obvious because they are away in the future but choosing them is often more difficult, not least because their provision may constrain current operational and tactical policy and incur immediate costs without quick benefits.

Not only does current strategic policy impact on current operational and tactical policy, but its future results may constrain the options for operational, tactical and strategic policies at that

future time. Strategic policy-making is therefore not only long term, but fundamental to much other policy. A potentially major aspect of strategic policy is its capacity to induce paradigm change, the overturning of pervasive conventional assumptions. Examples of issues that appear to require paradigm change are given later, such as problems of population size (§4.2.1), global warming (§4.2.2), unemployment (§4.2.3) and excessive growth (Chapter 5). Another facet of strategic policy is that it covers issues of national constitutions and conventions, such as those that determine the institutions of government, including whether government will be representative rather than direct and if so, how the representatives will be selected.

Although citizens generally do not have the time, interest, knowledge and facilities to do much long-term fundamental thinking, they unwittingly produce much of this strategic 'policy' because their persistent demands for short-term private and public goods constrain options for the longer term. The result is major policy failure such as the examples discussed later in this chapter and also in Chapters 3 (in §3.2), 4 and 5. In line with this view, environmental scientist James Gustave Speth (2012, 87–88) has identified 'strategic deficit disorder' as the major failure of democratic governments. So, if democracies are to sustain an optimal provision of private and public goods, their division of labour must be clear: Both citizens and those they elect must know who chooses public goods for the short to medium term and who chooses those for the long term.

In their book *Intelligent Governance for the 21st Century,* philanthropist Nicolas Berggruen and press entrepreneur Nathan Gardels (2013, 124–5) draw attention to the problem of democratic division of labour, referring to it as 'scaling governance' and 'decision-division'. They acknowledge the need to divide decision-making in both spatial and temporal dimensions and they endorse the principle of 'subsidiarity', in which responsibilities are only taken up at a higher level if they cannot be fulfilled at a lower one. In spatial terms, subsidiarity means that local problems are best managed only by the communities they affect, while regional, national and global problems must be han-

dled by people with responsibility and expertise at those scales. This spatial division of labour often coincides with the necessary temporal division, so that effects likely to occur far off in the future must be anticipated and taken into account primarily by those who develop policy at large spatial scales. However, in democracies it is essential that these political agents work with citizens to ensure popular support for long-term and spatially expansive policy. As it is often the case that what a government does now determines what it can do later, temporal policy is arguably more fundamental than spatial policy. Strategic policy is therefore a central concern in the following discussions of ambiguous delegation and decision-division.

The first effect of ambiguous delegation, confusion about whether any or how much responsibility and authority has been delegated, has long been recognized by debates about whether a political representative is, or should be, a delegate or a trustee. Political 'trustees' are given autonomy to deliberate about what constitutes the common good and to choose whether and how it is to be provided. 'Delegates' are not granted autonomy; they must reflect the wishes of their constituents. The oft-quoted case of choosing between these roles was the speech to the electors of Bristol by Irish statesman and liberal conservative Edmund Burke (1774), in which he advocated trusteeship. 'Parliament … is a *deliberative* assembly of *one* nation, with one interest, that of the whole … You choose a member indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not a member of Bristol, but he is a member of *parliament*' (emphasis in original). Unsurprisingly, Burke lost the next election.

The eminent political theorist Iris Marion Young has argued that representatives must combine both delegation and trusteeship, and that this requires sustained, effective communication between citizens and representatives.

> The representative's responsibility is not simply to express a mandate, but to participate in discussion and debate with other representatives, listen to their questions, appeals, stories, and arguments, and with them try to arrive at wise and just decisions … The respon-

> sibility of the representative is not simply to tell citizens how she has enacted a mandate they authorized or served their interests, but as much to persuade them of the rightness of her judgement … Strong communicative democracy, however, also requires some processes and procedures where constituents call representatives to account over and above reauthorizing them [by means of re-election]. (Young 2000, 131–32)

Young's recommendation that good representation comprises both delegation and trusteeship conforms to the view of social psychologists Alexander Haslam, Stephen Reicher and Michael Platow (2011) that effective leadership requires followers and leaders to work together, with followers making choices for the leader (acting as a delegate) and the leader (acting as a trustee) making choices for followers. If such 'strong communicative democracy' is not achieved then citizens and their political agents may fail to recognize and appreciate important public goods. We now take a closer look at the obstacles to this communication that are raised by ambiguity in delegation.

2.2.1 Obstructions to communicative democracy

As noted in §2.1, the work of liberal democratic government is basically to recognize public goods that are — or may become — important and to make good social choices of them. In addition to making these choices, those governments must also execute them. The social choice part of democratic government is performed by elected representatives rather than by citizens because citizens do not have the resources for this and are far too busy with their own occupations. As Young points out, strong communication between citizens and representatives would help representatives recognize and choose the public goods that citizens would want if they were able to give them full consideration. However, ambiguous delegation interferes with this communication by placing representatives in a position where their primary incentive is not to attend to social choice, but to get elected or re-elected. As observed above, the delegation is ambiguous because it is done with frequent elections in which

incumbents may run for re-election. The fact that elections are frequent (relative to the span of a human life) is a significant cause of ambiguity because an incumbent's performance in the last few years of a term of office is likely to be increasingly influenced by the state of public opinion that he or she anticipates for the looming election. This influence will cover more of the incumbent's term if it is short. But if incumbency is limited to one term only and if representatives are elected for terms of, say, twenty to thirty years instead of two to six years, their responsibility to act as trustees and their freedom to fully attend to the social choice task of government would be clear. This would, of course, virtually eliminate their accountability to the electorate, but as discussed below in §2.2.5, the accountability provided by the current electoral system is defective, so this is not quite the problem it may seem to be.

At this point, a sketch of the representative process may help illustrate the blocking of communicative democracy by ambiguous delegation. To the extent that electors consider that they elect trustees, they transfer to politicians the responsibility and authority to execute the social choice task of government. In this mode, electors may not think much about these choices, as they are leaving them to their representatives. If their representatives act accordingly, as trustees, and think seriously about issues, they are likely to develop views that are more sagacious than those of most electors, who will then not appreciate the utterances and actions of their representatives. Such incomprehension by voters would tend to make them hostile to trustees, who would then lose votes at the next election. Representatives will therefore allocate a lower priority to trusteeship than to the task of performing as delegates for electors. As delegates they are concerned to show that they are carrying out the wishes of electors and will be reluctant to point out that this means they, the representatives, are not fully focused on social choice. This lack of openness will be encouraged by representatives' awareness that they do actually attend to some of that choice, as it will be some of what citizens want them to do as delegates. In addition to this element of deception by representatives, they will also

be reluctant to ask citizens to think more carefully about public policy when the people have largely given this task to them, as trustees. Another way of describing this deceptive behaviour is that citizens elect representatives to provide leadership, but as citizens expect this to come from their representatives they neglect their own role in that relationship (as discussed above in §2.2), making it dysfunctional. However, in order to get re-elected, representatives must pretend that their leadership is in excellent shape and doing a great job of providing public goods.

It might be expected that deficiencies in public policy generated by ambiguous delegation would be corrected by the expert knowledge and professional behaviour of public servants. But bureaucrats have limited freedom to act. When upper echelon bureaucrats are appointed by politicians, the bureaucracy will only offer advice that politicians can implement to enhance (or at the very least, to not endanger) their prospects for re-election. Public choice economist Bryan Caplan describes the situation as follows.

> In complex modern political systems, leaders can only make a handful of big decisions. The rest must be left in subordinates' hands. High level subordinates face the same dilemma, pushing concrete decisions further down the bureaucratic food chain. This fosters the sense that elected leaders are not in charge. The real power, supposedly, is the 'faceless bureaucracy.'
>
> The economics of principal-agent relations cuts against this inversion. When a principal delegates a task to a subordinate, his tacit instruction is, 'Do *what I myself would have done if* I had the time,' not, 'Do as you please.' The former does not have to evolve into the latter. Common sense tells a principal to occasionally audit his subordinates to see how well they mimic the decisions he would have made himself.
>
> It makes little difference if there is one principal and one agent, or one principal at the top of a tall bureaucratic pyramid. The preferences of the apex trickle down to the base …
>
> In a deep sense, the leader of an organization is responsible for everything his organization does … Those who have been a cog in

> the political machine frequently relay a different impression, but their objections are fairly superficial. The fact that you have some latitude over the cosmetics of a delegated decision hardly shows that you — not your nominal superior — control its substance. (2008, 172–73, emphasis in original)

Bureaucrats are therefore unable to influence very significant areas of policy, and major policy flaws generated by the ambiguity of delegation are likely to remain uncorrected.

Because ambiguous delegation produces not only some incompetence in democratic public policy, but also a lack of candour and even direct deception by many politicians, electoral politics arouses the distrust of electors. In other words, it appears that the ambiguity of delegation creates what political scientist Paul Whiteley (2004, 7) calls the 'paradox of trust'. As he describes it, this is the flouting of the classical Greek 'elected principle' that citizens will trust representatives they can throw out more than those they cannot. According to this principle, citizens should trust people who are elected and the institutions they run, more than those that are not based on elections. However, surveys in Britain have shown the opposite to be true, with low public trust in politicians and only modest trust in government and the House of Commons, compared with high trust in the courts and the public service (Whiteley 2004, 7). The same result is shown by surveys in Sweden, where institutions whose leaders are elected, such as political parties, unions, the European Union Parliament, the Swedish Parliament and city councils, generate less confidence than those in which citizens do not elect leaders, such as the public health care system, universities, the courts, the police, the Central Bank and the Royal Family (Rothstein 2011, 84). However, if one recognizes that delegation by means of fairly frequent elections is somewhat ambiguous, then there is no 'paradox' of trust at all, for the ambiguity should make those who delegate suspicious of those they delegate to.

The effect of ambiguous delegation might be summarized as being to hobble democratic government with a failure of leadership in which leader and followers do not relate effectively be-

cause followers neglect to make crucial contributions to their leadership while the leaders have an incentive to pretend that it is working well. To rectify this, followers must contribute, first by deliberating their choices of public goods and then by influencing their representatives with those well-considered choices. As indicated in the preceding section with its discussion of operational / tactical / strategic policy and also in this section by Caplan's views on delegation, the essential role for citizens — especially in view of their limited time for this — is to focus on strategic policy. If such participation could be institutionalized, it should place citizens very ostensibly in the role of directing their democracy, and that would oblige them to do it carefully.

The conventional terms for political influence by citizens are 'popular control', 'popular rule' and 'popular sovereignty', but 'directing' and 'directorship' will be used here, to indicate that citizens must determine strategic or fundamental policy. As discussed below in §2.2.3 and §2.2.4, citizens do provide much of this direction, but as their awareness of this is very limited, their guidance lacks thought. Directorship is not the same as leadership because, as noted above, leadership is the relationship between leader and followers and does not include management, decision-making and authority. These other functions are those of directors and as democracy is 'government by the people', it is they who must direct government. As a democratic state has thousands or millions of such directors there is an obvious need for facilitators to coordinate their work. These facilitators might be the elected politicians, but if the people regard them as their leaders rather than as their facilitators, then they will follow rather than direct. A democratic state therefore requires that the people curb their need for leaders so that they can clearly see themselves as its directors. Such a replacement of the focus on 'leadership' with an emphasis on 'directorship' may help clear the fog observed by communication theorist John Gastil (1994), as he wrote that 'conceptual ambiguity and operational inconsistency has clouded the findings of the last four decades of research on democratic and autocratic leadership.' Political scientist Marjan Brezovsek (2009, 641) describes this fog as follows.

> Despite the modern flood of literature on leadership generally, the specific problem of democratic leadership seldom appears. We argue that this strange silence is in fact symptomatic of the ambiguous place leadership occupies in a democracy, being both essential to democratic government yet finding no secure justification within a theory resting on the concept of popular sovereignty. The present scholarship on democratic leadership is deficient precisely because it is unwilling to contemplate the possibility that the tension between leadership and popular sovereignty is incapable of resolution. We claim that this is not a political problem to be overcome, but rather a theoretically invaluable starting point for understanding both the unique authority of democratic leaders and the perennial challenges they face …

A few years after Brezovsek, political scientists John Kane and Haig Patapan (2012, 170) also noticed 'this strange silence' on democratic leadership and came to the same conclusion: It is 'not a political problem to be overcome'. In their words,

> leadership is absolutely necessary and yet in permanent tension with the democratic principle of popular sovereignty … In compelling leaders perpetually to negotiate the problem of leadership legitimacy, democracies constantly reaffirm the sovereignty of the people even while enjoying the benefits of leadership.

So it is suggested here that democracies should 'constantly reaffirm the sovereignty of the people', by having them act as a board of directors that chooses strategic public policy. If the people perform this role with full awareness that they are doing this, then they may be able to transform their sovereignty into an intelligent directorship that, over time, develops into a broad management of all public policy, from strategic through tactical to operational.

To summarize this introduction to ambiguous delegation, we might begin by recognizing that democratic leadership is a relationship in which it is fundamentally the followers who make the social choices. It is they who direct government. If these fol-

lowers do not clearly see this and thus do not think and act as directors, some — or many — public goods will be neglected. As confusion in a democracy about who directs it is crucial, ambiguous delegation is now surveyed in more detail, in the following six stages.

- Although politicians are popularly regarded as the policy makers, research indicates that citizens are the basic directors of policy in liberal democracies.
- Research also indicates that citizens are generally ignorant of many issues concerning public goods. It is argued that this is partly because ambiguous delegation allows citizens to be unconscious of their role as directors and thereby feel free to focus on private goods and ignore important public goods. Six specific motivations for this bias are proposed.
- The unconsciousness of citizens' directorship allows them to strengthen that unconsciousness by seeing others as directors. Five motivators of this perception are suggested.
- Democratic accountability and legitimacy are flawed by the ambiguity of delegation.
- Supermajoritarianism is a type of ambiguous delegation in politics, albeit less fundamental than the type being considered here.
- An objection to ambiguous delegation being considered a major problem is described — and assessed as misleading.

2.2.2 Citizens as directors

Although the ambiguity of electoral delegation means that neither citizens nor politicians perceive a clear responsibility to direct government policy, many observers of US democracy conclude, in effect, that citizens are the directors. As political scientist James Druckman (2006, 405) observes, a 'defining feature of democracy is government responsiveness to citizens' preferences'. Michael Xenos (2005, 164), who studies political communication, observes that politicians 'and candidates are remarkably responsive to public sentiment … [because citizens who are] politically uninformed and apathetic … nonetheless

occasionally engage in the active disciplining of representatives through electoral rewards and punishments'. Sociologist Paul Burstein (2003, 29) states that 'public opinion influences policy most of the time, often strongly. Responsiveness appears to increase with salience, and public opinion matters even in the face of activities by interest organizations, political parties, and political and economic elites.' Druckman (2006, 406, 408) notes that

> presidents will make appeals for policies when the public already supports the president's position … particularly on domestic issues … the bottom line is that public opinion affects the direction of policy … the president does not manipulate public preferences by going public; rather he highlights certain issues, making them salient, and as a result, public opinion subsequently has an impact on these issues (because Congress follows this opinion on these issues).

Political scientist James Stimson has analysed the political influence of citizens in *Tides of Consent: How Public Opinion Shapes American Politics.* His assessment is summarized by political scientist Mark D. Brewer (2005, 632):

> The bottom line of this book is that public opinion, specifically, public opinion change, is the most important factor in American politics. Political conflicts and strategies are dictated in good measure by its shapes and contours. Political elites (at least astute ones) are attentive of it and responsive to it. Policy formation is dependent on it, and policy outputs are ultimately reflective of it. In short, Stimson argues that public opinion drives American politics, and that political change is the result of shifts in public opinion.
>
> For Stimson, not all opinion change is the same. Sometimes, opinion change is fast and responsive, such as the spikes in presidential approval immediately after a national crisis or the fluctuations in presidential horserace polls during election campaigns. Other change is so slow as to be almost glacial or tidal in pace (hence, the 'tides' of the title) and occurs in such small increments that it is almost always overlooked as it is occurring. In other in-

> stances, opinion change falls somewhere between these two types. Each type is important here.

Legal scholar Ilya Somin (2000, 147, 153) notes that although some researchers find that public opinion is followed much less slavishly than others report, 'the case studies they themselves rely on show that public opinion constrains policy makers more than they claim.' He concludes that 'flouting centrist public opinion poses severe risks for politicians … [raising] the danger that close adherence to ill-informed public opinion might lead to disastrous, internally contradictory policies.' Political scientist Derek Bok (2001, 359) has stressed the sensitivity of US politicians to voters' opinions, with government involving 'minute measurement of public appetites'.

Somewhat counter-intuitively, evidence of directorship by the people appears to be provided by this account from political scientist Graham Smith (2009 17, 18, emphasis in original).

> Evidence from consultation exercises suggests that the deep scepticism expressed by citizens about their capacity to affect the decision-making process is often justified … Janet Newman and her colleagues argue there is often an orientation towards 'enabling the public to operate within the norms set by the bureaucracy … a process of possible *incorporation* of the lay public into official institutions' … While public policy may praise the virtues of participation (and may even make it a statutory requirement), evidence suggests that organisational and professional resistance to participation is often an obstacle for successful engagement … It is not unusual to find the belief amongst agency officials that citizen involvement is not suitable for strategic level decisions.

If directorship by the people is taking place largely unconsciously through the electoral process, as would be expected from ambiguous delegation (see §2.2.4 below), then when public authorities ask for input from citizens on specific projects or policy areas, these authorities will be constrained by the broad directorship of the mass public to ignore any contrary recom-

mendations from such consultations. This is because that input lacks political power because it comes from a small subsection of the mass public and/or because the subject of the consultation is relatively specific policy that is subservient to broader policy controlled by the directorship of the mass public. What agency officials and politicians like to think of as their strategic or fundamental policy may in fact be tactical or operational, for much of the policy that is really strategic may be invisible to them as it is predetermined by the prevailing attitudes, values and assumptions of most citizens. If politicians are to be elected, they must embrace these mind-sets, either unconsciously or with conscious agreement or in Machiavellian conformity with the rule of the political game that says voters will not allow their major mind-sets to be overruled.

So it is concluded here that public policy in democracies is basically directed by citizens. This is, of course, what elections and their frequency are intended to achieve. Politicians usually follow this directorship by making decisions (often presented as leadership) that carefully avoid clashing with the values and strongly held opinions of the majority of the public. Fukuyama (2014, 519) provides a military analogy for this: 'The autonomous platoon leader … does not weigh in on grand strategy; that's the appropriate function of generals. In a democracy, the people are ultimately the generals.' Political scientists Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Alastair Smith (2012, 281) concur: 'Democratic leaders listen to their voters because that is how they and their political party get to keep their jobs.'

2.2.3 Ignorant directors

Directorship by citizens is perversely strengthened by their well-documented reluctance to discuss and deliberate policy with each other (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002). Because most citizens pay limited attention to public policy it is very difficult for politicians to lead by attempting to develop or change the political views of citizens. The people are thereby left firmly in charge, because, as we have seen, politicians are responsive to their opinions. Political scientist Stephen Bennett (2006,

120) has described this general disinterest in policy in emphatic terms: 'Low levels of political information among the mass public have been observed again and again.' The editor of *Critical Review,* Jeffrey Friedman (cited in Bennett 2006, 120), describes this as 'one of the strongest findings that have been produced by any social science — possibly the strongest.' In 1964, political scientist Philip E. Converse made the first attempt to statistically describe the competence of citizens to offer sensible advice on affairs of state with his paper 'The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics'. Bennett (2006, 105) notes that this research served 'to overwhelmingly confirm the worst fears of… democratic skeptics'. Somin (2006, 255) notes that these observations remain valid: 'More than 40 years after the pioneering work of Converse, political ignorance remains as widespread as ever.' Many others agree (e.g. Hardin 2006; Kinder 2006; Zaller 1992). Surveys have shown this ignorance to be profound in something like 80% of the population. Friedman assesses the current significance of the work of Converse and his University of Michigan colleagues in the following terms.

> Subsequent research, inspired by the work of the Michigan school has amply borne out its 'bleak' findings. Whether the question is what the government does, what it is Constitutionally authorized to do, what new policies are being proposed, or what reasons are being offered for them, most people have no idea how to answer accurately…
>
> Most of this scholarship establishes that the public lacks the most elementary political information. It is paradoxical, then, that nothing more dramatically brought public ignorance home to public opinion scholars than Converse's paper, which focused on the public's ignorance of relatively esoteric knowledge: knowledge of political ideology…
>
> The chief prescriptive implication is, I believe, that the will of the people is so woefully uninformed that one might wonder about the propriety of enacting that will into law. (Friedman 2006, iv, v)

Political scientist Larry Bartels (1996, 194) has observed that the 'political ignorance of the American voter is one of the best documented features of contemporary politics, but the political significance of this is far from clear.' The competence of voters depends not only on their levels of information but on how they use the information they have. Some scholars have suggested that one or both of two processes could cause a mass public of fairly uninformed citizens to act as if it were well-informed. One process is that the statistical aggregation of voters' choices may cause the uninformed votes to cancel each other — if the uninformed error is random — so that the informed votes decide the issue. The other process is that uninformed voters use heuristics (cues or information shortcuts) as labour-saving devices to guide their vote. It is suggested that merely by observing the opinions of like-minded citizens or groups, a citizen can vote the way she would if she were fully informed. Empirical studies (e.g. Lupia 1994; Bartels 1996) have shown that in some cases, voters can use heuristics as substitutes for being well-informed, while in other cases neither heuristics nor the cancellation of ignorance through the aggregation of votes can compensate for voter ignorance.

> The right question to ask is not whether heuristics always (or never) yield competent decisions, because we know the answer is no. The right question to ask is about the conditions under which use of particular proxies is necessary or sufficient for competent voting. (Lupia 2006, 229)

Heuristics may fail when elites do not understand an issue well, perhaps because of partisan bias, or insufficient public debate and deliberation, or lack of information. Bias or insufficient debate may mean there has been an inadequate demand for information, so more research is needed to produce it and then subsequent public discourse to process and disseminate it. Insufficient deliberation often occurs because an issue can only be understood by considering consequences that may follow the initial results of the action aimed at resolving it. This problem

is explored later with descriptions of feedbacks in §5.3 and a discussion of 'thinking beyond stage one' in §5.4. Where politicians serve as elites or proxies, citizen ignorance may constrain them to have partisan attitudes and limited understandings of issues in order to attract votes. An illustration of how this effect has distorted and constrained public debate on the issue of the desirable future size of Australia's population is given later in §4.2.1.

Public opinion scholar Scott Althaus (2003) has observed that while

> many respondents may use heuristics, on-line processing, and information shortcuts to arrive at the political opinions they express in surveys, these substitutes for political knowledge do not necessarily help ill-informed people express policy preferences similar to those of well-informed people. If they did, surveyed opinion across the board should closely resemble fully informed opinion (2003, 143) … Despite assurances by public opinion researchers that the public's low levels and uneven social distribution of political knowledge are relatively benign to the functioning of democracy, the mass public is often unable to make up for its inattentiveness. (2003, 311)

As indicated above, this inattentiveness means that not enough accurate and crucial information is sought out and publicised. Political scientist Doris Graber (2006, 176) has expressed concern at this situation:

> Decision quality is very much constrained by the information available to decision makers at the mass as well as at the elite level. When that information is incomplete or wrong, it may be very difficult for mass publics and even elites to detect the inaccuracies and discover the truth … [for example,] the question of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

Four current and persisting issues that are difficult for both elites and citizens to be sufficiently informed on are discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. These are global warming, unemployment,

overpopulation and the closely related syndrome, the 'scarcity multiplier', in which scarcities are exacerbated by short-sighted attempts to avoid them. To prepare for those discussions, as well as to add to our understanding of citizen ignorance, six incentives for that ignorance are presented below. These are all motivations to ignore public goods in favour of private goods and they have the effect that (especially as these two types of goods compete for resources (see §2.1)) public goods are neglected and underprovided. The first three of these six motivations are fairly stable over time, but the other three tend to grow through positive feedback. This bias, of citizens being much more motivated to consider and choose private rather than public goods, is not only likely to have trivial private goods chosen instead of important public goods, but it is also likely to prevent citizens from getting practice at understanding and evaluating public goods.

Later, in §4.1 we will add to this understanding of ignorance of public goods by describing several characteristics of many issues concerning public goods that make it difficult for citizens to recognize and evaluate them. Then in section §8.1 it is suggested that these cognitive obstacles to choosing public goods might explain some of the difference in the policy preferences of conservatives and liberals.

2.2.3.1 Fairly stable motivations of citizens' ignorance of public goods

THE RELATIVE EASE, URGENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CHOICE OF PRIVATE GOODS. In a democracy, the choice of a private good is much easier than the choice of a public good because the latter requires social or collective choice while the former only needs the decision of one person or entity, that is, individual choice. The non-excludability of public goods requires the members of a democracy to discuss each issue concerning these goods to try to understand what private and public goods are competing in the issue, then decide what trade-offs they want between these goods, and, finally, aggregate their preferences in some way. In contrast, the individual choice of private goods is merely the choice of a person or an entity to either make it, or take it,

or purchase it, or go without. Purchasing is facilitated by the market, as its 'invisible hand' automatically elicits supplies and computes prices. The market also gives an impression that private goods have a very definite value — their price — but price actually registers exchange power rather than value. In contrast, those public goods that have to be purchased are not priced directly to consumers because they are non-excludable, so their value appears vague and perhaps inconsequential. Moreover, many public goods are not priced as they are freely available to all from nature or society, so their value and even their existence tend to be overlooked. The urgency of looking after oneself with many excludable goods such as food, shelter, clothing, entertainment, recreation equipment and facilities, and medical care, adds to the attraction of individual choice. In addition to these seductions of private goods and the individual choice that secures them, people are decisive in individual choice, whereas in social choice they know they are non-decisive, being merely one of thousands or millions of people voting together to choose or reject a non-excludable good or an uncertain bundle of these (Brennan and Lomasky 1989, 49–50). As public policy scholar Anthony Downs (1957) observed, it is therefore rational for voters to remain ignorant of issues concerning public goods. This 'rational ignorance' makes many citizens vote expressively, in which they choose policies that make them feel good, without having any interest in whether those policies actually work; and they also vote with the 'rational irrationality' of believing, without any supporting evidence, that feel-good policies actually do work (Caplan 2008, 138–39).

In these ways, the comparative ease, urgency and effectiveness of the individual choice of private goods encourage people to focus on choosing these instead of giving serious attention to public goods. This tendency is generated with incentives created by the excludability of private goods. And it is encouraged because the ambiguity of electoral delegation allows citizens to neglect their democratic responsibility to carefully consider public goods.

Citizens' fear of free-riders. Political scientist Kevin Smith (2006, 1015, 1013) notes considerable cross-disciplinary empirical evidence of a human predisposition to avoid 'being played for a sucker … It is not just what they get from decisions, but whether they perceive the process of decision-making as fair that leads people to view the decisions as legitimate' (see also Hibbing and Alford 2004; Orbell et al. 2004). 'Sucker aversion' can have a powerful effect on the provision of public goods because their non-excludability leads some people to consider that, because this makes them vulnerable to free riding, private goods must be preferable. In this view, the 'higher the proportion of resources that are allocated in a market way, where there's no escape from paying for what you get and getting what you pay for, the more just and efficient the economy is likely to be' (Stretton and Orchard 1994, 55–56). This motivation for overvaluing private goods is also facilitated by ambiguous delegation, for this allows citizens to neglect their responsibility to reject such heuristic shortcuts and to carefully consider needs for public goods.

Citizens' fear of government incompetence. Observations by citizens of government incompetence may lead them to see the market as more reliable, in which case they may focus on obtaining private rather than public goods. This attitude will further erode the competence of democratic government and help to make it a self-fulfilling prophecy. As hedge fund manager George Soros (2010, 16) observes for the US: 'A large majority of the population is convinced that the government is incapable of efficiently managing investments. Again, this belief is not without justification: a quarter of a century of calling government bad has resulted in bad government.' Again, it might be expected that such irresponsibly convenient thinking by citizens is invited by the ambiguity of electoral delegation.

Whether Americans' experience of political bungling has produced scepticism of the capacity of government to produce public goods or whether other factors cause it, fear of government incompetence and the resultant bias towards private goods is strikingly influential in the United States (for a discussion of

this see §3.2). Economics journalist Robert Kuttner (2008, 75) describes this fear as an 'undertow' on US government: 'Regulation is still widely considered a pejorative word. Obama … must hose away a prevailing ideology in which large government endeavours are deemed to be outmoded by modern markets'. Kuttner (2008, 75–76) notes several American expressions of this ideology: 'Government is generally perverse or incompetent … Tax cuts are one of the few benefits that governments can reliably deliver … Private markets invariably work better than government … [and] Democrats need to talk more like Republicans'. Within the last four decades, three presidents have strongly expressed this mindset. Jimmy Carter, in his 1978 State of the Union address, declared: 'Government cannot solve our problems, it can't set our goals, it cannot define our vision'. In 1981 Ronald Reagan observed in his Inaugural Address: 'In this present crisis, government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem.' And in January 1996, Bill Clinton stated, in his State of the Union speech: 'We know big government does not have all the answers … . The era of big government is over' (Kuttner 2008, 87–88).

As Soros observed, reluctance to correct financial markets is a very significant rejection of solutions from government by US citizens. Nobel laureate economist Joseph Stiglitz (2009, 46) has assessed that 'confidence in financial markets will not be restored unless governments take a stronger role in regulating financial institutions … Even former Federal Reserve System chairman Alan Greenspan, the high priest of deregulation, admits he went too far.' Amartya Sen (2009) has given similar advice. At George Mason University on 8 January, 2009, President-elect Barack Obama (FederalNewsService 2009) appeared to recognize that the 'undertow' required an emphatic rebuttal: 'Only government can break the cycle[s] that are crippling our economy.'

2.2.3.2 Relatively dynamic motivations of citizens' ignorance of public goods

DISTRACTION BY POSITIONAL COMPETITION. Economist Eban Goodstein (2005, 218–19) has observed that 'when relative consumption becomes important … people tend to overvalue increases in private consumption (given the negative externalities imposed on others), and undervalue noncompetitive public goods'. The externalities he refers to are the costs of 'positional competition', some of which are described by economist Richard Layard (2005, 7, 44) as follows: 'Our wants are not given … We are heavily driven by the desire to keep up with other people. This leads to a status race, which is self-defeating since if I do better, someone else must do worse.' Doing better provokes retaliation, then counter-response, which provokes more retaliation and so on. Positional competition is not only a zero-sum game but it continues indefinitely in a positive feedback. Also, as its consumption produces no ultimate benefit (which would be the social status it tries to establish) the players of the game reap only the repetitive costs of their consumption (e.g. Frank 2005).

Positional competition occurs not only as status rivalry, but also as people try to buy products or services that are in scarce supply relative to the number of people in a society, such that not everyone can have access to them. Examples are land suitable for leisure living and leadership positions in politics and business. This competition becomes strong when people are well-provided in basic needs such as shelter, food, security and companionship. They can then afford to focus more on comparing their private goods with those of their neighbours, so, as Goodstein puts it, their 'relative consumption becomes important'. Citizens in democracies are encouraged to overlook the public costs of positional competition by ambiguous delegation confusing them about who should take care of public goods. As citizens expect their politicians to do this, they tend not to notice when they themselves are destroying these goods with their positional competition.

Distraction by adaptation. People are distracted from appreciating and choosing public goods by another failure to anticipate the consequences of choosing private goods. This is that their satisfaction with these depends not only on how well they are doing relative to their neighbours, but also on how well they are doing relative to what they are used to having (Layard 2005, 42, 48). This is known as adaptation or habituation. It operates vigorously on some things, but not on others, such as the pleasures of friendship and sex, and the miseries of unpredictable loud noises, widowhood and caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease. Layard (2005, 49) makes the point that the 'things we get used to most easily and most take for granted are our material possessions'. Adaptation therefore escalates our desires for private goods rather than for public goods. One manifestation of this is that the level of income that people feel they require is usually not much below what they currently have. For example, over the period 1952 to 1987, the income that US citizens considered they required increased by 70% of their increase in real income (Layard 2005, 42–43). Another indication of adaptation is given by survey results that show if one's real income rises by a dollar, then after a while one's required income will rise by at least 40 cents (Layard 2005, 49). As with positional competition, adaptation tends to re-establish wants for private goods after an increase in their supply, which produces a tendency for positive feedback in wants for private goods and a corresponding decline in wants for public goods. This feedback is encouraged by ambiguous delegation, because confusion about who directs public policy leaves citizens free to ignore the impacts of their adaptation on the provision of public goods.

Distraction by advertising. Half a century ago the iconoclastic economist John Kenneth Galbraith pointed to sales promotion as another motivation of neglect of public goods. He called this a 'problem of social balance' and described it as a lack of

> satisfactory relationship between the supply of privately produced goods and services and those of the state … The problem of social

> balance is ubiquitous, and frequently it is obtrusive … [Every] corner of the public psyche is canvassed by some of the nation's most talented citizens to see if the desire for some merchantable product can be cultivated. No similar process operates on behalf of the non-merchantable services of the state. (Galbraith 1958, 198, 202–3)

'Social balance' is a straightforward concept when it compares purchases of private goods with purchases of those 'non-merchantable services of the state' that are funded from taxes, such as law enforcement, national defence and the construction and maintenance of public infrastructure. However, the 'problem of social balance' is subtle in the case of public goods that are free and therefore do not directly compete with private goods for purchasing power, but which nevertheless do compete with them because both types of good require the same resources. The largest class of such resources is natural capital, much of which is a public good. Natural capital is defined as the *stock* of natural (or 'non-produced') things that are the means of producing *flows* of natural resources and services that people may utilize. Such flows are termed natural income. Examples of natural capital are stocks such as: soil, biodiversity, forests, wilderness, natural scenery, the sun and its distance from earth, a stable climate, geographic space and air, seas, rivers and lakes. In the cases of soil, forests and rivers we have stocks that may produce flows of produce such as food, timber and fish. When natural capital is increasingly used to produce private goods it becomes scarcer and its public component may thereby be allocated a price, transforming it into a private good (e.g. Daly and Cobb, 1989). Such transformations and the resultant rising scarcities of natural capital are also problems of social balance.

As Galbraith described it, the problem is one of democratic governments being compelled to underprovide public goods by the advertising industry focusing citizens on private goods. An example of this is given in §4.2.3 with a discussion of the biasing of society's labour-leisure choice (which should produce the public good of optimizing the availability of leisure) towards excessive hours of work. The advertising industry is permitted to

do this at least partly because the ambiguity of electoral delegation leaves citizens without a firm obligation to recognize and consider public goods.

In common with positional competition and adaptation, advertising tends to escalate wants for private goods through positive feedback. By increasing sales, advertising provides more funds for more advertising to further increase sales and so on. Galbraith (1958, 124) called this feedback the 'dependence effect'; a cycle in which 'wants are increasingly created by the process by which they are satisfied'. Sales promotion works by encouraging both positional competition and adaptation, so the three mechanisms form a feedback complex in which two positive feedbacks, those of positional competition and adaptation, are boosted by sales promotion, which tends to boost itself in another positive feedback. This complex is referred to later in §5.3.1 in an analysis of addiction to economic growth by modern industrial societies. It is depicted diagrammatically there in Figure 5.1 (p. 211).

The six incentives described here that nudge citizens to neglect public goods all work by making private goods appear more attractive. As noted for each incentive, citizens allow themselves to be swayed by them at least partly because they are confused about their role in democratic government. This confusion is now examined more closely.

2.2.4 Unconscious directors

We have seen that the ambiguity of delegation by frequent elections leaves citizens partly or even largely unaware of their position as the directors of government policy. Citizens therefore feel free to want private goods, with little sense that they should consider restraining these desires to allow, and to demand, the production or protection of public goods. Politicians are pressured by these private wants to make social choices that tend to express aggregations of wants for private goods rather than wants for public goods. Over time, this will progressively destroy public goods that require resources needed for private goods, such as environmental quality versus commercial consumption

of natural capital, fair-minded foreign policy versus access to markets and commercial resources, and equality among citizens versus financial incentives for private innovation and productivity. If we are to correct such erosions of public goods we must fully understand why citizens lack consciousness of their democratic role as directors. Six causes of this have been described above, in the form of incentives for citizens to be ignorant of public goods. In addition, the following five factors have a similar effect, as these are incentives for citizens to be unconscious of their democratic responsibility to direct public policy.

PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN PASSING POWER TO A FIGURE OF AUTHORITY. Citizens lack consciousness of their role as directors partly because the delegation of that authority and responsibility from citizens to politicians by means of elections is a very public, formal procedure in which many or most citizens are personally involved. They therefore get a strong impression that it transfers their directorship until the next election. The selection of leaders is thereby conflated with the selection of directors. Democratic systems that hold popular elections of presidents are likely to accentuate this cause of unconscious directorship by the people, as those events dramatically appoint figures of supreme authority. Historian Dana Nelson (2008, 183–85) laments this effect in *Bad for Democracy: How the Presidency Undermines the Power of the People.*

> The sway of presidentialism reduces our democratic skill-set … and has made it all the harder to imagine not only how to make democratic community together but even how to picture why we would want to … I'm arguing that we imagine democracy as something we, the people lead together, amid our differences …. that democracy is not served by the president. Rather it is served by us, the people, working together for its present and its future.

Not only may the ambiguity of delegation be greater in presidential democracies than in other types, but the huge amount of money required for presidential campaigns helps the wealthy

to influence the president, making government even less democratic. Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign showed that the internet may be used to counter this effect, but such facilitation of small donations to presidential contests brings millions of ordinary citizens into more intimate contact with that process, so it may strengthen the ambiguity of delegation by reinforcing citizens' impressions that it is not them, but presidents who govern. Presidential campaigns can be emotionally engaging, drawing many citizens into politics with great enthusiasm. But this participation is largely driven by the emotional appeal of personalities, so the pros and cons of issues are neglected and public deliberation virtually nonexistent. After a new president is elected, the opinions and attitudes of the people are likely to be little more developed than before and the new leader must then basically follow these or be replaced by one who does. In parliamentary systems the head of government is chosen by politicians, which may allow citizens more freedom to see that it is they who must govern, for that head is not directly their leader, but the leader of their representatives.

Appearance of authority. As politicians appear to be the ones who direct public policy, citizens tend to regard themselves as bystanders and not as democratic directors. However, as discussed above, because politicians have to face elections frequently, their policy decisions tend to be within the boundaries of the opinion of the general public — or if they are outside these, then they tend to be within the boundaries of the opinion of their constituencies — or if they are beyond these limits on particular issues, then they attempt to counter the electoral cost with policies on other issues that satisfy more urgent desires of their constituencies. This gives an appearance of — rather than real — directorship by politicians. The appearance is reinforced when they are called 'leaders', which is the case at least when they are presidents, prime ministers or heads of parties. Haslam, Reicher and Platow (2011, 218) call for this appearance to be changed, hoping that

> by articulating a new psychology of leadership that focuses equally on leaders and followers within the group, we … hope to open up the possibility of a new politics of leadership centered on inclusive debate about what our groups stand for and where they are heading.

Pragmatism. Citizens tend to be unconscious of their directorship because they want delegates to do this for them. This is because citizens recognize to some degree that they do not have the time, the interest, the expertise, the institutional support and the incentives for them to competently identify and choose public goods.

Psychological predispositions. As with the pragmatic motive, psychological predisposition is another case of citizens not thinking of themselves as directors because they want others to do the job. However, this want arises not from the practical need for specialists to handle a complex task, but in human nature: We have a genetic predisposition to belong to a group and in doing so, to either lead the group or follow its leader. Therefore, when a group tries to be democratic and be governed by all the people, a few of them try to lead while the great majority look for the leader that they feel like following. This is rather different from all citizens regarding themselves as the members of a very large board of directors. To understand this democratic problem and gain some perspective on how it may be countered, it is looked at here in some detail.

Primate ethologist Frans de Waal (2005, 232) has described humans as 'Janus-headed', that is, egalitarian but with a desire to control and dominate. He (2005, 78–79) notes that we 'often permit certain men to act as first among equals. The keyword here is 'permit', because the whole group will guard against abuses'. De Waal (2005, 232–33) notes that this 'bipolar' balance of egalitarian and hierarchical dispositions makes people both dependent on, and sensitive to, hierarchies. The dependency arises from the need for harmony, which requires stability, which depends on a well-acknowledged social order. We therefore 'crave hierarchical transparency', which produces the paradox 'that although

positions within a hierarchy are born from contest, the hierarchical structure itself, once established, eliminates the need for further conflict' (de Waal 2005, 64). Thus, in De Waal's view, humans have an instinctive desire for leaders who are strong, reliable and seen to be good for the group. This is consistent with evolutionary psychology, which recognizes that we are social animals who instinctively form and join groups. As this has been a basic survival strategy during our most recent evolution we fall into the zoological category of 'obligatorily gregarious' (de Waal 2005, 231). This has exposed us to the pressures of group life and these are conjectured to have selected predispositions for individuals to adopt social roles, such as leading, or following a dominant individual who leads in the interests of the group (Alford and Hibbing 2004; Barkow et al. 1992; Dugatkin et al. 2003; Fehr and Fischbacher 2003; Keltner and Haidt 2003; Smith et al. 2007; Van Vugt et al. 2008).

The physical activation of the predisposition to follow has actually been observed. Neuroscientist Uffe Schjoedt (2010) and colleagues have done this with functional magnetic resonance imaging that shows when a person listens to someone they regard as authoritative and trustworthy, they shut down parts of their prefrontal and anterior cingulate cortices. These parts of the brain play key roles in vigilance and scepticism when judging the importance and truth of what others say, so their deactivation would permit the listener to be motivated to follow authoritative and trustworthy figures. Subjects who do not regard a speaker as being charismatic do not have this response. Although these tests were done using religious authority figures, Schjoedt speculates that the deactivation should also be stimulated by listening to people such as doctors, parents and politicians.

In line with the opening paragraph of this section, social psychologists Mark van Vugt, Robert Hogan and Robert B. Kaiser (2008, 186) suggest that human 'populations contain individuals with genotypes predisposing them to either leadership or followership'. They argue that the predisposition to follow will be the more prevalent in any population because any 'increase in

the frequency of leader genotypes reduces the payoffs for this strategy — because many would-be leaders compete and fail to coordinate — thus selecting against leader genotypes' (Van Vugt et al. 2008, 186). Van Vugt and his colleagues argue that these predispositions evolved over 2.5 million years of Pleistocene hunter–gatherer life in small groups of 50–150 individuals, creating an innate preference for reverse dominance hierarchy. In that type of hierarchy (as observed by De Waal) leadership is desired but evaluated by group members 'against egalitarian 'hunter–gatherer' standards such as fairness, integrity, competence, good judgment, generosity, humility, and concern for others' (Van Vugt et al. 2008, 188).

> This power reversal made it possible for our ancestors to reap the benefits of cooperation and conquer the world. When leaders are kept in check, as has happened throughout most of human evolutionary history, and others are permitted to reproduce, then followers have a vested genetic interest in protecting the welfare of the group and stability results. (Van Vugt and Ahuja 2010, 192)

In the small groups typical of our environment of evolutionary adaptation (EEA, see Thornhill 1997), intra-group communication was easy and effective, allowing members to make accurate evaluations as they approve a suitable leader. The difficulty of intra-group communication in very large groups such as modern nation-states means that such evaluations in these circumstances may be superficial, producing poor collective judgement.

Van Vugt and his colleagues (2008) suggest that in current circumstances, predispositions to lead and follow make leader-follower patterns emerge more quickly in situations that resemble adaptive problems of the EEA, such as internal group conflict and external threats such as natural disasters or attacks on the group. In such emergencies, followers will readily defer to the decisions of a single individual because the interests of leader and followers have converged. Natural selection in the EEA appears to have produced predispositions for followers to prefer different leaders depending on the problem they face. For exam-

ple, US voters tend to choose hawkish presidents when threatened by war and 'show an increased preference for charismatic leaders and a decreased preference for participative leaders when reminded of their own mortality' (Van Vugt et al. 2008, 189). This corresponds with the behaviour of people in hunter-gatherer societies, in which 'Big Men wield influence only within their realms of expertise, and they lead by example … Prestige is given to individuals with specific skills who can help the group achieve its aims' (Van Vugt and Ahuja 2010, 158). As Van Vugt and his colleagues (2008, 191) express it, leadership 'in the ancestral environment was fluid, distributional and situational.'

Such specificity of leadership response by both leader and followers may have been occurring recently in Russia. The confusion, corruption and stress of attempting to replace communism and the command economy with democracy and capitalism may have helped to make the autocratic style of Vladimir Putin popular with many Russians. In such situations, the instinctive response does not promote democracy. As political scientist Ellen Carnaghan (2007, 64) observes,

> emerging democracies are vulnerable, not because unprepared citizens do not like democracy as they understand it, but because many average citizens do not understand the intricacies of democratic practice well enough … The fate of democracy in Russia remains vulnerable, then, in part as the result of actions by people in power who do not seem to value democratic institutions, but also because citizens may not sufficiently appreciate the opportunities that democracy provides to protect the future they want.

Corruption by special interests. A fifth cause of citizens lacking consciousness of their directorship may be that some of them consider it is not them, nor politicians, but special interests who largely perform this role. These interests usually have financial resources or very large memberships or other forms of power that they can use to deliver votes or other favours to politicians, who, in return, produce laws, policies and programs that those interests want. One indication of this power of special

interests is the scale of their lobbying expenditure, as discussed in Chapter 1 and below in §2.3.2.

SUMMARY. There appear to be five ways in which citizens of liberal democracies are kept unconscious of their responsibilities as directors: 1, citizens personally elect politicians to direct government; 2, citizens see politicians directing it; 3, citizens want them to do it because citizens don't have the necessary time, interest and resources; 4, it is also likely that citizens want politicians to be the directors because most citizens are genetically predisposed to follow; and 5, to some citizens, special interests seem to direct the government.

If democracies are to function effectively, this unconsciousness of their citizens must be dispelled, for as long as they elect representatives via frequent elections, citizens are the ultimate authorities, essentially directing government by setting its strategic goals. They do this with their attitudes and values, such as assigning low importance to long-term probabilities and insisting on the provision of short- and medium-term private and public goods (which has strategic effects). It is therefore essential that the people clearly recognize that they are the directors, for it is only then that their democracy can perform well.

2.2.5 Failure in accountability and legitimacy

A slightly different way of describing democratic government being made irresponsible by citizen directors who are largely politically ignorant and also unconscious of their role is that the accountability of politicians to citizens is defective because citizens are too ignorant of public policy to use that accountability wisely. Over time, this failure of accountability may register with citizens despite their disengagement, for many will be affected by the resultant underprovision of public goods. This could damage the legitimacy of government, so that when it is inclined to implement good policy it cannot muster the political will to do it, producing adverse consequences that further damage its legitimacy. Such deterioration appears to be especially

well-developed in the US, where distrust of government has a firm hold, as discussed later in §3.2.

Unconscious directorship by citizens further damages the legitimacy of government by facilitating corruption by special interests. When citizens do not realize that they are the directors, when they expect to be led and when they lack institutions that would help them to direct in a considered, competent manner, their directorship is open for others to exploit. Manipulation by special interests was noted previously as possibly facilitating citizens' unconsciousness of their directorship, but at the same time their unconsciousness facilitates the manipulation. To some degree, then, public goods will suffer, the political process will be seen as corrupt, the legitimacy of politicians and government is damaged and more citizens will disengage, perhaps with some becoming actively hostile to government. Public-minded citizens may be discouraged from trying to improve their government by becoming well-informed voters, or by offering themselves as political campaigners and candidates, or by working honestly and constructively as bureaucrats and politicians. Public goods may then suffer further, escalating the illegitimacy of government. Such alienation may at times flare into the outrage and protest of civil disobedience, such as the Franklin River protest in Tasmania (noted below in §4.1(3) and §5.1). The Tea Party movement in the US may be another expression of this distrust, as discussed later in §3.2.

Of course, even in issues where special interests do not influence outcomes, unconscious directorship by citizens is still likely to underprovide public goods because the 'rational ignorance' (Downs 1957) of citizens and their feeling that they have delegated the task to politicians leaves them feeling free to focus on private goods. Perhaps such malfunction was observed by Richard Clarke (2004, 238–39), National Security Coordinator for US presidents Clinton and G.W. Bush, as he declared: 'America, alas, seems only to respond well to disasters, to be undistracted by warnings. Our country seems unable to do all that must be done until there has been some awful calamity that validates the importance of the threat'. Clarke was referring to the

management of national security, but his observation could also be applied to other public issues in the US, such as the National Health Service, global warming, energy supply, oil industry regulation (highlighted in April 2010 by the explosion and blowout of BP's Deepwater Horizon rig in the Gulf of Mexico), financial regulation (failure of which caused the 2007–8 global financial crisis, as analysed in Soros 2010, Madrick 2010 and Stiglitz 2010) and, as discussed below in §2.3, foreign affairs. The Secretary-General of the UN, Kofi Annan (2006), appeared to agree with Clarke's assessment with thinly veiled criticism of the US at the Nairobi Climate Change Conference. He declared that, as we consider how to proceed beyond the Kyoto Protocol, 'there remains a frightening lack of leadership.'

Clive Hamilton, public ethics scholar at the Australian National University, has described what appears to be another symptom of the lack of accountability and the resultant irresponsibility to be expected from ambiguous delegation. Hamilton (2011) calls it

> the riddle of Australian politics: voters want a strong leader, but one who will deliver only symbols of action on climate change. Australians want to feel good about themselves without making any sacrifices.
>
> The source of the venom directed at [Prime Minister] Gillard seems to lie in this flaw in the modern Australian character. Confusing what Australians say they want with what they actually want, her plan to push through a carbon tax has turned her into a hate figure.

Perhaps the problem is not a uniquely Australian character flaw, but a predictable response of citizens who consider that at the last election they delegated their democratic authority and responsibility to politicians, chief of whom in this case is the Prime Minister. Citizens thereby feel relieved of responsibility and act accordingly. So it seems that the question is: How can citizens be given the feeling that it is they who are responsible for government policy? Without trying to completely substitute

direct democracy for representative democracy, this might be done with a new institution that gave citizens a very public, influential and deliberate role in choosing specific policies. If this institution was very easy for citizens to use, it should give them an ownership of policy that prepares them for any sacrifices they must make in order to have it executed. This objective for institutional design will be addressed in Part 2.

2.2.6 A less fundamental type of ambiguous delegation—supermajoritarianism

The idea that confusion of authority and responsibility produces defective public policy has a wider application than the situation covered here, of citizen principals failing to clearly delegate from themselves to political agents. In §2.2 this failure was described in terms of uncertainty about two aspects of delegating authority and responsibility: whether any or how much is delegated; and its *ambit* or *type*. But in addition to these problems, ambiguity about which agent or group of agents the citizen principals are attempting to delegate authority and responsibility to, will also hinder the development and implementation of good public policy. McGann (2006) argues that this happens with supermajoritarianism, damaging policy by establishing different and competing agents, sometimes as 'checks and balances'. Supermajoritarian devices are those that require more than simple majorities for decisions, such as federalism, bicameralism, presidentialism, judicial review, the 60 per cent cloture rule to end a filibuster in the US Senate, the two-thirds requirement to overrule a US presidential veto and the need for a supermajority to amend the US Constitution. McGann's (2006, 115–52) argument is that these devices all damage political equality and public deliberation and therefore tend to prevent the development and implementation of good public policy. As supermajoritarianism generally arbitrarily promotes the status quo, it may damage public policy by preventing informed judgement from prevailing. Another aspect of supermajoritarianism is that it blurs accountability with ambiguity about which agent or group of agents has been delegated authority and responsibility. Political

scientists Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson (2012, 56) observe that this makes

> it easier for politicians to depart from voters' priorities. In parliamentary democracies, voters can relatively easily reward or punish politicians. The party or coalition in power, from the prime minister to the backbenchers, must bear responsibility. In the United States, responsibility is much harder to assign — especially now that a party needs at least sixty votes in the Senate to overcome the omnipresent filibuster. GOP leaders know the president and his party are likely to receive most of the blame for poor economic performance, even if the scorched-earth resistance of conservative Republicans is the biggest obstacle to enacting the president's policies.

The concept of ambiguous delegation could therefore be broadened from ambiguity about *whether* principals have actually delegated and *what* they have delegated, to include ambiguity about *which agents* the principals have delegated to. In this book, however, we focus on the 'whether and what' ambiguity, as this is the fundamental one, being a direct consequence of electoral systems. The supermajoritarian, or 'which-agents', ambiguity is not a necessary outcome of frequent elections that are open to incumbents but is imposed independently of that electoral structure by other, less fundamental institutional arrangements.

2.2.7 An objection to ambiguous delegation being seen as a major problem

Citizens who are particularly concerned about special interests pursuing private goods at the expense of public goods might respond to the suggestion that democratic governments malfunction because of ambiguous delegation by proposing that the real problem is manipulation by special interests. This view has two errors. The first is that if we choose to view special interests, rather than the institutions of government, as being responsible for its failure we are assuming that we need not design governments to be capable of governing in the real world, where self-interest is a powerful motivation. The second error is that even

if blaming special interests succeeds in stopping their manipulations, electors would still make defective inputs into public affairs, because ambiguous delegation means they are not clearly asked to deliberate these. However, notwithstanding these problems with that conspiratorial view, it actually implies that ambiguous delegation is significant. Seeing the solution as blaming manipulators is to see it as provoking outrage in citizens so that they take charge by demanding that their manipulated representatives outlaw, or otherwise prevent, their own manipulation. But getting citizens to 'take charge' is what the ambiguous delegation view of democratic dysfunction calls for — not only to prevent manipulation by special interests, but to take charge of public goods in general. Whereas the blaming view is that we must empower citizens by making them angry, the ambiguous delegation view is that we must empower citizens by clarifying delegation. Making citizens angry provokes action, but not necessarily deliberation; however, clarifying delegation produces division of labour, which should facilitate both deliberation and action.

Two decades ago, in a review of the capacity of democracies to make collectively binding decisions and carry them out, political sociologist Claus Offe concluded that it has declined.

> To be sure, states and governments, citizens and social movements, social classes and political parties, elites, administrative authorities, interest groups, coalitions, nations, blocs and associations are all well and alive; it is just that neither the spectators nor they themselves seem to have a very clear notion about their distinctive domain of action … What turns out to be surprisingly and essentially contested is the answer to the question 'who is in charge?' (Offe 1996, vii–viii)

Offe suggested several causes of this uncertainty, such as the growing permeability of national borders due to globalization and multinational agreements, and the decline of traditional political activity such as voting turnout and party membership as activism on specific issues becomes more attractive to increas-

ingly individualistic citizens. He does not mention ambiguous delegation, but if frequent elections have this effect, they should indeed have citizens wondering 'who is in charge?'

2.2.8 An overview of ambiguous delegation

The idea of ambiguous delegation is primarily that democracies are confused about whether they are run by the people or by their political agents. Supermajoritarian devices produce a less fundamental confusion of responsibility and authority by obscuring which political agent or group of agents this obligation and power may have been delegated to. Much of the confusion of the fundamental form of ambiguous delegation is caused by citizens wanting good leaders whereas democratic government demands that they want to be good directors. Their desire for good leaders is the biological urge of a deeply social species and it is partly because citizens expect any government, including democratic ones, to satisfy this desire that they neglect to engage as its directors. As we have seen, leadership is produced by both followers and leaders, whereas directorship is produced by directors choosing policy and then instructing operatives to execute it. In a democracy, those operatives are the elected representatives, but this is not clearly recognized because citizens' primal urge to be led makes them regard their operatives as their 'leaders'. Citizens are confused about whether they should direct, not only because that means they actively lead their 'leaders', but also because they have few specific ways of directing. If they had easy and effective ways of doing this they would be deliberating and choosing public policies and then instructing their operatives to execute them. But it is easier and more natural for citizens to embrace leadership. This merely requires them to be followers, looking for leadership qualities such as charisma, strength of purpose and apparent concern for the group.

Electorally representative democracy demands that citizens grow out of their primal need for leaders and develop the self-reliance and maturity that will enable them to select representatives according to their policies rather than their leadership

qualities. They will then be directing their democracy instead of looking for good leaders. But exhorting citizens to grow up will not move them. Instead, new institutions are needed that would transform them into mature democrats by giving them the incentives and tools to collectively deliberate issues and direct their political agents accordingly. A design for such an institution is offered in Part 2 — but before we go there, the analysis of dysfunction that must guide such design is pursued by identifying two more democratic dysfunctions. We then test the resultant threefold view of government failure by seeing whether it appears to account for such failure in several different liberal democracies and also in a few major public policy issues.

2.3 Excessive competition

In democracies, the competitive device of election is used to select representatives in a manner that is intended to generate energy, ideas, truth and accountability (e.g. Shapiro 2012, 200–207). The competition here is between politicians and political candidates and it is almost continuous because of the regular repetition of elections, usually at intervals of from two to eight years. This periodicity was described in §2.2.1 as frequent because it is a small part of the human life span. As it makes elections an almost constant threat to incumbents who are eligible for re-election, they tend to focus on holding office rather than on choosing good policy. In order to attract votes they often simplify the voter's choice by aligning themselves with a party. Political scientist Ian Marsh and environmental scientist David Yencken (2004, 82) observe that in Australian politics, this simplification (driven by the imperatives of political survival and dominance) is so pronounced that the 'familiar competitive two party system is now itself a principal obstacle … to wise policy choices.' They describe one form of this as 'fake adversarialism'.

> If the government declares a contentious issue to be white, and public opinion is divided or uncertain, the Opposition almost invariably declares it to be black. Yet in government, the Opposition

> may often have supported a similar approach … It happens because, when public opinion is divided or uncertain, rewards accrue to leaders who champion contrasting alternatives, even if they are hollow or only manufactured for political impact … The present system is distorted by the way electoral incentives trump attention to arguments based on considerations of merit and prudence. (Marsh and Yencken 2004, 32–33)

In the UK, the contrasting performances of the unelected House of Lords and the elected House of Commons illustrate the distractions of competition between elected representatives.

> The Lords often scrutinises legislation that the Commons has not had time to look at (it has carved out an important role examining edicts from the European Commission) … Members are astonishingly polite to each other. 'It can become quite syrupy at times,' says Meg Russell, who watches the upper house from University College London. When asked how they would like their elected politicians to behave, voters tend to describe something that sounds a bit like the unelected Lords. (*Economist* 2012, 48)

Electoral competition encourages blatant corruption in politicians by tempting them to rig the economic / social / political situation in favour of their election and re-election. An example of this is South Africa under President Jacob Zuma, where it has been reported, 'Freedom of the press is being chipped away under an embattled ANC' (Economist 2015b). However, electoral competition can be much more destructive than provoking bad manners, irrelevance, fake adversarialism and corruption.

> For two months, Kenya, East Africa's most prosperous and supposedly stable country, hovered on the brink of self-immolation as two warring factions ripped the country apart after a disputed election at the end of 2007. Kofi Annan, the former Secretary-General of the United Nations was brought in to try to resolve the conflict … As ethnic violence raged nearby, negotiators from the two sides would sometimes almost come to blows themselves as Mr. Annan tried

> to find common ground between them … Rival politicians can be brought into open conflict by elections, such as in Kenya, or now in Zimbabwe. (*Economist* 2008a, 67)

Legal scholar Amy Chua (2003) has described examples in which electoral competition inflamed long-suppressed hatred against market-dominant prosperous ethnic minorities: for example, the 'ethnic cleansing' of Croats in parts of the former Yugoslavia following the first free post-WWII elections in 1990; attacks on the Chinese minority in Indonesia as the autocrat Suharto retired and elections were held in 1998; and the massacre of Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994 as the corrupt totalitarian President Habyarimana responded to pressure from the west by making a show of abandoning dictatorship in favour of pluralism and multiparty democracy. Zakaria (2003, 114) has observed that 'without a background in constitutional liberalism, the introduction of democracy in divided societies has actually fomented nationalism, ethnic conflict and even war.' The example of Jamaica indicates that such background must be very strong if it is to prevent destructive competition.

> A relatively stable, peaceful, and 'good natured' democracy started to go astray in the 1970s. A political confrontation between the two parties that escalated out of control drove Jamaica into a vicious circle of corruption, favoritism, clientelism, and organized crime. The Jamaican case shows that in developing countries, unchecked democratic competition can destroy a civil service and a law enforcement sector of relatively high quality by politicizing them for clientelist purposes. (Rothstein 2011, 202)

This spectrum — from bad manners to deception and lethal violence — indicates that the relentlessly competitive nature of electoral politics encourages politicians to be impatient with careful deliberation. It is also likely to attract political candidates with combative dispositions. Democratic politicians may therefore have a tendency to treat issues as fights rather than as cases where pros and cons must be carefully understood and

compared. Examples of such combativeness are given by the journalist and historian Peter Scoblic in *Us vs Them: How a Half Century of Conservatism Has Undermined America's Security.* In one of these he sympathetically describes US President Ronald Reagan's shift from denunciation to negotiation in talks on nuclear arms reduction with the President of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev. But he also observes that it had previously not 'even occurred' to Reagan

> that adopting a war-fighting strategy, beginning with a widespread missile defense program, researching a missile shield, while increasing the military budget by 35 per cent, starting a new bomber program, deploying a new ICBM, and deploying missiles in Europe could be construed as threatening. (cited in Power 2008, 68)

Scoblic also sees dangerous combativeness in US President George W. Bush. Samantha Power (2008, 68), a scholar of foreign policy and special assistant to President Obama, observed that

> Scoblic's account becomes most chilling at the end, when the same conservative voices that had long preferred confrontation to cooperation — such as Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld — actually become dominant players in George W. Bush's executive branch. On January 21, 2000, a year before he would move into the White House, Bush said:
>
> 'When I was coming up, it was a dangerous world. And we knew exactly who the 'they' were. It was us versus them, and it was clear who 'them' was. Today we're not sure who the 'they' are but we know they're there.'
>
> Having suffered through what one diplomat called the 'enemy deprivation syndrome of the 1990s,' September 11 gave hard-line conservatives an opportunity to apply their pre-hatched theories; and from the start they sought to unshackle the United States from international agreements and to reduce reliance on diplomatic engagement.

The great influence of the conservative politicians that Scoblic and Power criticize means that both scholars are troubled by American democracy. The combativeness that alarms them is also evident in the record of the US ignoring human rights such as political freedom and self-determination by supporting authoritarian regimes where this has been convenient for US interests, such as backing Israel (e.g. Mearsheimer and Walt 2007), fighting communism and securing access to markets and resources such as oil (e.g. Perkins 2004; Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2012). For example, although the US upheld the principle of self-determination for Kosovo (versus Serbia) in 1999, it abandoned this rule in the case of Abkhazia and South Ossetia (versus Georgia) in 2008, apparently because it wanted to control oil pipelines (Lantier 2008; Orlov 2008). Russia took the opposite attitude on Abkhazia and South Ossetia, although it had ignored self-determination in its two wars against Chechnya in 1994–96 and 1999–2000. On those separatist movements the

> Russian daily *Kommersant* compared the [Russian] recognition of the Georgian territories with 9/11, stating that world politics would never be the same again. 'For the first time in history, Russia demonstrably undermined the principle of territorial integrity, giving preference to the principle of self-determination of peoples' (WeekendEditor 2008, 32) …
>
> [This has produced] a chill directed towards Russia by its usual allies — and the most important part of this is China's appalled reaction … For years it has joined Russia in defending the notion of territorial integrity, saying that sovereign borders were inviolable. Now it sees Moscow jettison this principle to both countries' potential cost. (Maddox 2008, 15)

We have strayed here from democracies to authoritarian regimes, but the digression illustrates a need for democracies to provide a strong lead, not only by promulgating principles for the just conduct of international affairs, but by adhering to them even if the immediate cost to those democracies is considerable. Unfortunately, it appears that competitive reflexes prevent de-

mocracies from doing this. Other impacts of these reflexes are now inspected.

2.3.1 Competition distracts politicians from producing public goods

As political scientist Ian Shapiro (2012, 202) emphasizes, 'competition for power is indispensable' as it gives 'political aspirants incentives to shine light in dark corners and expose one another's failures and dissembling.' But electoral competition in democracies also limits the openness and honesty of politicians because they are tempted to win the competition by pandering to the ignorance of electors. Politicians will rarely risk alienating electors with benevolent policies that electors do not understand. Pandering can produce bad legislation and policy not only as an immediate result, but also as a delayed effect because it inhibits the development of public opinion by preventing or distorting inputs to public debate. Instead of discussing issues in public with constructive candour, politicians often personally attack their opponents, indulge in fake adversarialism and respond to difficult questions from journalists and others with irrelevant answers or by raising and answering another question that they prefer. Such bluster, spin, concealment and even lying (e.g. Mearsheimer 2011) hinders the development of public opinion and thereby constrains the provision and protection of public goods. Some of this corruption is obvious to many citizens and thereby helps to produce the 'paradox of trust' described in §2.2.1.

In Australia, as well as many other democracies, the competitive electoral environment cultivates a popular obsession with leaders of parties and governments, which distracts citizens from being aware that it is they who basically direct government policy. It focuses their attention on personalities and on character assassination rather than on discussing and debating issues, an effect that joins with the evasiveness of politicians observed above to hinder the development of public opinion. Another consequence of competition in Australian politics is a rigid insistence by politicians that government is formed virtu-

ally exclusively from the party with the most members in the legislature, so that when the two major parties have almost the same number of members a minor party may exert unrepresentative influence — a 'balance of power' situation. This insistence on opposition politics often prevents much public opinion from being represented in government and deprives it of much talent in the legislature. The oppositional fetish motivates parties to try to destroy each other's public image rather than to devise and negotiate good policy. It also tempts governments to seek electoral advantage over the opposition by using public money to sell their policies to the public, especially before elections. Instead of opposition politics, parliaments could form a governing legislative majority in the lower house from a coalition of minor parties, or they could have the all the members of the lower house work as the government. In Australia, both arrangements are repugnant to most representatives. This combative attitude is fuelled by the need to attract votes, because a fairly disengaged populace will only register simplistic images and messages from their political agents. The same competitive approach may also make the internal affairs of each party a fractious business. Abandoning opposition politics would not eliminate competition, but it should moderate it to be more constructive because politicians would still compete with each other to propose the smartest policy ideas and to gain positions of status and influence within the legislature. The consensual democracies of Scandinavia demonstrate that there is no absolute requirement for electoral democracy to be fiercely oppositional, for those polities mostly govern with coalitions of minority parties.

2.3.2 Competition tempts politicians to sell legislation

Shapiro (2012, 203) points out that a major difficulty with political competition 'is that, particularly in the United States but increasingly in other democracies, politicians compete first for campaign contributions and second for votes.' Al Gore (2007) has corroborated this by stressing that the costliness of television advertising exerts extreme pressure on US politicians to

raise money. In order to get it, they will be tempted to produce the legislation that lobbyists will pay for. Television campaigning not only corrupts democracy in this way, but it also truncates the public debate that is essential for the development of the mass opinion that democratic governments basically follow. Television promotions do this by being made very brief in order to have impact and to minimize their cost, but this eliminates balance and rational argument.

Payments for legislation also pose temptations for both lobbyists and politicians to use this money for personal financial gain as well as for political campaigns. The Abramoff Indian lobbying scandal illustrates the complexity and scale of such corruption. This erupted over work performed by political lobbyists Jack Abramoff, Ralph E. Reed Jr., Grover Norquist and Michael Scanlon for Indian casino gambling interests who paid them fees of an estimated US$85 million. Abramoff and Scanlon grossly overbilled their clients and orchestrated lobbying against them in order to force more payments for counter-lobbying services. The lobbyists were accused of illegally giving gifts and making campaign donations to legislators in return for legislative action. Representative Bob Ney (R-OH) and two aides to House Majority Leader Tom DeLay (R-TX) were directly implicated. Both Ney and DeLay were forced to give up their Republican leadership posts. Ney was sentenced to thirty months in prison and Abramoff to five years, ten months (Schmidt et al. 2005). The fact that they were caught demonstrates that liberal democracy works at the level of limiting the extent of corruption, but the case also indicates that the competitive pressures of electoral politics coerce politicians to accept — and seek — the bribes of lobbyists.

Corporations may, in effect, buy legislation and government projects by rewarding a representative who favours them by establishing a business in that legislator's district to improve their electoral prospects, or by offering a post-political career as an executive or consultant (Freedland 2007, 20). Such favours may be 'earned' by politicians introducing bills, lobbying, log rolling, earmarking and introducing tax credits. Log rolling is the bar-

tering for votes to support a bill by its proponent undertaking to vote for the bills of other legislators. Log rolling also covers the bundling together of diverse measures into a single package to broaden their basis of support. Earmarking is inserting a special provision favouring one constituent or a very narrow group into an appropriations bill (Kirkpatrick 2006; Kuttner 2008). In March 2010 the House Appropriations Committee banned earmarks to for-profit organizations. Such insertions are permitted by the legislator who proposes a bill in order to get votes for it, or to allow that legislator to insert earmarks in the bills of other representatives in return for the favour. Tax credits create similar corruption of legislation. As Kuttner (2008, 96) points out, these ploys 'are hardly ever subjected to normal legislative hearings; rather, deals are cut behind doors and the general public only learns of the intended beneficiary afterward, if ever.' Pork barrelling is another attempt to pay for favours in which representatives bribe electors for votes by spending public funds or locating government agencies or businesses in their electorate. Such deals often allow policies and programs to be dictated by the interest groups able to lobby for or buy them, rather than by the strengths of arguments for and against policies, as judged on their merits, either by the public or by their representatives. As a result, US scholar of international relations Chalmers Johnson (cited in Freedland 2007, 20) has observed that 'the legislative branch of our government is broken'.

Such manipulation of electoral and legislative affairs could be reduced by legislation, but special interests pursuing private goods make it virtually impossible to enact. That subversive effect was described by Mancur Olson (1965) and public choice theorist Gordon Tullock (1993, 39–40) assessed it as 'the crucial weakness of democracy',

> the evident bias of the political process in favour of voters who are concentrated and well-informed on issues that are significantly relevant to them and against voters who are dispersed and ill-informed on issues that are less directly relevant .... [This is how] special in-

> terests penetrate in order to rent-seek, to the general detriment of society as a whole.

But in electorally representative democracies, special interests are only able to 'penetrate' by helping politicians to compete with each other; primarily for votes but also for money. Tullock's 'bias of the political process' — which has been dubbed 'Olson's Law' (Mickelthwait and Wooldridge 2014, 111) — might be mitigated or eliminated in two ways. The first is to reconfigure the political process so that it brought together 'voters who are dispersed and ill-informed on issues that are less directly relevant' (to them). The second way is for the reconfiguration to provide incentives for voters to become better informed. The new institution proposed in Part 2 is designed to produce both reforms. This would change democratic government into a less representative and more direct form. If it worked, it would demonstrate that Tullock's 'crucial weakness of democracy' is a weakness only of electorally representative forms of democracy and not necessarily of other forms. But as Zakaria (2003, 177) observes, this weakness

> is the heart of America's dilemma today. The American people believe that they have no real control over government. What they do not realize is that the politicians have no control, either. Most representatives and senators believe that they operate in a political system in which any serious attempts at change produce instant, well-organized opposition from the small minority who are hurt by the change. And it is these minorities who really run Washington.

Public choice theory has much to say about such corruption in electoral democracy, but it is viewed by some as misguided because it tries to explain and predict political behaviour as rational utility maximization by actors such as voters, politicians and lobbyists, while ignoring their benevolent and irrational motivations. However, the simplification of assuming that politicians are purely self-interested may be accurate enough because the competition that threatens to put them out of politics makes

self-interest their overriding priority. For example, public choice economist Peter Leeson (2006, 357, 364) has given a theoretical demonstration that

> even when policymakers are partially benevolent towards the public, they are still led to cater to special interests and society fares no better off than if politicians were strictly self-interested. Political agent benevolence is thus an all-or-nothing proposition. Unless benevolence is total, policy looks the same … Despite its departure from motivational realism, if we get the same results with partial political agent benevolence as we do with zero, the standard public choice assumption is vindicated predictively.

Leeson's analysis is based on competition between political agents for votes from citizens. The latter generally pay inadequate attention to public issues, so each agent must be at least as willing as her competitors to ignore public welfare by taking advantage of public ignorance to pander to special interests who may deliver votes. As Leeson (2006, 357) writes: the 'absence of an effective enforcement mechanism for punishing politicians who cater to special interests gives political agents strong reason to doubt the commitment of their fellow statesmen to the public welfare'. His analysis indicates that this doubt will coerce politicians to produce defective public policy as they compete with each other for votes.

Selectorate theory (which is outlined later in Chapter 10) is a public choice ('rational choice') approach to political science, as it uses the economist's method of explaining and predicting political behaviour by looking for incentives, especially those appealing to the self-interest that is mandatory for success in the highly competitive environments of markets and politics. The major incentive recognized by selectorate theory is that competition for political office is so persistent and potentially lethal (at least politically lethal, and in some autocracies, biologically lethal as well) that it compels each politician to make political survival his top priority. Selectorate theory therefore regards competition for office as a fundamental feature of poli-

tics, across the entire spectrum from democracy to autocracy. (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003, 25)

2.3.3 Political competition intensified by commercial competition

In the last few decades, competition between politicians has been heightened by the media manufacturing and dramatizing it for commercial advantage. Public communication scholars Jay Blumler and Stephen Coleman (2001) claim that this sensationalism has been facilitated by a growing fickleness in public opinion, which arises from increasing individualism and its weakening of traditional social ties such as political parties, the nuclear family, mainstream religion, the workplace and social class.

> Relations between journalists and politicians have been transformed as a result. Given the fluidity and fickleness of public opinion, news coverage matters enormously to politicians and their advisors. They consider they are engaged in a daily competitive struggle to influence and control popular perceptions of key political events and issues through the major mass media. They aim therefore to permeate and dominate the news agenda so far as possible.
>
> But political journalists have not taken such attempts to narrow and determine their news choices lying down. Wherever possible, they impose their own interpretive frames on politicians' statements and initiatives, limiting the latter to compressed quotes and soundbites. They concentrate on issues that politicians cannot keep under control, ones that reporters can run and break open doors with and apply conventional news values to. They put a spotlight on any weaknesses, failings, and blunders that the professionalised politicians may happen to commit. In particular, they continually 'unmask' politicians' publicity efforts, often saying more about the PR motives behind them than about the substantive pro's and con's of their records and proposals … The logic of this is like submitting political communication to the ravages of a shoal of piranha fish … Thus, in democracies where measures across a series of recent election campaigns are available, the balance of the evidence

> shows that media coverage of politics is diminishing in amount and becoming more 'mediated' (dominated more by journalists and their frames of reference), more focused on power tactics at the expense of issue substance, and more negative. (Blumler and Coleman 2001, 9, 10, 11)

Commercial competition does more than exacerbate the competitiveness of democratic politics through the media. It is also a pervasive influence on the lives and attitudes of all citizens in democracies, for they must continually cope with and contribute to commercial competition as they consume and work. In some personalities this may encourage an ethos of looking for advantage to the limits of law, so that ethical judgment is neglected and self-interest is followed to excess. Australian examples of this are given by journalist and public relations analyst Bob Burton (2007) in *Inside Spin: The Dark Underbelly of the PR Industry*. The title of the autobiography of a 'numbers man' for the Australian Labor Party, Graham Richardson (1994), expresses a similar view of democratic politics: *Whatever It Takes*. Perhaps their training in, their experience in, and their inclination for adversarial behaviour is why lawyers and businessmen often do well in democratic politics. Bryan Caplan has observed that as the modal US politician has a law degree (with 70% of the presidents, vice presidents and cabinet officers and more than 50% of the US senators and House members being lawyers) it is clear that 'the electoral process selects people who are professionally trained to plead cases persuasively and *sincerely* regardless of their merits' (Caplan 2008, 169, emphasis in original).

2.3.4 Exacerbation of political competition by ambiguous delegation

Ambiguous delegation may have a tendency to exacerbate competition between politicians because uncertainty about who directs government invites them to try to show the people that they, the politicians, are the directors. So they are encouraged to compete with each other to be the most powerful, as in contests for leadership of their party, state and nation. If delegation

unambiguously gave the director's role to the people, all actors would see those contests as less important and politicians would be able to restrict more of their competition to getting elected. They would also be able to reduce their competition by leaving argument over strategic policy to the people.

It is also likely that rancourous competition between political agents encourages voters to either ignore politics or debate it with less civility and reason. This may produce a polarization in the community that further encourages rancour between their agents. As political scientists Marc Hetherington and Jonathan Weiler (2009) report, political polarization is now a problem in the United States, so it would seem that any measures that might reduce competition and foster understanding and cooperation in politics would be beneficial, certainly in that country and probably in many others as well.

2.3.5 Minimizing the damage from competition

Two general approaches can be employed to reduce the damage done to public goods by competitive struggles between politicians. One is to *produce as much policy as possible without having politicians do it,* which may be achieved by helping citizens to be more effective as the directors of government, as discussed above in §2.3.4. This calls for the ambiguity to be eliminated from delegation, and it would not only take strategic policy out of the hands of politicians but it would guide the tactical and operational policy that it leaves them with, for strategy eventually determines the broad directions and limits of all other policy.

The other damage-reduction approach is to *reduce the competition* between politicians. Here again, eliminating ambiguity in delegation is essential. If there is no confusion about who directs the polity, then the competition between politicians might be reduced in two stages. The first is that the clarification of responsibilities would help to confront citizens with the fact that it is up to them to devise rules that moderate competition between politicians. These rules are a matter of strategic policy, so their determination by the people is a part of their job as directors. Moreover, this particular policy is a type that politicians cannot

be expected to make because, as a general rule, regulators are more objective and effective when they regulate others, rather than themselves. Any improvement in the responsibility of politicians that is achieved through their regulation by citizens may then produce a second stage of competition reduction: politicians being more responsible about considering and choosing or accepting other changes that could further moderate incentives for them to compete with each other.

2.4 Excessive compromise

As political scientist Mark Warren (2002a, 192) observed, the 'most famous objection to democracy, immortalized by Plato, is that democratic decisions are likely to be worse than decisions made by those better qualified by virtue of their knowledge'. Psychiatrists Wilfred Abse and Lucie Jessner (1962, 86) have described the problem as follows:

> In the democratic system of values, men have equal rights, but they are not equal in ability, personal development, and education. A democracy which promotes illusions in this respect is undermining its own strength: its power to foster and release the full capacity of the group.

Liberal democracy ensures that this problem will be ever-present because of its universal franchise with one vote per person and equal power for each vote. One vote per person means each person has one vote for one objective: for example, in presidential systems each elector has one vote for a presidential candidate and also one vote for a member of each legislative body, such as a house of representatives or a senate. In mixed member proportional electoral systems such as in New Zealand, Bolivia, Germany and Italy, the elector has one vote for a member of a legislature and also one vote for a party.

One vote of equal power for each citizen ensures that high ideals, imagination and cultivated tastes are blended with low aims, insensitivities and disengagement in the public opinion

that representatives respond to with their policies and legislation. So competence is heavily compromised and the public goods that politicians deliver reflect average ideals and awareness. Philosopher John Lucas (1976, 254) bluntly described part of the problem by observing that where

> a democracy altogether rejects the aristocratic principle, and regards it as undemocratic for anyone to acknowledge anyone else as his superior in artistic taste … artistic creativity is stunted, and the whole of society is submerged in a tide of tasteless mediocrity.

However, it is not only artistic taste in the sense of taste in music, literature, art, architecture and so on that is overruled in this way. Any public goods whose values only become appreciated through some form of learning are also likely to be 'submerged' — either by being consumed to produce other things, or by being converted from public to private goods. Public goods of this more subtle type are often essential for the provision of other goods, for example: the public good of a high ratio of natural capital to population may permit a widely available lifestyle of residence in spacious rural or coastal environments and good opportunities for outdoor recreation such as hobby farming, rafting, wilderness backpacking, fishing, hunting and the observation of wildlife. Likewise, the public goods of free education, economic equality and political equality may foster responsible foreign policy and human rights. To illustrate the dependence of the quality of foreign policy on another public good we might turn again to Samantha Power. The public good that she discusses here is the competence of American public opinion.

> Bush's stated goals were to strengthen the US military, bring stability to Iraq and Afghanistan, combat terrorism, prevent rogue states and militants from acquiring nuclear weapons, and promote democracy around the world. In each case, two terms of Republican rule have been disastrous for US national security. *The question is: Have American voters noticed?*

> Joe Biden has. In an interview with MSNBC, Senator Biden, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, was asked whether Democrats could be trusted on national security. He erupted:
>
> 'I refuse to sit back like we did in 2000 and 2004. This administration is the worst administration in American foreign policy in modern history — maybe ever. The idea that they are competent to continue to conduct our foreign policy, to make us more secure and make Israel secure, is preposterous … Every single thing they've touched has been a near disaster.'
>
> Poll data show that *voters are in fact beginning* to share Biden's view and *at last* question Republicans' reliability on national security. On Election Day in 2004 exit polls showed that a majority of voters (49–44 per cent) believed that the war in Iraq had made the country less safe. *Yet those same exit polls gave Bush an 18-per cent edge in handling national security.* (Power 2008, 68, emphasis added)

Power is observing that the average US voter is not well-informed about public policy, is slow to learn and that the US government has performed at about the same level. These observations are in line with the results of the empirical studies noted above in §2.2.2 and §2.2.3.

The problem of excessive compromise was indicated earlier in §2.2.5 by observing that the accountability of politicians to electors is defective because the ignorance of most electors on many aspects of public policy means that they are often poor judges of the performance of their representatives. However, excesses of compromise may be reduced by eliminating the ambiguity in delegation. This should work by making the people more aware that it is they who direct their government, which should spur them to give their political influence to those among them who are most likely to have informed and sensible views. The new institution proposed in Part 2 is designed to help them do this.

2.5 Triple dysfunction

The dysfunctional tendencies of liberal democracies discussed above are summarized by Figure 2.1. This shows three dysfunctions producing two expressions or types of behaviour, which in turn produce government failure, that is, an underprovision of public goods. This view of democratic failure is called the triple dysfunction hypothesis. The five elements of the electoral process that are proposed to cause these three dysfunctions are separated into two groups in Figure 2.1 to indicate their differing effects. The upper group comprises elections, their frequency and the eligibility of incumbents to run for re-election; the lower group is universal franchise and equality of the vote. The upper group produces ambiguity in the delegation of authority and responsibility, causing confusion about whether electors or politicians are the directors of the polity. It also creates competition between politicians, which is excessive as it interferes with the formulation and implementation of good policy. These two dysfunctions are indicated to interact by two arrows that are drawn thin, meaning that these effects may be slight. The short, thin, downwards arrow indicates that excesses of competitive struggle may be exacerbated because confusion about directorship widens the area in which political agents may compete with each other. Without this confusion they would compete primar-

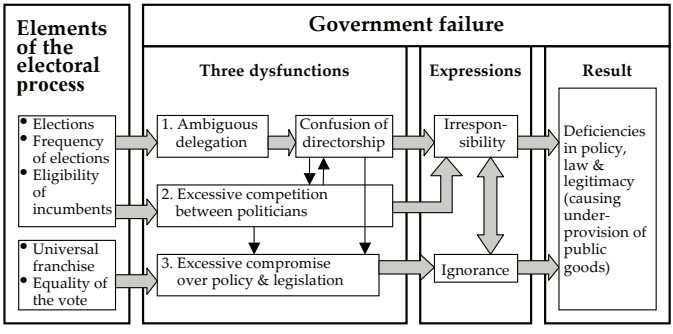


Fig. 2.1. The triple dysfunction hypothesis

ily for election to the legislature and, to a lesser degree, for dominance over each other for factional political influence and party leadership. But as this confusion exists, political agents are also invited to compete with each other for directorship of the whole polity, or leadership of the state or nation. The short thin arrow that points up from 'Excessive competition' to 'Confusion of directorship' indicates that the need for politicians to compete for votes encourages them to act as if they are the directors in order to impress electors, which may encourage electors to neglect to carry out their democratic role of directorship, adding to the confusion about who directs democratic government.

The third dysfunction is that universal franchise and equality of the vote make the polity compromise knowledge, ideas and sensitivity with ignorance and indifference. As described above in §2.4, this effect is also encouraged by confusion about directorship. If the system of delegation was very clear that it is the people who direct government (with mass opinion more clearly controlling public policy), then citizens may be more likely to minimize any compromising of their wisdom with their ignorance. Because this impact of confusion about directorship may be slight, it is indicated here by a thin arrow. Excesses in compromise are also affected by competition between politicians because this coerces them to express and enact the views of the majority of their constituents, regardless of the wisdom of these views, in order to secure electoral support. This effect is shown by an arrow from 'Excessive competition' to 'Excessive compromise'. It is drawn thin to minimize emphasis, because the major compromising effect is considered to be indicated by the thick arrow pointing to 'Excessive compromise' from 'Universal franchise' and 'Equality of the vote'.

Confused directorship and excessive competition are expected to be expressed as an element of irresponsibility in democratic government. Confusion about who directs will do this by preventing electors and those they elect from being clear about which group has the responsibility to deliberate and develop policy. So both groups tend to leave this work up to the other. If one group does try to assume responsibility, the ambiguity

obscures whether that group should address strategic, tactical or operational policy, so irresponsibility still tends to occur, *especially at the strategic end of the spectrum,* as both groups have more incentive to focus on the other end. Competition between politicians for both electoral success and ultimate directorship (state or national leadership) will encourage irresponsibility by focusing them on choosing policies that appeal to, or at least do not offend, the ignorance of somewhat disengaged electors. The third dysfunction (excessive compromise) may have a rather different expression: a degree of ignorance that then limits the competence of public policy. These tendencies towards irresponsibility and ignorance thus cause democratic governments to fail, to some extent. In other words, as explained in §2.1, they underprovide public goods.

The two-way vertical influence between the expressions of dysfunction indicates that irresponsibility and ignorance each tend to strengthen the other. It should be noted that these expressions are tendencies only, not complete irresponsibility and ignorance. The triple dysfunction hypothesis thus offers at least a partial model of deficiencies in the behaviour of democratic governments and appears to indicate that confusion about who directs is the major cause.

This hypothesis describes government failure partially as an 'agency problem' (e.g. Stiglitz 2010, 13), which is that when agents (in this case, political representatives) are appointed by principals (in this case, citizens) to act for them, then the principals may not be able to make sure that the agents act in the principals' interests rather than in the agents' interests. Agents often have some advantage over principals in that their agency gives them access to information that principals do not have and also some scope for action that principals cannot see or control. The first two parts of triple dysfunction are agency problems. Ambiguity in delegation gives agents a degree of freedom to further their own interests rather than the interests of the principals, which is the public good. Excessive competition between political agents gives them a very strong incentive to look after their own interests rather than those of their principals. The

third part of triple dysfunction is not a classic agency problem because excessive compromise is a failure by the principals to fully consider their own good — the public good — as they issue directions to their agents and monitor their performance.

2.6 Checking the hypothesis by backward mapping from two democratic failures

The prediction of democratic failure given above could be described as a mapping of consequences. It starts from basic democratic structure to predict any consequences of this that would be failures of performance ('dysfunctions') by democratic principals and their agents. It then looks for probable consequences of those failures ('expressions' of dysfunction) and then for likely consequences of those consequences (government failure). However, instead of referring to this systems thinking as a mapping of consequences, it is here called 'forward mapping', a term that was adapted from public affairs academic Richard Elmore (1980) by two scholars of public policy and administration, Brian Head and John Alford (2008, 16). I now compare the results of this particular forward mapping with two causal mappings that proceed in the reverse direction, which Head and Alford call 'backward mappings'. In these, the circumstances of an adverse consequence are inspected to see what may have caused it and then probable causes of this cause (or causes) are investigated for their likely causes and so on, as far back along the causal web as appears clear and useful for identifying points where effective corrections may be possible. Backward mapping should identify the same causal chain or web that a forward mapping of the same system reveals. The first backward mapping that is presented here investigates causes of neglect of the long-term in Australian politics and the second asks why many US environmental policy problems recur. These problems are both failures in strategic policy, and as this is predicted by triple dysfunction theory, these mappings should test the theory.

2.6.1 Neglect of the long term in Australian politics

Marsh and Yencken (2004) have investigated why Australian politics neglects the long term, as shown by problems such as salinity, land degradation, deteriorating rivers, the effects of globalization on employment, inadequacy of research and innovation, public cynicism about politics, massive expansion of foreign debt, problems in the health and development of children and youth, energy issues and greenhouse emissions. This political failure is widely recognized, as environmental scientists David Mercer and Peter Marden (2006) observe: 'There is little doubt that Australian politics has failed to grapple with the challenges posed by a post-sustainable development society. The unwillingness of liberal democracy to resolve environmental problems has been recognized for a considerable time'. Judith Brett has backed this assessment with her scrutiny of Prime Minister John Howard's legacy of federal government in Australia. She suggested that his performance on global warming, related environmental issues and dependence on oil made him

> similar to the now faceless and nameless men who condemned Galileo for claiming that the world went round the sun … after ten years in power we know far more about how he sees the past 100 years than how he sees the next. (Brett 2006)

Marsh and Yencken (2004, 31–41) diagnose the causes of this neglect of long-term issues in Australia as threefold: 'fake adversarialism'; limitations of the policy-forming structure; and limitations in the availability of information. As they start with symptoms and then look for causes, their analysis tends to focus on those which are most immediately responsible for the neglect. The fundamental changes that are required to produce lasting corrections of the neglect of long-term issues therefore tend to escape attention. Marsh and Yencken (2004, 83) appear to acknowledge this in their closing two sentences. 'All these changes will be in vain if they do not lead to effective action. There is therefore a final requirement — political leadership of vision, courage and conviction'. This conclusion agrees with the

diagnosis of forward mapping: that leadership is confused and therefore seriously deficient. The cause of this confusion — frequent elections that are open to incumbents — is recognized by Marsh and Yencken (2004). They observe that the first of their three causes of policy neglect, fake adversarialism,

> arises from the dynamics of the electoral contest between parties … The present system is distorted by the way electoral incentives trump attention to arguments based on considerations of merit and prudence … electoral needs have required public contention between the major parties. Issues have been distorted or fabricated to create the appearance of difference or to undermine opponents. (Marsh and Yencken 2004, 31, 32–33)

This means we may replace 'fake adversarialism' with a more fundamental cause, 'the dynamics of the electoral contest', the operative parts of which have been suggested above to be ambiguous delegation and excesses in competition and compromise.

To explain their second cause of neglect, 'limitations of the policy-forming structure', Marsh and Yencken observe that the 'inability to create a public conversation about longer-term issues is partly caused by the dynamics of electoral competition between the major parties. It is *also* caused by a number of organisational features of the formal policy-making structure' (2004, 35, emphasis added). They list those organisational features as (a) work overload created by the restricted size of the policy-making executive; (b) lack of access for interest groups; (c) inability of the policy-making system to create interest coalitions around longer-term issues; and (d) weak working relationships between the federal and state governments. Feature (b) here refers to a lack of formal access structured for fairness to all stakeholders, not a lack of the underhand access for special interests discussed above under 'Excessive competition'. Marsh and Yencken do not remark that their four organisational features (a) to (d) are also likely to be largely caused by 'the dynamics of the electoral contest'. This is suggested to happen as

follows. The restricted size of the executive referred to in (a) is likely to be a response to the electoral imperative of being seen to provide strong, decisive leadership free of drawn-out internal argument, an imperative that arises from ambiguous delegation and excessive competition between politicians, which as noted above are two parts of 'the dynamics of the electoral contest'. Problems (b) and (c) may be responses by politicians to the electoral imperative to be seen to be catering to the broad mass of voters, so they appear to be cases of excessive compromise. Politicians are reluctant to confuse their simplistic appeal to disengaged electors by being seen to cooperate with minority opinions, however benevolent to the public interest these might be, because these minority opinions are not well understood by the mass of voters. Finally, problem (d) arises because federal–state conflict is almost obligatory for politicians wanting to demonstrate their allegiance to their constituents and impress them with their leadership qualities. Such demonstrations are driven by excessive competition and permitted by the ambiguity of delegation. We may thus alter most of Marsh and Yencken's second cause of neglect of the long term from 'limitations of the policy-forming structure' to 'dynamics of the electoral contest' and in turn alter this to ambiguous delegation plus excesses in competition and compromise. So their second cause of neglect of the long term appears to be fundamentally the same as their first cause.

Their third cause of neglect, 'limitations to the availability of information' may also be largely ascribed to the 'dynamics of the electoral contest', which in this case is the influence of ambiguous delegation. To see this we may start with Marsh and Yencken's observation that, with the exception of well-established regimes of economic reporting at every level of Australian government, the reporting of trends and conditions is inadequate, especially in social reporting. They point out that these deficiencies mean 'issues are buried, neglected by the media and given scant attention by politicians' (2004, 38), but they do not mention that these deficiencies are likely to be caused by a lack of demand for that information, which in turn would be caused by a lack of

interest from the public. But such disinterest is what one would expect from ambiguity in delegation, for this allows citizens to think they have given the entire task of choosing public goods to politicians — so they can focus on their private goods, including their purchasing power. Of course, analysts, media and government respond to this strong interest by citizens in business and the economy by providing the relevant information.

Marsh and Yencken (2004, 40) observe that the limitations they postulate as causing neglect of the long term, 'political, organisational and information limitations … are widely acknowledged as the cause of present public disaffection with the major parties. They are at the root of public cynicism about politics.' However, as indicated above, inspection for possible causes of these causes appears to show more fundamental causation: the democratic structures of frequent elections, eligibility of incumbents, universal franchise and equal vote, which produce ambiguity in delegation, excessive competition and ignorance from compromise. Marsh and Yencken's analysis amounts to an exhortation to politicians or to the disengaged electorate or to anyone who might have influence to fix the political, organisational and information deficiencies that they identify. This seems unlikely to work for several reasons. One is that few citizens are listening, as discussed above in §2.2.2 and §2.2.3. Another is the number of defects to be corrected. A third problem is that of making any corrections continue to work. If an underlying cause such as counterproductive structure is not corrected or persistently countered by a new, permanent institution, it will prevail by continuing to exert its effects. The reforms suggested by Marsh and Yencken are likely to be ignored or to fail because the existing electoral structure provides little incentive for citizens and politicians to support them. As these scholars recognize in their conclusion, the crux is leadership, so the major task is to make this effective and to do it in a way that is self-maintaining. However, the analysis of leadership given above indicates that, as this is the relationship between leaders and followers, then the performance of followers is at least as crucial as that of leaders. Following the terminology used above, we might define the

problem of government failure more usefully by revising Marsh and Yencken's view that the crux is leadership, by saying that the crux is directorship. This invites us to consider whether we can improve directorship by eliminating ambiguity in delegation.

2.6.2 Recurrence of environmental policy failures

In Table 2.1, the University of Michigan's Steven Yaffee (1997) ascribes several types of failure in ecosystem management by successive administrations in the US to five behavioural biases of humans and human institutions. He proposes that the solutions listed in the right-hand column may eliminate these biases and thereby produce better policy. This analysis was focused mainly on repetitive mismanagement of the northern spotted owl, but it recognizes similar behavioural biases in attempts to manage other species, such as the red-cockaded woodpecker, black footed ferret, California condor, whooping crane, grizzly bear, gray wolf and whales. Yaffee's method is a short backward mapping as it identifies 'policy problems' and inspects these for likely proximal causes.

To compare the forward mapping of the triple dysfunction analysis with Yaffee's backward mapping, each one of his five biases (in the left-hand column, 'Behavioural bias') and each suggested correction for these (in the right-hand column, 'Solutions') is followed in the table by a bracketed comment of D, C or I. These letters indicate that the relevant behavioural bias or solution identified by Yaffee is judged equivalent to one or more of the dysfunctions or solutions suggested by our forward mapping. In these bracketed comments, D stands for directorship (so under 'Behavioural bias', D is confusion about who directs and under 'Solutions', D is clear responsibility for directorship); C is for competition (so under 'Behavioural bias', C is excessive competition; and under 'Solutions', C is the moderation of competition, for example by cooperation); and I is for ignorance by the polity (so under 'Behavioural bias', I is ignorance from excessive compromise; and under 'Solutions', I is dissemination of information or greater political influence for those citizens who are relatively well informed). The particular allocation of

Behavioural bias	Policy problems	Solutions
Short-term rationality outcompetes long-term rationality (D, C, I)	Poor long-term direction	Learn about the future. (D, I); Bind ourselves to the future through directives, information and 'fixers'. (D, C); Promote innovation and experimentation. (D); Find creative ways to meet both short-term and long-term objectives. (D)
Competition supplants cooperation (D, C)	Impasses; inferior solutions	Develop processes that promote sharing and develop trust and relationships. (D, C); Protect those who may be exploited. (D, C); Focus on super-ordinate goals. (D, C); Be firm on ends; flexible on means. (D, C)
Fragmentation of interests and values (D, C, I)	Impasses; inferior solutions	Promote discourse & values ratification. (D, C, I); Build political concurrence. (D, C); Promote education of the public. (D, I)
Fragmentation of responsibilities and authorities (D, C)	Slow, inconclusive decision-making; diminished accountability; piecemeal solutions	Foster leadership. (D); Create coordinating mechanisms. (D, C); Structure incentives. (D); Develop clear measures of success and an ability to monitor performance. (D)
Fragmentation of information and knowledge (I)	Inferior solutions	Promote information flows within and between organizations. (D, C, I); Invest in better data bases. (D, I); Build centres of up-to-date expertise. (D, I); Use data negotiation. (C)

Table 2.1. Behavioural biases that generate environmental policy problems and suggest solutions. Based on Yaffee 1997, 330.

comments D, C and I that is made in this table is necessarily a subjective set of judgements and each reader might prefer a somewhat different set. But on the allocation suggested here, the broad impression is that Yaffee's biases and solutions tend to be covered by the dysfunctions and solutions suggested by our forward mapping. However, in addition to this broad agreement of forward and backward mapping, forward mapping yields something that Yaffee's truncated backward mapping falls short of doing: It prescribes fundamental structural reform that appears necessary if Yaffee's 'Solutions' are to be systemically introduced, driven and given permanent incentives to be maintained.

Yaffee's backward mapping indicates five policy problems being caused by five behavioural biases that might be ameliorated by thirteen different actions (the 'Solutions' in the right-hand column). Forward mapping produces a simpler set of solutions by suggesting that a multitude of policy problems (far more of these exist than just those in this particular set of ecosystem mismanagements) are at least partly caused by just three political dysfunctions. Table 2.1 indicates that confused directorship (D) is probably the most damaging of these dysfunctions, as it is suggested to be roughly equal to excessive competition (C) in producing behavioural bias (both are noted 4 times here, compared with 3 times for I) while it may be much more influential in producing solutions (D is suggested 18 times) than both C (suggested 10 times) and I (suggested 6 times) taken together. On this rough assessment, the most useful single solution might be to eliminate ambiguity in delegation. This is also the conclusion reached in comparing Marsh and Yencken's backward mapping with the forward mapping analysis of triple dysfunction.

It appears that forward mapping tends to find something that backward mapping may have trouble reaching far enough back to see. In analysing government failure, forward mapping starts with fundamental structure, so as soon as it sees problems near this level it suggests systemic solutions in the form of either changes to basic democratic structures or designs for new institutions that should prevent or rectify the failures produced by these structures. Such changes or new institutions should estab-

lish and then maintain better governance, and they will tend to be a smaller set of remedial actions than backward mapping will initially find, for this starts with a multitude of symptoms that need correcting. On the other hand, backward mapping should produce operational and tactical solutions that complement the strategic solutions indicated by forward mapping.

2.7 Summary and implications

As the preceding two backward mappings of government failure appear to support the triple dysfunction hypothesis, it seems to point us toward corrections that are systemic and very few in number. As triple dysfunction locates failure in the structure of democratic government — rather than in particular circumstances or in particular actors such as politicians, bureaucrats, citizens and special interests — it suggests one of two major remedies. Either the democratic delegation of directorship from the people to politicians is completed by making the latter the absolute rulers, or the nature of the incomplete delegation is made explicit, so there is no ambiguity for politicians and citizens. A third strategy, that of making the people the absolute rulers at all levels of public policy, is impractical because citizens do not have the time to devote to this. Some form of representation is necessary. The first strategy of making politicians the absolute rulers or directors calls for eliminating the frequency of elections, either by greatly lengthening the interval between elections, to, say, twenty years or more, or by eliminating elections altogether, for example by selecting representatives by lot. This strategy eliminates much of the accountability of politicians to the electorate, so it risks the quality of public policy. And that risk makes it extremely difficult to get citizens to accept this strategy.

For the second strategy of making the incomplete delegation explicit, the people and their politicians must be continually reminded of their respective responsibilities under current systems of electoral delegation. As these systems leave electors in the position of directors, they can only produce good public

policy if they realize they must determine the broad objectives that they want for public goods and if politicians know they are restricted to choosing the relative details of how to achieve those objectives. Under this strategy, politicians must regard themselves as executives or managers for electors who are their directors, so it is confusing for both them and citizens when they are called, or when they call themselves, 'leaders'. However, it is unlikely that these roles will be permanently clarified by merely renaming or describing them. Most citizens would not hear the descriptions and in any case would soon forget them. Some politicians may ignore descriptions or titles that demote them from leader to manager. Descriptions will also do little to help either citizens or politicians to perform these functions. But new institutions may be able to continually remind citizens and politicians of their different roles while providing them with permanent incentives and assistance to perform in those ways. However, that problem of institutional design is set aside here, to be taken up in Part 2. At this stage we may begin to eliminate the confusion arising from the word 'leader' by being careful to use it with the specific meaning discussed above in §2.2, §2.2.1, §2.2.4 and §2.2.8, while using 'director' when we mean that, rather than leader. Both terms are needed to describe how a democratic government functions and how it should function if it is to be fully effective.

In respect of the citizen's job of director, political scientist Diana Mutz (2006, 150) cautions that deliberation and active political participation are seriously incompatible. A citizen who participates vigorously is unlikely to deliberate much and one who deliberates fully is unlikely to be an active participant. Mutz offers two mechanisms to explain this: The cross-cutting exposure to policy issues that deliberation produces creates ambivalence about political decisions, which inhibits action; and crosscutting exposure heightens awareness of the potential for involvement in controversy, which also deters many from participation. Mutz's first mechanism may include the following two influences: Paying attention to crosscutting arguments takes time and energy, so the deliberant has less of these for participation;

and this attention also demands and may cultivate an analytical or reflective attitude, which is the antithesis of the impulsive, action-demanding mood that may be needed for participation. The difficulty of producing both deliberation and participation in the same citizen must be ameliorated or overcome by institutions that execute the second strategy noted at the outset of this summary, which is to encourage citizens to deliberate strategic policy and then assist them to participate by helping them to get their politicians to execute their findings.

The corruption of the democratic system of social choice that has been described in this chapter means that individual choice of private goods is very often able to take advantage of the weakness in social choice to replace or overrule it. A major way in which this occurs is that citizens find it rewarding to avoid the ineffectuality and frustration of the muddled and rancourous system of social choice by focusing on individual choice. The market is adept at encouraging them to do this, as Reich (2007) describes in *Supercapitalism* and political scientist Michael Sandel (2012) laments in *What Money Can't Buy.* So people focus on 'me, now', their narcissism grows, private wealth flourishes (for those who can get it) and the public domain decays. In Australia, sociologist Michael Pusey (2003, 183) is deeply troubled by this progression, noting that with

> economic reform has come a thinning of democracy and an induced retreat of the people into a purely private sphere of caring only for one's own, of mood states, of consumption, of recuperation, of therapy, and incommunicable anger at what is being done to them.

After many years of social research in Australia, psychologist Hugh Mackay (2004, 7–8) observed that Australians have become

> [i]nfinitely more snobbish, infinitely more stratified, with a much stronger sense of there being a wealth class … who think they're there, they've made it, we deserve to be here, we've got to look after

> our children and those people well that's just how it is … nothing to do with us.

Mackay's (2004, 7) conclusion is that we need a much more 'compassionate, harmonious, generous, accommodating society, paying excessive regard to the disadvantaged, the poor, the unintelligent.' Triple dysfunction is a way of understanding why many democracies are in this crisis and others appear to be drifting towards it. In Chapter 6, this prediction is used as a diagnosis to guide the prescription of a remedy. Before this is done, the next three chapters further investigate the accuracy of the diagnosis. In Chapter 3, the performances of some liberal democracies with structures and cultures that minimize triple dysfunction are inspected and compared with one that cultivates it. Chapter 4 looks at the characteristics of issues that make triple dysfunction liable to produce serious mismanagement. It then gives examples of this occurring in three issues, each of which has several of those troublesome characteristics. The diagnosis of Part 1 is concluded in Chapter 5 with a more detailed inquiry into the way in which a fourth issue is mismanaged by triple dysfunction: the issue of human wants for scarce natural capital.

3
SUSCEPTIBILITY TO DYSFUNCTION: TYPES OF DEMOCRACY

As the triple dysfunction hypothesis predicts that a major cause of underprovision of public goods is confusion about whether citizens or politicians direct this provision, it indicates that the underprovision should be less pronounced in polities that facilitate overt, deliberative directorship by electors. Some democracies tend to do this with features such as proportional representation of multimember electorates (Milner 2002, 89), not having their head of government directly appointed as such by popular election, and having a consensual political tradition. That tradition includes governing with coalitions of minority parties and developing social choice with discussion and negotiation among all interested citizens rather than by concentrating on securing power. Citizen initiated referendums may be viewed as assisting such direction by the people, but they tend to neglect deliberation. The Netherlands and the Nordic countries have several of these characteristics (Arter 1999, 151–55) and as a consequence they rank at the top of *The Economist* Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index (Economist 2008c). The Nordic nations have been described as state-friendly societies with society-friendly states (Grenstad et al. 2006, 122) and they are investigated below, followed by the contrasting case of the United States of America.

3.1 The Nordic democracies

Political sociologist Jørgen Goul Andersen (2007) participated in a project investigating power and democracy in Denmark from 1978 to 1982. He observed that among the committee of parliamentarians that initiated this work 'there clearly was a feeling of losing power, and more generally … that there are increasing threats to the democratic idyll in the Nordic countries.' This feeling was endorsed by that investigation, in which the 'most original result … probably was the finding that wherever we sought to measure power perceptions, we always found the feeling that 'power belongs to the others". This echoes the triple dysfunction view that a major problem is confusion about who directs. A subsequent study of power and democracy in Denmark in 1998–2004 produced mixed results, but identified problems of declining political party membership, a growing gap between a competent and resourceful majority and a marginalized minority that is becoming more disadvantaged, increasing influence of the media, and a transfer of power from the political to the judicial system (Christiansen and Togeby 2006). A similar study was carried out in Norway from 1998 to 2003 and its chair, political scientist Øyvind Østerud (cited in Gjessing 2003, 1), concluded that democracy 'as a chain from elections to decisions is weakened all the way … Parties don't mobilize many voters any more, and young people are less active than before, so the trend is likely to gather pace'. Together with political scientist Per Selle (2006, 564–65), Østerud has observed that 'the Norwegian political system is becoming less distinct' as large-scale ideological movements decline and interest grows 'in smaller and nimbler associations better at catering for individual needs and wishes, but also less able to plug members into the central decision-making institutions'. Along with other developments, these have been interpreted as revealing no general civic decline (Listhaug and Gronflaten 2007, 272), but as Selle and Østerud indicate, they appear to weaken the political role of the people.

For Sweden, it is relevant to note that in 1969 Prime Minister Olof Palme (cited in Oliver 1987, xviii) observed that his nation 'is to a considerable degree a study circle democracy.' Study circles are self-organizing groups of 5–20 citizens who choose to meet several times to learn about a public issue. This is done in a democratic manner aiming at freedom of choice, critical thinking and exchange of ideas and knowledge. These groups meet throughout Scandinavia, in some other European countries and have been introduced to the US, Australia and a few developing countries. Study circles have operated for a century in Sweden, where they are financially supported by government and reflect a strong commitment by the people to use adult education for social change (Oliver 1987, xv, xvii).

Swedish political scientists Johannes Lindvall and Bo Rothstein (2006, 48) have observed that a 1985–1990 study concluded that their polity was 'turning into a new kind of democracy, more 'individualistic' and more similar to political systems elsewhere'. Ten years after this investigation, its assessment was endorsed by a large Swedish government commission led by politicians, which called for the strengthening of civic society, more responsiveness by political institutions and a more 'participatory democracy with deliberative qualities' (Lindvall and Rothstein 2006, 60). Lindvall and Rothstein argue that in Sweden there are

> troubling indications for the operation of democracy … One common, if maybe simple view of the democratic ideal is that the state should do what the people want it to do. With the development of ideological state apparatuses, Swedish democracy looks more like a society where the state decides what the people ought to think and do … The system still spins, but it spins backwards … The question for the future is whether the strong state will be replaced by some new model that provides the necessary focal points for debates on public policy, or whether stable norms will remain absent due to an inherently obscure division of labour within Sweden's policy-making and administrative structures. (Lindvall and Rothstein 2006, 47, 61, 47)

Triple dysfunction, of course, suggests that this 'inherently obscure division of labour' is at least partly caused by the ambiguity of the delegation performed by the electoral system. Despite this, it seems that the 'strong state' in Sweden is supported by a relatively sophisticated public. For example:

> Sweden has long implemented one of the most progressive energy policies in Europe. The national government enacted one of the world's first carbon taxes in 1990. Ministers announced further ambitions last week through a plan that would increase renewable energy production to 50 per cent by 2020, transition the Swedish vehicle fleet to fossil fuel independence by 2030, and reach complete carbon neutrality by 2050. (Block 2009, 1)

On the other hand, perceptions of a weakening of the socialistic qualities of Swedish democracy appear to be confirmed by the 2010 election, in which, for the first time since the Second World War, a centre-right government has been re-elected after serving a full term.

Svanur Kristjánsson (2004, 172, 153), a political scientist at the University of Iceland, observes that the semi-presidential constitutional framework in his country makes the role of the voter complex. Together with the decline of the party system and its membership, this means that active citizen control of government has all but disappeared. Instead, politicians cater to a fickle electorate, which means that they restrict their policy development to a narrow focus on economic stability and growth. Kristjánsson's (2004, 153) conclusion is that 'the Icelandic system of governance has become a rather messy and complicated political arrangement, thereby resembling the situation in other modern democracies.'

Reviewing the results of the Power and Democracy projects for Denmark, Norway and Sweden, Andersen (2007) observes that by comparison with other democracies they remain quite healthy, and from what was known at that stage it would be surprising if the current study on Finland did not largely support this picture. He described the Nordic countries as having strong

representative democracies that rest on a solid popular base with high and equally distributed political participation conducted through capable mass-based parties and people's movements. They have rich economies with solidary (pro-social) wage policies that ensure redistribution for a high degree of economic equality. Gender equality is highly developed and the regulation of business to make it comply with social goals is strong. Levels of political literacy, political engagement, electoral turnout and trust in politicians are mostly high.

However, in agreement with the Danish parliamentarians, Andersen (2007) notes signs of trouble: declines in party membership, in electoral turnout and in political trust; increased electoral volatility; weakening of voluntary associations; excessively competitive behaviour among the media; concentration of economic wealth and power; and an increase in the importance of the market, not only relative to the state (both internally and internationally) but in the management of the state. Some of this growth of market power is indicated by lowered ambitions for macro-economic steering and fewer instruments available to government for economic regulation. As Andersen and Hoff (2001, 75) observed six years before, in some ways 'the period of Scandinavian exceptionalism is coming to an end.' Andersen (2007) points out that the decline of parties raises questions: What is to replace this linkage between citizens and political decision-makers? Are there new forms of participation building up to replace those which decline? He suggests there is a need in Scandinavia for a public debate on new democratic criteria for citizen participation, dialogue, deliberation and government responsiveness.

This sketch of democracy in Scandinavia suggests that triple dysfunction also occurs here, but to a much lesser degree than in many other democracies, presumably because the characteristics listed at the beginning of this chapter tend to prevent them. Proportional representation, non-presidential governance (except for Finland and to some extent Iceland) and consensual cultures may all give the people a feeling that they have a significant role as directors of public policy. In addition

to citizens in Nordic countries having somewhat less cause for confusion about who directs government than citizens of most other democracies, there also tends to be less strident competition between politicians because their political institutions and cultures support a more cooperative style of politics. Moreover, compromise in public opinion may not be as damaging as elsewhere because less confusion over directorship means that citizens feel more in charge, so they give considerable support to institutions that help them think constructively about public policy, such as consensus conferences and study circles.

3.2 The case of the United States

The structure and performance of government in the United States provides contrasts with the Nordic democracies that also appear to illustrate triple dysfunction. Before we look at this diagnosis, consider the symptoms, such as those noted by development economist Jeffrey Sachs (2009, 20–22).

> When you compare the US with Canada, Western Europe and Japan, the news is sobering. Its child-poverty and infant-mortality rates are the highest, its life expectancy is the lowest, its budget deficit as a share of gross domestic product (GDP) is the highest, and its 15-year-olds rank among the lowest on tests of math and science.
>
> A big difference between the US and the rest of the rich world is that for the past 30 years or so, Americans consistently rejected 'government solutions' to the problems of health, poverty, education and the environment …
>
> In the past 50 years, arguing for tax increases to fund the expansion of federal programs has been a political death wish … Jimmy Carter failed to close the deficit through higher taxes in the late 1970s. And Ronald Reagan made tax cuts the down payment on every election since.

Gus Speth (2011) gives a more extensive list of problems, prefacing it by noting

a deepening sense that this nation's challenges have grown so large that they exceed current capabilities. Reflect for a moment on the magnitude of the challenges America confronts. For example, in a 20-country group of America's peer countries in the OECD, the US is now worst, or almost worst, on nearly 30 leading indicators of social, environmental and economic well-being.

Even a well-intentioned and highly capable government in Washington, DC, would have severe difficulty addressing the current backlog of major challenges. And, of course, the good government the American public needs is not the one that it has or is likely to have anytime soon. Indeed, right now Washington isn't even trying to seriously address most of these challenges. Neglect, stalemate, and denial rule the day.

To our great shame, among the 20 major advanced countries America now has

- the highest poverty rate, both generally and for children;
- the greatest inequality of incomes;
- the lowest government spending as a per centage of GDP on social programs for the disadvantaged;
- the lowest number of paid holiday, annual, and maternity leaves;
- the lowest score on the United Nations' index of 'material well-being of children';
- the worst score on the United Nations' gender inequality index;
- the lowest social mobility;
- the highest public and private expenditure on health care as a portion of GDP,

yet accompanied by the highest

- infant mortality rate;
- prevalence of mental health problems;
- obesity rate;
- portion of people going without health care due to cost;
- low birth-weight children per capita (except for Japan);
- consumption of anti-depressants per capita;

along with the shortest life expectancy at birth (except for Denmark and Portugal);

- the highest carbon dioxide emissions and water consumption per capita;
- the lowest score on the World Economic Forum's environmental performance index (except for Belgium) and the largest ecological footprint per capita (except for Belgium and Denmark);
- the highest rate of failing to ratify international agreements;
- the lowest spending on international and humanitarian assistance as a per centage of GDP;
- the highest military spending as a portion of GDP;
- the largest international arms sales;
- the most negative balance of payments (except New Zealand, Spain and Portugal);
- the lowest scores for student performance in math (except for Portugal and Italy) (and far from the top in both science and reading);
- the highest school dropout rate (except for Spain);
- the highest homicide rate;
- the largest prison population per capita.

In looking at some of this performance, economics journalist Jeff Madrick (cited in Parker 2009, 40) alleges that such 'facts amount to about as conclusive a proof as history provides that the ideology applied in this generation has failed.' Much of that ideology is an upholding of libertarian rights such as: freedom from restriction by government (for example, in gun ownership); unfettered access to the entrepreneurial opportunities of free markets; and freedom from obligations to think carefully about the welfare of large publics, whether they are only of the present or whether they include future generations. This ideology has been interpreted as driving the US to trigger the 2008 global financial crisis (e.g. Stiglitz 2010; Madrick 2009; Krugman and Wells 2011) and its irresponsibility does nothing to replace faith-based thinking with the discipline of reasoning from critically scrutinized evidence. Perhaps this (along with the fear

aroused by highly competitive working conditions and poor social security) encourages religious belief to flourish in the United States, a phenomenon that evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins (cited in K. Muir 2008, 17) sees as a major problem: 'In a Gallup poll 44 per cent of the American people said that they believe the world is less than 10,000 years old'. As a culture of excessive libertarianism is, in itself, an underprovision of a public good, it is arguable that government in the US is failing in this way as well as in the others listed above. But do these failures result from triple dysfunction? Ambiguous delegation encourages them by granting both citizens and representatives a licence to neglect the common good. Excessive competition between politicians must support this neglect by focusing these agents on opportunities for personal advantage. And excessive compromise must permit it by directing and constraining politicians with ignorance from the mass public.

Excessive competition is implicated as a strong factor by British political scientist Anthony King (1997), for he ascribes US neglect of public goods largely to the exceptional need of American federal politicians to focus on campaigning for election rather than on governing. King describes American citizens as 'hyperdemocrats', partly because they hold their representatives accountable to a very high degree and partly because of their pride in their political system. This accountability is accentuated in three ways: with the very short two-year terms of office for members of the House of Representatives; by selecting candidates via primary elections; and through weak support for politicians by parties, which makes elections very candidate-centred. The system of primary elections in electoral colleges forces new candidates and incumbents to assiduously cultivate local activists, which means that Congress is fraught with dogmatic conflict. Bueno de Mesquita and Smith (2012, 269) have called for the electoral college to be abolished as it is (in the language of their 'selectorate theory') a mechanism for keeping 'the winning coalition smaller that it could be and, thereby, to empower politicians more and the people less.' As ambiguous delegation stunts voters' incentives to develop broad understand-

ings of public affairs, their tight control over members of the House of Representatives will produce poor policy. This damage is reinforced by an aspect of excessive competition in which the enormous personal expense of campaigning focuses candidates on raising funds by pleasing wealthy special interests.

King's description of the second part of the hyperdemocratic problem is that,

> as everyone who visits the United States quickly realizes, they are … inordinately proud of their government, or at least of their system of government. Far more than people in other countries, Americans are brought up to idolize, almost literally, both their governmental system, as embodied in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, and the heroes of American political history. (King 2000, 85)

As noted under 'Personal involvement' in §2.2.4, Dana Nelson (2008) has investigated this attitude by focusing on the prestige and power of US presidents, which is both desired by citizens and cultivated by presidents. This is such a prominent feature of American politics that Nelson gives it a label — 'presidentialism'. She argues that it diminishes democracy by encouraging citizens to limit their participation to choosing their next chief. So when Americans feel a need for better national government, they look for a better president, rather than for ways of improving the quality of their own input. This reaction is encouraged by ambiguous delegation, but it would also seem that the absence in the US of two major characteristics of the Nordic democracies adds to the confusion about who directs government. These are the lack of proportional representation and an approach to politics that is less diverse and open-minded than that of the Nordic countries, as politics in the US lacks both a left wing and consensual motivation. It is arguable that the citizen disengagement encouraged by ambiguous delegation is accentuated by the absence of proportional representation because this discourages minorities from debating, developing and promoting innovative policy positions. As there is little prospect of such policy

gaining public attention through debate in Congress, citizens may turn away from trying to direct their government, either by ignoring politics or by focusing on political personalities and partisanship instead of on policies.

In addition to King's observations, hyperdemocracy is also evident in the exceptionally extensive use of elections in the United States, with over one million offices being filled in this way. This is probably the most complicated electoral system in the world (see, e.g. Streb 2008). It asks citizens to make more decisions more frequently than citizens of other democracies, with the likely result that many fail to vote because they are overwhelmed by the task. At state and local government levels, elections may appoint not only the members of legislatures, but the executive (such as Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General and Secretary of State), the judiciary, sheriffs and school board members. According to the paradox of trust (see §2.2.1), this heavy reliance on elections should exacerbate citizens' distrust of government. The triple dysfunction hypothesis suggests that such distrust is well-founded, for selecting public servants as well as political representatives by popular election should further encourage underprovision of public goods. Political scientists John Hibbing and Elizabeth Theiss-Morse (2001) have, in effect, declared that the paradox of trust is alive and well in the US with their assessment that Americans' disapproval of government is provoked largely by the political process.

Another cause of government failure in the US may be the strong American emphasis on the production and consumption of private goods, as it directly competes with the provision of public goods (see §2.1). This emphasis is likely to be facilitated by ambiguous delegation because its confusion about who directs government leaves citizens very free to focus on private goods. As this is the main focus of the majority of citizens, excessive compromise makes it politically influential. The history of the United States, right from the arrival of the Puritans, is one of seeking freedom from oppression in Europe, of displacement of the American Indians, of exploitation of abundant natural resources and then subsequently, of exploitation of slaves — a

history that appears to have fostered an individualistic, materialistic and competitive culture. Perhaps this is why the United States has the most enterprising and vigorous market economy in the world. As King (2000, 81) observes, there

> are few countries in the world whose collective ideology is more pro-business than that of the United States and where the climate of opinion is more favourable to free-enterprise capitalism. Yet American businesspeople — an immensely influential force in American society — do not love their government … This underlying suspicion and mistrust extends well beyond the large corporate sector and is also deeply embedded in the small business and entrepreneurial psyche.

Kuttner (2008, 75) laments the damage inflicted by this suspicion of government:

> Obama is constrained by a fiscal climate of opinion in which right-thinking people are supposed to be more alarmed about budgetary threats than about either the risks of another depression or a continued slow decline in the economic security and opportunity of most Americans. Regulation is still widely considered a pejorative word … large government endeavours are deemed to be outmoded by modern markets …

As a consequence it appears that while presidentialism encourages US citizens to neglect their democratic role of considering and choosing public goods, their libertarian and pro-business mistrust of government drives their politicians to neglect it as well. Under these conditions, government must fail to provide many important public goods, and as Sachs and Speth observe at the beginning of this section, this is happening in the US. The libertarian impulses driving this are acute. As King (2000, 97–98) observes, much of the mistrust of federal government has 'extreme intensity … of anger, frustration and betrayal'. It has been reported as driving the 2009–2010 rise of the Tea Party (Drehle 2010). Political scientist Alan Abramowitz (2013) sup-

ports that view with a multivariate analysis of factors that are likely to attract people to the Tea Party. He found that the conservatism of their ideology was the most powerful, but next and more important than factors such as age, gender, income and church attendance was racial resentment and dislike of Obama. The Tea Party is disproportionately supported by Republicans who are white, conservative and very upset about the presence in the White House of a black man.

Some of the mistrust of government by US citizens may arise in them feeling robbed by it because their focus on partisanship and presidentialism means that they lack practice at perceiving needs for public goods. The taxation needed for good governance therefore seems like theft to them. King (2000, 91) observes that another

> reason for declining trust in government in the United States since the 1960s has almost certainly been that a significant proportion of those at the head of the government have proved untrustworthy. They have cumulatively deprived the American presidency of much of its dignity.

This is likely to be decisive. It will cut through the usual disengagement of most citizens on issues and politics because, as political scientist Susan Pharr (2000, 201) points out,

> misconduct reports are likely to trigger what cognitive psychologists call 'hot cognitions,' judgments that carry powerful emotions, facilitating the retention of such reports … And indeed, empirically speaking, we know that across class, educational, and age lines, people tend to be remarkably aware of major misconduct cases, often far more than they are about many other domains of government action or policy.

As ambiguous delegation fosters the delusion that the president directs the country, it allows the people not only to ignore many important public goods but to focus so intensely on political

personalities that, sooner or later, the presidency discredits itself.

In addition to these problems of citizens' mistrust and disengagement, the US system has another major flaw, the policy 'drift' created by its separation of powers (Hacker and Pierson 2010). Separation of powers is employed to produce checks and balances and operates between the executive, the legislature and the judiciary, between state and national governments, between the Senate and the House and between the people and their political agents through referendums such as citizen initiated referendums and recalls. Other checks and balances are the Senate filibuster, the two-thirds requirement to override a presidential veto, supermajority voting to amend the Constitution and pass legislation in the Senate, the committee system and the Senate's excessive representation of small states. As discussed in §2.2.6, checks and balances are labelled by McGann (2006, 89–112) as 'supermajoritarian' because each one interferes with simple majority voting and thereby obscures the accountability of government to the people. McGann (2006, 115–52) argues that this underprovides public goods by damaging both political equality and public deliberation. This underprovision, or policy drift, might be illustrated by comparing legislation for sustainability in Germany with that in the US.

> Germany's policy portfolio comprises more than 30 legislative measures that address all aspects of sustainability, with binding long-term targets guiding implementation efforts and the necessary review of policies at regular intervals. In the United States, by contrast, short-term incentives, fragmented regulations, and a lack of planning certainty — in the absence of a binding policy framework — have dampened private-sector investment and technology deployment. (Buehler et al. 2011, 8)

Yet another problem for the US has been noted by political scientist Peter Beinart (2010): a tendency for politicians to deliberately incapacitate federal government. The motivation for this started to develop when Bill Clinton became president. Bein-

art observes that with the GOP no longer controlling the White House, a new group of aggressive Republicans such as Newt Gingrich, Tom DeLay and Trent Lott began trying to discredit Clinton by discrediting government itself.

> Rhetorically, they derided Washington as ineffective and conflict-ridden, and through their actions they guaranteed it. Their greatest weapon was the filibuster, which forced Democrats to muster 60 votes to get legislation through the Senate. Historically, filibustering had been rare…
>
> With these acts of legislative sabotage, Republicans tapped into a deep truth about the American people: they hate political squabbling, and they take out their anger on whoever is in charge… Republicans [had] learned the secrets of vicious-circle politics: When the parties are polarized, it's easy to keep anything from getting done [because of the checks and balances in the US system]. When nothing gets done, people turn against government. When you're the party out of power and the party that reviles government, you win…
>
> In recent years, Republicans have played this style of politics better than Democrats. Winning elections by making government look foolish is a more natural strategy for the anti-government party. But there is no guarantee Democrats won't one day try something similar… At its core, vicious-circle politics isn't an assault on liberal solutions to hard problems; it's an assault on any solutions to hard problems. (Beinart 2010, 14, 15, 16)

From the viewpoint of the triple dysfunction hypothesis, Beinart's 'vicious-circle politics' is a product of excessive competition between political agents in the institutional environment of the USA.

On 5 August 2011, after America's lamentable performance of initially triggering the global financial crisis, failing to adequately reform its financial regulation and then indulging in political confrontation on the federal debt ceiling, the credit rating agency Standard & Poor's made the unprecedented move

of downgrading the AAA credit rating of the US to AA+. On 13 August *The Economist* reported that

> S&P's political analysis is spot on. In light of the brinkmanship of the recent months, it argues, America's governance and policymaking are becoming 'less stable, less effective and less predictable' … The gap between the parties had become 'extraordinarily difficult' to bridge, and 'the statutory debt ceiling and the threat of default have become political bargaining chips in the debate over fiscal policy'
>
> … Other sober institutions concur. The World Economic Forum has downgraded America from second place in 2009 to fourth place in 2010 in its annual global competitiveness rankings. By the Forum's reckoning, America comes a lowly 40th for the quality of its institutions, 54th for trust in its politicians, 68th for government waste and a dismal 87th for its macroeconomic environment. The World Bank sees a relentless decline in various indicators of American governance. Daniel Kaufmann of the Brookings Institution notes that last year 33% of American business leaders told pollsters that a big constraint was the 'instability of the policy framework'. The figure for France was 14%; for Chile, 5%. (*Economist* 2011b, 23, 50)

But respected congressional scholars Thomas Mann and Norman Ornstein (2012) have proclaimed that *It's Even Worse Than It Looks.* Their subtitle explains this as a product of *How the American constitutional system collided with the new politics of extremism.* In reviewing the book, Paul Krugman and Robin Wells (2012, 9) note that Mann and Ornstein

> argue that Congress — and indeed the whole American political system — is close to complete institutional collapse. We have entered a new politics of 'hostage taking,' they tell us, epitomized by but by no means limited to the 2011 fight over the debt ceiling …
>
> What the country faces, they write, isn't a problem with partisanship in the abstract; it's a problem with one party:
>
> 'However awkward it may be for the traditional press and nonpartisan analysts to acknowledge, one of the two major parties, the

> Republican Party, has become an insurgent outlier — ideologically extreme; contemptuous of the inherited social and economic policy regime; scornful of compromise; unpersuaded by conventional understanding of facts, evidence and science; and dismissive of the legitimacy of its political opposition. When one party moves this far from the center of American politics, it is extremely difficult to enact policies responsive to the country's most pressing challenges.'
>
> … But ultimately the deep problem isn't about personalities or individual leadership, it's about the nation as a whole. Something has gone very wrong with America, not just its economy, but its ability to function as a democratic nation. And it's hard to see when or how that wrongness will get fixed.

It is clear that the US is in a difficult position. The weakness of its democratic system invites wealthy interests to manipulate both public opinion and politicians. Government failure is evident, widely acknowledged and theoretically predicted, but countermeasures appear difficult to devise. Moreover, any that are proposed are not likely to be implemented by government because of its incompetence. As we have seen, this failure is a function not only of the inadequacy of US institutions, but also of their multiplicity and that many are intended to check each other.

As government failure underprovides public goods in the US it might be anticipated that it exacerbates citizens perceptions of uncertainty and threat. They might therefore have relatively elevated levels of fear and, as discussed later in §8.1, fearful responses are especially strong in conservatives. This may explain the extreme antagonism towards government by many of those people. As their attitude blocks government from limiting and reducing uncertainties and threats it is likely to amount to self-fulfilling prophecy. Perhaps that is propelling the US in a spiral to the bottom, where strident self-interest and antagonism rule.

King and Nelson recommend several remedies for these democratic difficulties, such as: lengthening the term of office for the House of Representatives; strengthening the role of parties (for example by replacing primaries with candidate selection by party caucuses and by allowing parties to contribute

more funds to their candidates' campaigns); and replacing the presidential system with a head of government that is not elected by the people but by their representatives. The last change should help shift the public image of responsibility for the deliberation of public policy away from the head of state and towards citizens. However, if this shift is to be made constructive, new institutions are needed that assist the people to deliberate policy and to have political impact when they do. Such innovations are also needed for the implementation of King and Nelson's recommendations. Those new institutions must be independent of government so that its failure does not obstruct them, yet they must influence government. This seems a formidable set of requirements. The abolition of the US presidency is the last thing that the well-cultivated awe of this office would countenance. Moreover, few proposals have been made for new institutions that could facilitate deliberation by citizens while giving their conclusions political influence. Descriptions of these designs, together with assessments of their probable effectiveness and their feasibility of implementation, are given in Part 2.

4
SUSCEPTIBILITY TO DYSFUNCTION: TYPES OF ISSUE

The triple dysfunction hypothesis only looks at trouble and does not attempt to indicate the positive contributions of the five elements of the electoral process that it is based on. This search for weakness is crucial because, as observed in §2.1, private and public goods usually compete with each other for the resources required to provide them. These resources may be human, artificial or natural and any failure by government may be taken advantage of by interests that want to use them to produce private goods, which may then create an underprovision of public goods.

To begin to see how pronounced triple dysfunction might be and to help recognize the situations where it would be costly, several possible characteristics of public goods issues are now suggested as being likely to produce some failure of democratic responsibility towards public goods. This failure includes lack of consideration of the interests of external states, groups and individuals, which is a failure not only because inconsiderate behaviour damages the interests of others, but because it invites reprisal.

4.1 Issue characteristics that create problems for liberal democratic governments

It is suggested that the following eight characteristics that may be found in issues concerning public goods are likely to cause liberal democratic governments to neglect or mismanage these goods. The first five characteristics are suggested to have this effect because triple dysfunction tends to make democratic government ignorant (see Figure 2.1, p. 126). The last three — pervasiveness, competitiveness and 'externalizability' — are suggested to evoke dysfunction even if these governments are well-informed, because they are likely to lack the high degree of responsibility (also in Figure 2.1) required to effectively address issues with one or more of those three characteristics. The more of these eight characteristics that occur in any one issue, the more it will tend to be mismanaged by democratic governments, because of the ignorance and irresponsibility that their triple dysfunction generates.

1. Complexity. Issues with this characteristic may have long causal chains, feedback loops, or be part of an interrelated web of issues. Social and ecological systems are rich in feedback and web structure, but as politicians tend to use short, linear thinking for easy comprehension by electors (H. Muir 2008, 41), their 'solutions' to social and environmental issues may make them worse (e.g. Forrester 1971; Yaffee 1997).

2. Abstraction. Constructive social, economic, environmental and international policies may be ignored by politicians focused on more material monuments to achievement such as buildings, bridges, trade profits and quick employment, because the visual, monetary, or personal impact of these immediately impresses constituents (Bennett 2008, 2–3). Abstract social problems such as the development of equality, public trust, community solidarity, public rationality and education tend to be too cerebral for easy communication to a largely disengaged electorate. Problems of risk are abstract when presented in statistical terms,

so people and societies are inclined to ignore events with low short-term probability even if this becomes very high or certain over the longer run. Psychologist Elke Weber (cited in Bennett 2008, 2) states that for 'most of us, risk is not a statistic. Risk is a feeling … If I feel scared, that overshadows any amount of pallid statistical information.' Abstract risks can therefore lead to disastrous inaction if they have high stakes, such as with nuclear proliferation, terrorism, hurricanes, floods, tsunamis, earthquakes, pandemics, global warming and space weather events such as coronal mass ejections (for a discussion of these see Brooks 2009).

3. Obscurity. Obscurity describes situations that societies have no previous experience of, or they have forgotten, or, as Weber (cited in Bennett 2008, 3) observes, they do not recognize because humans have not evolved an innate response to the situation, through lack of evolutionary experience. Lack of recognition may also occur because electors who are not focused on governance do not recognize the issue as a public goods problem. Another form of obscurity is imperceptibility of the development of the problem, variously known as 'landscape amnesia' and 'creeping normalcy' (Diamond 2005, 425), the 'shifting baseline syndrome' (Arbesman 2012, 38) and the 'boiling frog syndrome'. Lack of an obvious threshold or deadline for action may also amount to obscurity. Climate change presents this type of vagueness. An example of creeping normalcy being overthrown by the arrival of a threshold to produce an active democratic social choice is given by the Tasmanian issue of whether to dam the Franklin River for hydro-electricity. The physical start of dam construction scheduled for late 1982 presented citizens with a dramatic deadline that galvanized civil disobedience, ultimately protecting the river. That threshold spurred into action a very direct democratic social choice by the people that may otherwise not have been made.

Another galvanizing effect in the Franklin River dam issue was the fact that the crisis was directly attributable to people. These can easily be demonised, such as business people asking

for cheap electricity ('greedy capitalists') and politicians and engineers wanting to build monuments to themselves ('hubris', 'empire-building', 'political dinosaurs'). Psychologist Paul Slovic (cited in Bennett 2008, 3–4) provides another example of this emotional responsiveness to human actors by contrasting the muted response of the US to hurricane Katrina of 2005 with the far more significant and long lasting response to the 9/11 terrorist attack in 2001. Although it may have been contributed to by anthropogenic global warming, Katrina was an act of nature and therefore failed to trigger the millennia-old fear of having our homes and lives invaded by strangers that was evoked by 9/11. Evolutionary psychologists point out that a major part of our environment of evolutionary adaptation (EEA) was a social existence of dependence on, and vulnerability to, other people. This situation created an 'evolutionary 'ratchet'' or 'evolutionary arms race between manipulation and mindreading' (Orbell et al. 2004, 3, 13) that produced 'the extraordinary sensitivity humans have to other humans' (Smith 2006, 1021). As this sensitivity to others appears to be 'a predisposition 'hardwired' into our biology' (Smith 2006, 1016) it will express itself in democracies. As we have predicted, democratic polities have a tendency to be irresponsible and ignorant, so we might expect such hardwired instincts in the people to prevail without their appropriateness being examined for each issue. Conversely, the appropriateness of inaction may not be examined if human predispositions are not aroused by an issue because it is unlike those that were crucial in our EEA. Such an issue can therefore be classed as having 'obscurity'. Global warming has this characteristic, as noted by Andrew Simms, policy director for the UK New Economics Foundation.

> In their inability to take action commensurate with the scale and timeframe of the climate problem, the [UK] government is mocked … by Britain's own history … The challenge is rapid transition of the economy in order to live within our environmental means, while preserving and enhancing our general wellbeing. In some important ways, we've been here before and can learn lessons

> from history. Under different circumstances, Britain achieved astonishing things while preparing for, fighting and recovering from the second world war [sic]. In the six years between 1938 and 1944, the economy was re-engineered and there were dramatic cuts in resource use and household consumption. (Simms 2008)

4. TEMPORAL REMOTENESS OF CONSEQUENCES. Issues with this characteristic are long-term problems. Slovic (cited in Bennett 2008, 3) notes that it is 'a very well established fact about human behaviour that we discount future negative outcomes a great deal, especially if it means having to postpone some immediate positive benefit'. As discussed above in §2.6.1, Marsh and Yencken analyse the impact of this issue characteristic of democratic government in *Into the Future: The Neglect of the Long Term in Australian Politics.*

5. SPATIAL REMOTENESS OF CONSEQUENCES. Problems of this type are geographically distant from decision makers and thus often easy to neglect (Diamond 2005, 424–25).

6. PERVASIVENESS. The size of an issue, or habituation of citizens to it, may require a massive effort by democracies to generate the political will needed to manage the problem. This includes making sure that most citizens are informed and concerned as well as mutually supportive, so they have the solidarity that enables them to take responsibility and produce effective collective action. Confusion in democracies about who directs public policy hobbles their capacity to create solidarity, with the result that pervasive problems such as overpopulation, species extinction, risks of pandemics and global warming are likely to produce dire consequences before the political will to confront them can be generated. Authoritarian regimes may find it easier to forestall such calamities — if they anticipate them, and if they choose to act. An example of this facility is the ability of China to introduce strong measures to control the birth rate in order to limit overpopulation, in contrast with the inability of demo-

cratic India to make such a resolute attempt to face the same problem (see §4.2.1 below).

7. Competitiveness. Rivalry over issues that divide the community can be magnified to a destructive degree by excessive competition between politicians in representative democracies (Dahl 1998, 150, 154–55). This may inhibit responsibility towards public goods, as described in §2.3. The difficulty that all nations have in acceding to calls for secession appears to demonstrate this as these situations are competitive, with separatists competing with the tribal instincts of the rest of the nation, which tells people that the members of their group must be loyal and show solidarity. It appears that one of the causes of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda was exacerbation of Hutu–Tutsi rivalries by the competitive struggle of democratic politics (Courtemanche 2003, 191–93). Ecological geographer Jared Diamond (2005, 317–8) supports this view by stating that, in addition to desperate competition for land because of overpopulation, genocide resulted here from hatred and fear deliberately fostered by the political elite in order to retain power.

8. Externalizability. 'Externalizability' is used here to indicate the openness of a problem to interpretation by citizens and their political agents that it does not exist, or that it is caused or permitted by something *outside* them or the groups with which they feel some affiliation, when it is either those citizens or their groups that are partially or wholly responsible for the problem. Two examples of groups that may have this role are political parties and nations. Such irresponsible denial of a problem or misinterpretation of its cause is here called externalization. One form of this is conspiracy theorizing, in which citizens blame evil intentions in others instead of blaming the circumstances in which those others are placed, or blaming themselves or their group. For example, the Global Financial Crisis of 2008 was blamed by many Americans on greedy bankers rather than on themselves for electing politicians who advocated deregulation of the financial market (Stiglitz 2010, 6). Three ways of external-

izing are: (a) psychological denial, which is usually avoiding the anticipation of a painful outcome by refusing to recognize reality; (b) groupthink, in which 'the need for mutual support and approval may lead to suppression of doubts and critical thinking' (Diamond 2005, 435–36); and (c) avoiding responsibility by neglecting to anticipate the subsequent effects of the immediate results of attempting to solve a problem. As discussed later in §5.4 this last form of externalization (i.e. not 'thinking beyond stage one') is very common, no doubt largely because ambiguous delegation gives little incentive for either citizens or their political agents to thoroughly think things through. An example is given in §4.2.3, in which the provision of the public good of full employment is doggedly attempted by externalizing much of the solution from politics to the market. For the adverse implications of this and other externalizations of associated problems, see §5.3. In that case study, externalization produces feedbacks that stop problems from being solved.

The openness of an issue to the lazy, impulsive or wishful thinking of externalization may depend to a large degree on whether it has any of the preceding seven difficult characteristics. For example, complexity may invite neglectful thinking or obfuscation by blaming others rather than confronting reality. Similar responses may be encouraged by abstraction, obscurity, temporal remoteness, spatial remoteness and pervasiveness. Competitiveness may present a more direct motive for externalization. However, although externalization is often encouraged by these characteristics in an issue (e.g. denial by pervasiveness; groupthink by competitiveness; and neglecting to fully anticipate the chain of consequences by complexity, abstraction and obscurity), it may also depend on other characteristics of the issue, such as its social context making it attractive for other agents to be portrayed as responsible and its capacity to evoke horror or contradict a world view, as this can arouse denial.

Externalizability invites the irresponsibility that is predicted here for liberal democracies by triple dysfunction. Confusion of directorship and fierce competition for votes give politicians strong motives to respond to externalizable issues by choosing

'solutions' that do not require effort or sacrifice by their electors, regardless of whether they cause the problem, or contribute to it, or are best placed to fix it. This propensity to externalize solutions is likely to be considerable, for evolutionary psychology indicates that the capacity for deceiving not only others, but also oneself, is highly developed in humans (Trivers 1991). Politicians will therefore be supported in their externalizing by the egoistic and pro-social predispositions of each citizen to do it as well.

A powerful motivation for the wishful thinking in which people externalize solutions to problems is their inclination to reject evidence that clashes with their world view. Slovic (cited in Bennett 2008, 5) explains that people 'do their best to hold onto their worldviews … because so much of their personal identity and social networks are tied up in maintaining [them]' He notes that the two world views with the most influence on perception and action appear to be the egalitarian and the hierarchist (Bennett 2008, 4). The egalitarian world view is a preference for a society where wealth, power and opportunity are broadly distributed and the hierarchical world view is a preference for leaders on top and followers below. Slovic observes that what

> we've seen through this research is that egalitarians are generally more concerned about environmental risks over a range of hazards, including global warming. Hierarchists tend to be less concerned … The truly disconcerting thing about this work is that it shows how difficult it is to change people's views and behaviours with factual information … People spin the information to keep their worldview intact. (cited in Bennett 2008, 4, 5)

This adherence to world view appears to encourage the development of enclaves of people with similar views (Sunstein 2002). In wealthy societies people have considerable ability to form and join such enclaves by choosing their place of residence, by selecting those with whom they interact and by selecting the information that they find most congenial. So wealth tends to activate externalization in peoples' thinking about issues by insulating them from contrary views and evidence.

A COMMENT ON THESE EIGHT CHARACTERISTICS. It was predicted in §2.5 that triple dysfunction would produce government failure mainly in strategic policy. The eight troublesome characteristics of issues described here support that prediction as they are more likely to be found in strategic than in tactical and operational issues. This means that the ignorance and irresponsibility generated by triple dysfunction is more likely to produce neglect in addressing issues that are strategic, than in addressing those that are tactical or operational.

4.2 Three cases of irresponsibility by liberal democratic governments

The eight characteristics of difficult issues described above may produce a degree of failure by democratic government that varies from issue to issue according to the strength of these characteristics in each issue. As triple dysfunction produces a degree of irresponsibility and ignorance in government it tends to focus democracies on providing those public goods that are, from the citizen's perspective as an individual, personally and immediately important. Examples of such goods are the availability of work, a prosperous economy, good public educational and medical facilities and freedom from crime. The irresponsibility of triple dysfunction will also incline democracies to aim for quick results by treating symptoms rather than underlying causes, so most government failure will occur in the provision of public goods that are net benefits only over the long term. This patchiness and the delayed effects of failure conceals much of it from many citizens. Other government failures that citizens may overlook are problems for minority groups within their polity and problems in their nation's relationships with other nations. These group-based issues may be spatially remote from most citizens and often characterized by competitiveness and externalizability, both of which invite citizens to react instinctively towards members of other groups with indifference or even antagonism.

Three public goods issues of strategic significance that are often mismanaged by democracies are now described, to see how significant such government failure can be and whether triple dysfunction appears to explain it. Triple dysfunction will be indicated when one or more of its three components (ambiguous delegation, excessive competition and excessive compromise) appear to contribute to, or cause, the failure. The three strategic issues selected here are overpopulation, global warming and unemployment. Their management strongly affects the per capita availability of natural capital (defined in §2.2.3.2, *Distraction by advertising*) and this common thread is pursued further in Chapter 5 by analysing a fourth strategic public goods issue, the problem of democratic governments inflaming the wants of their citizens so that sooner or later they become frustrated by limits to their natural capital.

This focus on natural capital may seem curious to those who have not given much thought to sustainable development but it is essential when the sustainability of civilizations over decades, centuries or millennia is being considered. On such time scales, cultures can evolve and economies adapt to focus on whatever is most useful, be it services, intellectual property, commodities, manufactured goods and so on. But quality of life will always depend to a large degree on the ratio of natural capital to population, for this gives people their biophysical requirements of space, land, fresh water, clean air, a stable and amenable climate, wildlife, fisheries, wilderness, ecological capacity to assimilate wastes, and many other renewable and nonrenewable assets. If this ratio is high, then these things will be perceived as abundant and those that are marketed will be more affordable for citizens. Because the ratio of natural capital to population is a matter of strategic policy, issues that affect this ratio are used below in this section and in Chapter 5 to test triple dysfunction theory. As that ratio is of great importance to people, these tests also indicate that eliminating triple dysfunction is crucial for their welfare.

It is interesting to note that after the following three cases of government failure had been written, Jeffrey Sachs indepen-

dently drew attention to two of them — global warming and unemployment.

> Climate science tells us unequivocally that we need to 'decarbonize' much of the energy system by the middle of this century. Yet advanced techniques for extracting fossil fuels — fracking, new deep ocean drilling and the like — dominate today's economic and political discussion. These measures may temporarily boost the economy but *they would end up crowding out investments in low-carbon technologies.* A boom in fossil fuels is bound to be a dead end. Short term priorities and long-term needs are at odds.
>
> This disconnect also exists in the realm of jobs policy. Youth unemployment is stuck in the stratosphere because conventional jobs have succumbed to advances in information technology, robotics and outsourcing, leading to lower employment and a decline in earnings among unskilled youth in particular. In response, economists obsess about policies to manage [consumer] demand. But that will not address these structural changes. New strategies in education and training, and in smoothing the tricky school-to-work transition, are also needed.
>
> These examples illustrate the difference between mainstream economics and the policies that are needed to deliver sustainable development … Mainstream economics divorces the short term from the long term. There may be big problems ahead — climate change, food scarcity, demographic shifts and poorly trained young people — but macroeconomists prefer to improvise today and worry about the future later. That approach also suits politicians, aligning the policy cycle with the electoral cycle. But it is not a recipe for producing robust, inclusive growth. (Sachs 2013, emphasis added to highlight a crucial strategic aspect)

We now inspect this chapter's three cases of failure in strategic policy, to gauge their significance and assess whether triple dysfunction is the culprit.

4.2.1 Size of population

The reluctance of democracies to take the problem of overpopulation seriously is consistent with triple dysfunction, as it is both ignorant and irresponsible. This reluctance has been noted by a host of observers (e.g. Butler 2004, 194; Attenborough 2011, Sulston 2012). After a surge around 1960–70 in public concern about growth of the human population, which was largely stimulated in 1968 by Paul R. Erhlich's *The Population Bomb,* interest then began to subside and overpopulation is now, in effect, a politically incorrect topic. That attitude has been called the 'Hardinian taboo' in memory of ecologist Garrett Hardin (n.d.), who noted that

> Pacific islanders apparently have no hesitancy in explicitly giving taboo as a reason for stopping a discussion. By contrast, Westerners, with their cherished tradition of free speech and open discussion, would be embarrassed to say (for instance), 'We will not discuss population because it is under a taboo'. Instead, they change the subject.

The Director of the UK Science Museum, Chris Rapley (2006) has observed that

> so controversial is the subject [of population size] that it has become the 'Cinderella' of the great sustainability debate — rarely visible in public, or even in private. In interdisciplinary meetings addressing how the planet functions as an integrated whole, demographers and population specialists are usually notable by their absence … Unless and until this changes, summits such as that in Montreal ('Beyond Kyoto') which address only part of the problem will be limited to at best very modest success, with the welfare and quality of life of future generations the ineluctable casualty.

The very personal basis of this taboo is described by World-Watch vice president Robert Engleman (2008):

> Discomfort with the topic is everywhere, not least among environmentalists, who grapple daily with the ways human beings are altering the natural world … Who wants to reduce humanity to a number, or to see themselves as one? And population trends touch on some of the most sensitive issues in our experience: sex, race, childbearing, family size, abortion. Yet anyone paying attention to human-induced climate change or the ongoing surge in global energy and food prices must sometimes pause to think about just how many we are.

As predicted by the ambiguous delegation and excessive compromise of triple dysfunction, in democracies such personal sensitivity and aversion will be transmitted to politicians with little of the reflection or critical thought that might control it for the common good. Perhaps this is why democratic governments are unable to develop rational policy responses on population.

People who have strong interests in public goods that are vulnerable to population pressure, such as environmentalists and green politicians, appear to have quickly recognized this irresponsibility of the political system. They have found that talking about physical and social carrying capacities and suggesting corresponding limits to populations arouses political scorn. However, their resultant aversion to trying to reduce growth of population may not be entirely due to the obstacle of lack of thought encouraged in citizens by the ambiguity of delegation and then given political expression by excessive compromise. Excessive competition may also be seen to play a part, for example in the following account by Mark O'Connor and William Lines (2008, 11) in *Overloading Australia: How Governments and Media Dither and Deny on Population.* They observe that

> more than a decade ago, Labor strategist Gary Johns, the former Special Minister for State, identified high immigration and the lack of a population policy as key reasons for the Keating [Labor] government's fall. As Johns put it, 'The Australian population has overwhelmingly disapproved of the level of immigration to Australia under both Labor and Coalition administrations for many years.'

> In his analysis, Johns endorsed a recommendation by Doug Cocks that Australia should aim to stabilize population at between 20 and 23 million, with immigration kept to about 50,000 a year. To introduce such a policy might be difficult, said Johns, but it was a potential election-winner for Labor. It would be 'overwhelmingly positive in national interest terms' and would also show respect for the electorate's opinion.
>
> But even with victory at stake, did Labor have the 'ticker' to take on the immigration lobbies? At the Labor Party's national conference in Hobart in 1998, Kim Beazley, Labor's then leader, broke through the Keating era's wall of silence, and promised that Labor would give Australia a population policy.
>
> Unfortunately, Beazley was soon trimming his rhetoric in other directions, so that at business dinners and fund raising occasions he gave the opposite impression: that Labor's new population policy would be one of rapid growth … Before long, Beazley was talking of ensuring that we reached 50 million people. No doubt his director of campaign funding was breathing easier.

This account indicates that although Australians have some concern that there are — or soon may be — too many of them, their politicians sense that they are more personally concerned about their employment and income and therefore want economic growth. At the same time, politicians want financial and other support from business in their campaigns for re-election and this also compels them to promote economic growth, which is easily done by encouraging immigration. The vote-getting motivation that drives this blend of policies is basically the excessive competition of triple dysfunction.

Another indication of democratic dysfunction in the choice of the size of Australia's population is that this failure appears to have been quickly recognized by the two political parties with very strong reasons to speak out about the pressure of population on limited natural resources: the environmentally concerned Australian Democrats and Australian Greens (O'Connor and Lines 2008, 166–75). By 1984, racist interpretations and the personal implications of the issue had made population too

electorally damaging for these parties to handle, so they ignored it until late in 2008, when Greens leader, Senator Bob Brown (2008), was spurred into action by the concerns of his constituents about the effect of population growth on global warming, peak oil, a virtually nationwide shortage of fresh water and many other issues. He called for a national debate in an attempt to break the national policy paralysis on the problem.

The paralysis had been observed in 2002 by the Australian Minister for Immigration Philip Ruddock (2003, 108): 'Two population inquiries in the past decade have … highlighted the very limited range of policy levers available for governments to influence population size … we have a very limited capacity to ensure any particular population target is actually delivered.' The inquiries Ruddock referred to were that of the National Population Council in 1991 and that of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Long Term Strategies (into 'Australia's Population Carrying Capacity') in 1994. These were not the only ones. In 1975 the 'Borrie Commission' reported for the Commonwealth Government on population policy and then issued a supplementary report in 1978.

In recent years net overseas migration into Australia has been rising, reaching a record level of 253,400 in the year ending December 2008 (Australian Government 2010) that provoked public expressions of concern at the population exceeding 40 million by 2050. Although arrivals of refugees as 'boat people' create intense political debate, the annual maximum was 6,535 in 2010, whereas the official Australian refugee intake is approximately 14,000 per year (*Economist* 2011c). In April 2010, the federal government announced it was to have yet another inquiry into the desirable future size of the population. Submissions closed in 2011 and, in the words of economist and agricultural scientist Doug Cocks (2012, 28), who has carefully studied Australia's carrying capacity, this was 'an inquiry which, in the blink of an eye, produced a 150 page masterpiece of glossy spin and bullshit. Talk about groundhog day. Very little has changed in 20 years'. Although the 1994 Committee had stressed 'the dire need for a solid and comprehensive data base from which to

project in detail the consequences of various population scenarios' (Newman 1994–5), the government has subsequently done no research into the desirable ratio of sustainable natural capital to population and ignores contributions of this type such as those of Cocks. He initially wrote a report for that Committee (see Cocks 2012, 28) and then, in view of its unwillingness to deal with the problem, put the issue before the public with a book (Cocks 1996).

The aversion of politicians in democracies to limiting the size of population may be seen in the contrast between the responses made by China and India to their population problems. The authoritarian regime in China implemented a one-child-per-family policy in 1979, whereas democratic India has been unable to respond so decisively to the same challenge. As Zakaria (2003, 251) observes: 'India has been unable to engage in sustained reform largely because its politicians will not inflict any pain — however temporary — on their constituents.' In 2008 the Chinese government estimated that by the middle of that year the country would have had a population of 1.6 to 1.7 billion without this policy, instead of the 1.3 billion it had at that time. China has thereby ensured that its growth of GDP produces a greater per capita increase in wealth than India has been able to achieve (as noted later in §7.3 under the heading 'PO2', providing for a 1% per annum growth of population can consume more than 12% of GDP). China has also increased its per capita wealth with less decrease in per capita availability of domestic natural resource, than it would have done with a larger growth in population (for a discussion of this effect, see §5.3). *The Economist* (*Economist* 2009, 31) reports that cutting the fertility rate (the number of children that an average woman has during her life) from, say six down to two, can help an economy in several ways. First, it increases the size of the workforce relative to the numbers of dependent children and old people. Part of that effect is that when women have fewer children to care for it is easier for them to engage in paid work. Another way in which lowering the fertility rate helps the economy is that with fewer dependents households have more money for savings, which can be in-

vested, producing capital. In addition, minimizing growth of the population maximizes per capita growth of capital, which is part of the per capita increase in wealth referred to above in comparing China with India. Economist Hu Angang (*Economist* 2009, 31) of Tsinghua University has estimated that half of the increase in Chinese GDP from 1978 to 1998 came from the per capita rate of accumulation of capital.

Another indication of the aversion of democracies to dealing with growth of population appears to be that 'the role of rapid demographic change in China (from large to small families, with an average of two or fewer children) is rarely credited as central to the Chinese economic miracle' (Butler 2004, 193). Instead, for example, Mahbubani (2008, 67–78) ascribes China's economic effectiveness relative to India as due to China making much better use of the abilities of its citizens. Under communism the Chinese had eliminated class distinctions, whereas in India the caste system continued to block much of the population from educational, political and economic participation. So when Deng Xiaoping, as chairman of the Communist Party of China, decided in 1978 to convert China's command economy into a market economy, the country was able to develop quickly. Deng's pragmatic insistence on meritocracy in both the Chinese Communist Party and business greatly assisted this process. From 1980 to 2005 China's economy grew at an average of 9.5 per cent per year, compared with India's 5.5 over the same period (Gittins 2006).

The omission by observers in democracies of crediting population control with a role in China's economic success may be another indication of triple dysfunction, for the effects of ambiguous delegation may have taught these democratic observers not to expect a policy problem to be solved by citizens making the necessary sacrifice, which in this case is restricting the size of their families. Liberal democracies tend not work in that way, except in desperate emergencies such as war. It is usually only in a sudden life or death crisis for a group (such as when outsiders threaten it) that the human solidary reflex is aroused to the extent that individuals willingly acknowledge that each

of them must pay a price for the common good. Only in such unusual occasions can citizens overcome ambiguous delegation by shouldering their social responsibility.

The following grim perspective on the importance of the democratic failure to address population growth may be worth keeping in mind. It was offered by someone who thought a lot about the future, the prolific author of science fiction, Isaac Asimov. When asked by political journalist Bill Moyers, 'What do you see happening to the idea of dignity to human species if this population growth continues at its present rate?,' Asimov replied:

> It's going to destroy it all … Democracy cannot survive overpopulation. Human dignity cannot survive it. Convenience and dignity cannot survive it. As you put more and more people onto the world, the value of life not only declines, it disappears. It doesn't matter if someone dies. (Moyers 1988)

4.2.2 Global warming

A striking example of democratic irresponsibility is the response of the United States to the reality and prospect of global warming. Most other liberal democracies also react to this issue with some irresponsibility, as indicated by their deficient performances on Kyoto targets, by the EU taking thirteen years after the 1992 Framework Convention on Climate Change to implement a dysfunctional Emission Trading Scheme and by democracies refusing to provide leadership at the 2009 Copenhagen climate summit, at its sequels in Cancun 2010 and Durban 2011 and also at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (the 2012 Rio+20 Earth Summit). However, these failures may be seen as less reprehensible than that of the US as that country was the world's pre-eminent emitter of greenhouse gases while the problem developed and the US continues, together with China, to emit more of these gases than other countries. Until December 3, 2007, Australia had followed the US in refusing to sign the Kyoto protocol. At the end of the Bush administration in 2008 the US had no intention of ratifying the Kyoto Protocol on

global warming and offered no credible alternative procedure. At the time of writing, it retains much of that attitude because of Republican intransigence, although President Obama is trying to change it with regulatory restraints on emissions and his agreement with China's President Xi Jinping of November 2014 to combat climate change, which they reaffirmed in September 2015. In view of the history of scientific knowledge on this issue, it is arguable that by 2008 the response of the US was 20 years behind where it should have been (Stern 2009). Global warming has been known to be a high probability, extremely high-stakes risk for more than 30 years. In 1979 the US National Academy of Sciences warned that a 'wait-and-see policy may mean waiting until it is too late' (Environmental Defense 2003). International recognition of the problem prompted the formation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 1988, and the urgency of the need for preventive action was emphasized in 1990 with a declaration by 49 Nobel laureates, 700 scientists and the IPCC (Environmental Defense 2003).

This issue has always been recognized as politically very difficult to tackle, but each year of procrastination multiplies the magnitude of the task of curbing greenhouse gas emissions. It raises the speed at which that must be done to stop the warming and increases the cost of reforming economies that grow more dependent on emitting these gases with every year that passes. This failure of government is actually worse than a failure to face global warming as it is also a failure to deal with acidification of the world's oceans and with 'peak oil' — the prospect that world production of oil is currently near its historical maximum and within a few years will enter an accelerating decline while demand continues to rise. That third failure has recently been masked by the prospect of new drilling and 'fracking' technology that opens up vast reserves of oil and gas from shale and coal seams. However, studies show that the production rate of each fracking well declines quickly so this technology may not be able to prevent peak oil (Strahan 2012).

As the country that has emitted the most greenhouse gas, consumes the most petroleum and is also the wealthiest and

most technologically advanced, the US has the greatest responsibility to lead in forging the transition to carbon-free energy. That revolution requires new systems of supply, distribution and consumption which are extremely difficult to establish against the competition of cheap fossil fuels. The Obama administration is starting to address this situation with many billions of dollars being poured into reducing greenhouse gas emissions and by stimulating scientific research, but this reversal may not be sustained and developed as opposing political voices are very strong.

A few details of the history of the US response to global warming illustrate its irresponsibility, while also indicating that triple dysfunction is the cause. At the 1992 Rio Earth Summit in Brazil, US President George H.W. Bush (cited in McKibben 2005) appeared to follow the unconscious directorship of US citizens (which would be a case of confusion from ambiguous delegation), as well as the interests of his financial support base (a case of the pressure from excessive competition), when in response to suggestions that emissions of CO_2 be controlled he declared that 'the American way of life is not up for negotiation'. The following Clinton administration talked in a more environmentally responsible way, but had basically the same approach (McKibben 2005). In July 2001, George W. Bush's Press Secretary Ari Fleischer was asked if the new President would call on US car drivers to reduce fuel consumption to help tackle global warming. He replied:

> That's a big no. The President believes that it's an American way of life and that it should be the goal of policy makers to protect the American way of life. The American way of life is a blessed one. (cited in Miller 2001)

But in 2006, as the impending oil crisis became obvious to growing numbers of electors, America's 'addiction' to foreign oil was at long last acknowledged by President G.W. Bush (KRT-Washington, 2006). This was 27 years after President Carter tried to tackle the problem by asking voters to take responsibility for

their democracy's actions (Elliott 2006). In doing that he was, in effect, trying to overcome the confusion of ambiguous delegation. Carter delivered his speech on the energy crisis on July 15 1979, and although he had been intending to talk to the people earlier, he delayed for ten days so that he could consult more widely and give the matter deeper thought. Andrew Bacevich (2008, 31), a scholar of international relations, describes Carter's earnest attempt as a resounding failure to understand American democracy, even as it 'demonstrated remarkable foresight' on the energy issue. Bacevich writes:

> He began by explaining that he had decided to look beyond energy because 'the true problems of our Nation are much deeper.' The energy crisis of 1979, he suggested, was merely a symptom of a far greater crisis …
>
> In short order, Carter then proceeded to kill any chance he had of securing reelection. In American political discourse, fundamental threats are by definition external … That the actions of everyday Americans might pose a comparable threat amounted to rank heresy …
>
> The nation as a whole was experiencing 'a crisis of confidence … growing doubt about the meaning of our own lives and in the loss of a unity of purpose for our nation … too many of us now tend to worship self-indulgence and consumption. Human identity is no longer defined by what one does, but by what one owns' …
>
> Carter outlined a six-point program designed to end what he called 'this intolerable dependence on foreign oil' …
>
> Although Carter expressed confidence that the United States could one day regain its energy independence, he acknowledged that in the near term 'there [was] simply no way to avoid sacrifice' …
>
> The response to his address — instantly labelled the 'malaise' speech although Carter never used that word — was tepid at best …
>
> As an effort to reorient public policy, Carter's appeal failed completely. Americans showed little enthusiasm for the president's brand of freedom with its connotations of virtuous austerity. Presented with an alternative to quantitative solutions, to the search for

> 'more', they declined the offer. Not liking the message, Americans shot the messenger. Given the choice, more still looked better …
>
> Far more accurately than Jimmy Carter, Reagan understood what made Americans tick: They wanted self-gratification, not self-denial … Whereas President Carter had summoned Americans to mend their ways, which implied a need for critical self-awareness, President Reagan obviated any need for soul-searching by simply inviting his fellow citizens to carry on. (Bacevich 2008, 32–41)

For a description by Bacevich of the American quest for 'more', see §5.2.1 in the next chapter. The democratic failure to act on energy that Carter attempted to correct appears to be due to confusion about who directs, i.e. ambiguous delegation. It is primarily the people who are confused in this way, but Carter was also confused in that he did not recognize the depth of their confusion and therefore the strength of their consequent disengagement.

President G.W. Bush's acknowledgement in 2006 that the US was addicted to foreign oil differed from Carter's by allowing for this democratic flaw. As the people were the directors he could not, and therefore did not, ask them to help (by conserving energy). If he had, the ambiguity of electoral delegation would have frustrated an exceptionally conscientious minority who complied while the rest chose not to. So Bush externalized the responsibility for solving the energy issue: he pushed it away from a confused, impotent system of government by giving nonconfrontational incentives to business to rescue the US with new sources of energy. Bush also continued this dysfunctional behaviour with his proposal for a counter-Kyoto AP6 group, which did not specify limits for carbon emissions (Hamilton 2007). This is consistent with the performance of the White House over the previous two decades, in which it had suppressed, altered or dismissed a dozen major reports on climate change, including the September 2002 annual report of the EPA in which the entire section on climate change was deleted (Flannery 2005). Such behaviour may be partially understood as excessive competition coercing successive administrations

to avoid alienating their ill-informed constituencies by asking them to pay for action on global warming. Ambiguous delegation also plays a part by inviting voters to remain unprepared for their democratic responsibilities and ready to vote for politicians who do not disturb their somnolence.

In his 2006 movie *An Inconvenient Truth,* Al Gore despaired at the inability of democracies, especially his own, to face global warming. Staff writer for the *New Yorker* Elizabeth Kolbert (2006) lamented the studied inaction of the Bush administration on this issue: 'It may seem impossible to imagine that a technologically advanced society could choose, in essence, to destroy itself, but that is what we are now in the process of doing'. The head of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, James Hansen (cited in Herrick and Owens 2006), has assessed that if greenhouse gas emissions are not being curbed and reduced by 2015, there is a strong chance that positive feedbacks will tip the planet into an irreversible runaway global warming sequence. He warned that the Bush administration is blocking the transmission of this message to electors. By doing this, Bush was (in effect) recognizing ambiguous delegation and declining to try to remove the ambiguity. By this interpretation, Bush's recognition told him not to disturb the people by pointing out their responsibility to perform as directors of their democracy by paying their share of the costs of halting global warming. Bush's political experience would also have attuned him to excessive competition, conditioning him to avoid losing votes by confronting voters with their responsibilities. As pointed out above, President Carter appeared to be less politically perceptive, which would have made him less acutely aware of the ambiguity of delegation, of the threat of political competition and of the need for compromise. He came to Washington as the ultimate political outsider, having served only one term as governor of Georgia, thus apparently never mastering the arts of inspiring the people, of working with Congress, and of working with his own party (Kuttner 2008, 55–57).

A well-known aspect of democratic performance on global warming is the manipulation of policy by sections of the fos-

sil fuel industry such as ExxonMobil, who are more concerned about their immediate sales prospects than the future of society (e.g. Bull 2007; Hamilton 2007). These special interest groups distort public information and offer incentives to politicians to bias policy, with the result that Mark Chandler (cited in Williams 2006), a palaeoclimate modeller at the Columbia University Center for Climate Systems Research, observed: 'we are not getting our politicians to vet their comments based on science … Instead we have a situation where our scientists are having to worry about what they say — can you see me sweating right now?' Hansen (2006, 12) evinced this fear by invoking the protection of the First Amendment of the US Constitution before warning of the dire consequences of greenhouse gas emissions. However, some fossil fuel-dependent companies are very concerned (either for society or for their public image of social responsibility or for future profits from their investments), so they warn government and the public about the need to limit greenhouse gas emissions. Their long time-horizons for returns on capital expenditure (for example a 50-year life for a coal-fired power station) encourage them to try to get sound public policy developed, as a more reliable basis for investment. A scathing *Washington Post* op-ed (Worldwatch 2006) has noted that business activism may offer the best hope of moving the US government to address global warming, observing that several large companies are pushing the UK government to increase its efforts to reduce carbon emissions. Cinergy, a corporation that operates nine coal-fired power plants in the US, asked President G. W. Bush to regulate its industry for greenhouse gas emissions (Fonda 2006). Linda Fisher, DuPont's chief sustainability officer, reports: 'We learned that we have to be ahead of legislation' (cited in Kluger 2007, 42).

In contrast with the failure of federal US policy on global warming, California has a more constructive approach, which nevertheless also appears consistent with triple dysfunction. In September 2006, Governor Schwarzenegger approved the *Global Warming Solutions Act,* which requires a 25 per cent cut in the state's greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 and 80 per

cent by 2050. In doing this he virtually defied his own party, as the bill received only a single Republican vote (Breslau 2007). Early in 2007 he issued an executive order requiring a 10 per cent reduction in the carbon content of all transportation fuels by 2020. Schwarzenegger (cited in Breslau 2007, 70) regarded federal denial on this issue as 'embarrassing' and observed that what 'we're basically saying to the federal government is 'Look, we don't need Washington' … let us let the world know that America is actually fighting global warming'. Several other US states are taking a similar line, although not to this degree. Schwarzenegger's approach reflects both his long-standing concern for the environment and his confidence in the ability of technology to solve problems. But an enabling factor may be what New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson (Breslau 2007, 70) terms Schwarzenegger's 'star power'. His popularity as a former macho muscle-man and film star may give him a freedom to choose policies that would cripple the electoral prospects of politicians without such a backup source of public approval. However, journalist Karen Breslau (2007, 72–73) notes

> there is concern that his approach places too little emphasis on the need for Americans to reform their consumption habits, from running their air conditioners around the clock to driving (yes) their SUVs. 'He likes to give the impression that you can have it all,' says Bill Magavern, a Sierra Club representative in Sacramento. 'He is overly optimistic about the ability of the market to solve our problems.'

So although it looks as though 'star power' in a politician may enable him to withstand the pressure of triple dysfunction's excessive competition to some degree, that pressure may still make him espouse populist policy. And this is often dysfunctional, for the ambiguity of delegation encourages citizens to think that they do not have to give careful consideration to public affairs.

Australian federal government behaves in a similar way to that of the US. An illustration was given by 'The Greenhouse Mafia' on ABCTV *4Corners* (Cohen 2006), in which former Cli-

mate Director for the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), Graeme Pearman, stated that 'scientists are no longer as free to speak as they were'. Barrie Pittock, former CSIRO Climate Impact leader, backed this up: 'I was expressly told not to talk about … how you might reduce greenhouse gases'. In the same program, Guy Pearse, former speechwriter for an Australian Minister for the Environment, claimed that 'greenhouse policy is being driven by the mining and energy sectors.' This irresponsibility by Australian government has been summed up by Tim Flannery (cited in Hodge and Wahlquist 2006, 8).

> What we do with coal is shovel it out of the ground as quick as we can, contribute to a global pollution problem, and then say we don't want to have anything to do with the international treaty that is meant to deal with this problem, which is Kyoto. We do the same thing with uranium. I just think that is morally abhorrent and very, very wrong.

Such behaviour appears to show ambiguous delegation facilitating the expression of the egoistic interests of disengaged electors, while excessive competition between politicians does the same for the narrow interests of wealthy special interest groups. Responding to this government failure, the president of Australasian BP, Gerry Hueston (*The Mercury* 2005, 4), appealed to his industry to work together to develop renewable alternatives to hydrocarbon fuels: 'My view is that we are running out of time to deal with the environmental consequences of fossil fuels much faster than we are running down our stocks of them.' The Business Council of Australia has indicated a similar concern about deficiencies in public policy by calling for more effective strategic planning in politics (Marsh and Yencken 2004). So we see a few attempts by Australian private enterprise, whose role is to supply private goods, to try to do government's job as well, that of providing public goods. As with Du Pont's Linda Fisher, some Australian businesspeople realize they must intervene to try to produce a stable and productive environment for their

investments. But part of their reaction may also be social responsibility: Business managers *are* members of the community and as they are often comparatively well informed they may develop concerns for society's future well before the average voter perceives those problems.

A complaint by the former Beatle, Paul McCartney — later to be echoed by environmental writer George Monbiot (2015) — provides another indication of triple dysfunction in responses by democracies to global warming. McCartney was reacting to the situation reported in 2006 by the United Nations that, world-wide, cattle-rearing generates more greenhouse effect through methane emissions than the carbon dioxide emitted by transportation.

> The biggest change anyone could make in their own lifestyle would be to become vegetarian … It's very surprising that most major environmental organisations are leaving the option of going vegetarian off their lists of top ways to curtail global warming. (cited in Reuters 2008)

By staying silent on vegetarianism, environmental NGOs (ENGOs) avoid confronting their members and supporters with the challenge of a very personal discipline. Perhaps they recognize that such advocacy risks damaging their causes by asking more of people than many will tolerate, especially if they have no assurance that most citizens will join with them to make their effort effective. ENGOs' avoidance of asking people to become vegetarian may also indicate that they recognize politicians in democracies are in a similar position. They too cannot ask citizens to pay significant additional personal costs for public goods, especially if most of them have little appreciation of the need for these goods (which produces the 'excessive' in excessive compromise) and no assurance that an effective majority will respond to the appeal (as ambiguous delegation does not make it clear to all citizens that they are jointly responsible for public policy). The same situations were observed above for both environmental organisations and politicians on another very

personal issue: size of population. These two examples of policy paralysis indicate that citizens of democracies are (1) divorced from feeling responsible for crucial public goods, which gives them a tendency (2) to be ignorant of those goods and of their needs for them, while (3) politicians follow this irresponsibility and ignorance. This is triple dysfunction, as the first and third of these circumstances would be respectively produced by ambiguous delegation and excessive competition, while as noted above, the second is what produces the 'excessive' in excessive compromise.

4.2.3 Unemployment

When a lack of employment is significant, the almost invariable response of liberal democratic governments is to externalize their responsibility to provide the public good of employment for all, by looking outside the political world of electors and politicians to the world of industry and commerce for an answer. They do this by trying to produce more economic growth, in order to provide more work, which hopefully will produce jobs for those who need them. Private enterprise welcomes this approach, for it means more profit. And pleasing private enterprise seems good to politicians, for it funds much of their election campaigns and runs most of the media. Pleasing business is thus at least partly a response of politicians to the competition between them.

The alternative to producing more economic growth in order to minimize unemployment is to share more equitably whatever work already exists (e.g. Bosch 2000), but this is usually ignored by politicians because it requires them to internalize the issue within politics by organizing that sharing. This would have them asking the majority of electors to change their lifestyle by earning less income through working fewer hours, days or weeks, so that the minority that are unemployed may have a share. It also *appears* to require politicians to ask businesses to reorganize themselves to facilitate the sharing of work. That appearance is created by ambiguous delegation, because this leaves citizens free to assume that it is not them but politicians

who are responsible for public goods such as the availability of work. Excessive competition between politicians supports that appearance by coercing politicians to avoid pointing out to citizens that in a democracy it is citizens who are ultimately responsible for public goods. Politicians usually do not risk losing votes at the next election by asking electors to pay personal costs for public goods, such as the time and effort of contributing to public campaigns to get businesses to provide more part-time work.

So both politicians and citizens externalize the problem from democratic politics, by trying to expand the economy instead of by sharing employment. Ambiguous delegation and excessive competition thus produce the absurdity that the introduction of labour-saving technology is used to make people work as much as before and possibly even more (an effect described below in §5.3.1 as 'affluenza'), rather than to give them more leisure time. As ambiguous delegation allows citizens to avoid taking on the responsibility for eliminating unemployment, it may also allow them to develop a culture of complaint, in which they react to difficult personal circumstances by blaming politicians instead of dealing with these situations themselves. Citizens might assume this responsibility by being more appreciative and supportive of government unemployment benefits, by regarding changes of work as a normal occurrence that may happen several times during their life (and thus being more prepared to relocate or retrain for future employment) and by demanding that their politicians organize incentives and opportunities for work-sharing.

Excessive compromise also plays a part. Most citizens do not think enough about unemployment to realize that work sharing is a practical solution to the problem that can also improve their quality of life, both in the short term via the work-leisure balance of the individual and in the long term by limiting impacts on natural resources (as discussed in the next chapter). So mass opinion neglects this option and excessive competition coerces politicians to implement the neglect.

Economist Herman Daly has emphasized the adverse impact on quality of life of the inflexibility of working time, calling for

restrictions on advertising so that it no longer drives people to spend more and therefore to work long hours.

> For the Classical Economists the length of the working day was a key variable by which the worker (self employed yeoman or artisan) balanced the marginal disutility of labour with the marginal utility of income and leisure so as to maximize enjoyment of life. Under industrialization the length of the working day became a parameter rather than a variable (and for Karl Marx was the key determinant of the rate of exploitation). We need to make it more of a variable subject to choice by the worker. And we should stop biasing the labor–leisure choice by advertising to stimulate more consumption and more labor to pay for it. Advertising should no longer be treated as a tax deductible ordinary expense of production. (Daly 2009, 4)

Economist Robert Skidelsky and his son, philosopher Edward (2012, 208–11) also argue for an end to the tax deductibility of company spending on advertising. They note that if 'advertising inflames our tendency to insatiability, there is a strong case for restricting it' and point out that many European countries already do some of this. By distorting the public good of choice between work and leisure, advertising causes many other public goods to be neglected, as discussed previously in §2.2.3.2 and later in §5.3. Economist David George calls this distortion the creation of 'unpreferred preferences' and, in considering how it may be corrected, notes that a

> step that must precede public action is a growth in public understanding that unbridled persuasion can be harmful … A first step in correcting for market inefficiency in the shaping of tastes must thus be the project of convincing contemporary society that the evaluation of tastes is a coherent and legitimate exercise. Only then will the spreading legitimization of market forces be slowed and will concrete steps emerge for the efficient channelling of the forces of preference creation. And only then will private desires to work long hours be lessened. (George 2000, 138)

Tim Jackson (2009, 180) sees work sharing as essential in providing the public good of economic sustainability. 'In an economy in which labour productivity still increases but output is capped (for instance for ecological reasons), the only way to maintain macro-economic stability and protect people's livelihoods is by sharing out the available work.' Jackson notes that reduced working hours are usually beneficial for other reasons as well, such as increasing labour productivity and improving the work-life balance. However, it only tends to succeed under certain conditions. Sociologist Gerhard Bosch (2000, 185) observes that experience in Germany and Denmark shows that a fundamental precondition for reducing working hours is 'a stable and relatively equal earnings distribution. Neo-liberal policies of income differentiation undermine attempts to redistribute working time because employees are unwilling to accept reductions in their hours'.

Daly calls for the US to tackle this problem, not only with legislation that may limit perceptions of inequality by minimizing advertising (as quoted above), but also with legislation that limits inequality itself, by mandating

> a minimum income and a maximum income … Complete equality is unfair; unlimited inequality is unfair. Seek fair limits to the range of inequality. The civil service, the military, and the university manage with a range of inequality of a factor of 15 or 20. Corporate America has a range of 500 or more. Many industrial nations are below 25 … A sense of community necessary for democracy is hard to maintain across the vast differences current in the US. Rich and poor separated by a factor of 500 become almost different species. (Daly 2009, 3, 4)

As discussed later in Chapter 8, conservatives are relatively unconcerned about — and even supportive of — inequality. That disposition makes them a major political obstacle to work-sharing as a remedy for unemployment and they may be strengthened in this by their resistance to change inclining them to oppose the industrial changes that work-sharing would require.

Bosch (2000, 192–93) warns that a number of such changes are necessary to allow additional employment to be created from collective working time reductions and elective shorter working time options.

> The necessary conditions under which employment expands must be created. These conditions include an active training policy, wage increases in line with productivity gains, the standardization of actual hours worked, the reduction of differences in hourly rates for full-timers and part-timers, better social security for flexible working lives, a change in the deep-seated full-time culture in the workplace and social security contributions that are proportional to the paid hours of work. Many of these conditions can be met only if a consensus can be forged between the social partners, as in the Netherlands or in Scandinavia.

Bosch adds two other conditions: That sharing employment purely by increasing the proportion of part-time workers is difficult to sustain in the long run; and working time reductions must be achieved by work reorganizations that improve efficiency in order to succeed in a global economy where competitors are using longer working hours. All these difficulties mean that if a democratic government is to manage its economy to provide employment for all without relying on endless growth, then it must be very competent and therefore, on this analysis, virtually free of triple dysfunction.

5
A PERVASIVE SYMPTOM OF DYSFUNCTION: ESCALATING THE SCARCITY OF NATURAL CAPITAL

This chapter describes what is arguably the biggest failure of democratic government and explains it in terms of triple dysfunction. In doing so it makes three claims. The first is that, as a broad rule for advanced economies, economic growth fails to deliver on its promise and yields net costs instead. The second is that triple dysfunction renders democratic governments blind to this problem, so there is virtually no chance that they will correct it. Instead, they resolutely make it worse; exacerbating costs in what may be the greatest manifestation of triple dysfunction — addiction to economic growth. The third claim follows from these two and is that further economic development should not be undertaken in relatively well-developed democratically governed economies until their triple dysfunction is corrected to enable them to make competent decisions on such development.

The second claim, of addiction to economic growth, is a major failure of citizens compensating for their ignorance of politics and public policy by using heuristics (mental shortcuts or cues, as discussed in §2.2.3). As the political groups, elites and others who provide these heuristics neither recognize nor understand the addiction and its costs, they mislead citizens. This

lack of understanding is due not only to the addiction process being a little complex and obscure (which invokes excessive compromise), but also because electoral incentives (excessive competition) constrain the attention of political agents to the concerns of voters. But ambiguous delegation allows those concerns to focus on the short term and ignore the longer term, where the costs of the addiction arise.

The promise referred to in the first claim is that economic growth will satisfy society's wants for more employment and more income. This is taken to be the promise of economic growth because it is the rationale that politicians routinely espouse as they pursue that growth. It is also a politically legitimate promise as it offers a public good — the satisfaction of the wants of all or most citizens for more employment and more income. As we will see, growth not only fails to deliver on that promise but it produces the reverse; it increases wants for more employment and more income. Worse still, it also reduces the availability of the natural capital (defined in §2.2.3.2, *Distraction by advertising*) required to satisfy not only many of those wants (which, taken individually, are for private goods) but many wants and needs for public goods as well.

According to these first and second claims, triple dysfunction must be minimized or eliminated; otherwise growth will be both futile and damaging. So the third claim is that until triple dysfunction is rectified, governments should eschew economic growth. This reversal would require wants for more employment to be addressed by sharing work more equitably and, as indicated in §4.2.3, in most countries that requires measures to reduce inequality of incomes. Those measures would also help to moderate wants for more income. But none of this will be politically feasible until triple dysfunction is corrected. So that is the key, not just to progress, but to preventing further deterioration. The argument in this chapter, together with the postulation of triple dysfunction in previous chapters, elaborates on the original publication of these three claims in an article in *Ecological Economics* (P. Smith 2009).

The policy failure postulated by the second claim is a blindness or myopia that preserves the *idée fixe* that a positive net monetary return from a commercial development is always a benefit provided that the development does not *directly* produce costs that outweigh the benefit, such as immediate environmental damage. However, as explained below in §5.2.1 and §5.3, the net monetary return may itself be a cost because it produces damaging consequences. Such damage may start to develop during the implementation of a project and grow for many years after its completion. In this process the bigger the net financial gain from the development, the bigger its ultimate net cost. If the reader considers that the description given in §5.3 of this effect mirrors the progress of economic growth in developed economies (perhaps especially those with relatively high ratios of natural capital to population such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada), then its reliance on the triple dysfunction hypothesis might be taken as another indication that this hypothesis has some reliability and could therefore be used as a theory for guiding reforms in democratic government.

The *idée fixe* that positive financial returns are always good in themselves appears to be sensed or understood by many environmentalists as a mistake and bad for public policy, because they tend to rank the value of development projects — and economic growth in general — lower than less environmentally concerned people do. To the latter, this sense of values in environmentalists may seem wishful, selfish and destructive, but the political and psychological processes described below indicate that assigning a low or negative value to economic growth can be wise.

Democratic governments feel compelled to give their citizens what they most strongly want, which is essentially more income and more employment, only to find that they then have to give more of it and are locked into a desperate pursuit of economic growth in blatant denial of obvious limits to natural capital. As discussed below in §5.2.1 and §5.3, when a community gets what it wants, it soon wants more, a response that is strongest for basic wants like food, shelter, energy and the education to get

the employment that provides such essentials in modern economies. For those who observe or sense this endless escalation of wants and have concerns about its impact on limited stocks of natural capital (and also on the personalities of those who always get what they want), rebellious questions arise: What is the point of giving citizens the things they want, especially those they want most urgently, when they will then expect even more? Why produce more economic growth when it recreates and even enlarges the dissatisfactions that demand it?

5.1 Illustrating the problem

The triple dysfunction hypothesis, along with much public choice theory and the other indications of democratic failure discussed in Chapter 2, implies that there will be times when citizens would be justified in engaging in civil disobedience, if this is their only way of trying to influence governments on important issues. Government policy will sometimes be badly mistaken because some irresponsibility towards public goods is built into the democratic system. At times, therefore, citizens are likely to perceive a moral obligation to challenge democratic government in order to try to correct such mistakes. If just a small minority of citizens recognize such a case, they may see civil disobedience as the only way in which they could alert the mass public with enough urgency to create political pressure that might change the offending policy. In addition, such disobedience could be their best — or only — prospect for pushing government to reform its basic processes so that it becomes more responsible. Protest and civil disobedience occasionally erupts in democratic countries, but the protestors usually do not call for fundamental reform of government. Instead, they demand removal of the symptoms of dysfunction, or for reform of government processes at relatively superficial levels, such as laws for freedom of information, commissions of enquiry into corruption and limits to private funding of electoral campaigns. No doubt their focus avoids fundamentals because very few promising reforms for democratic government have been sug-

gested at that level. Several proposals that try to do this are described and compared in Chapter 6.

A major Australian case of civil disobedience occurred in 1982–83 when hundreds of citizens made illegal attempts to physically block construction of the Tasmanian 'Gordon-below-Franklin' hydro-electric project. A total of 1272 people were arrested and nearly 450 remanded in gaol (Thompson 1984, 174). Before that protest and continuing to the time of writing, numerous demonstrations have been made in Australia against developments such as other hydro-electric schemes, the logging of old growth forests and mining projects. Property and jobs have been destroyed, people endangered and many have been arrested and fined. In parallel with similar developments in many other democracies, public anger over environmental destruction has inspired the establishment of a political party, the Australian Greens, to try to more effectively address not only the environment, but all public goods. These tactics of protest, civil disobedience and new political parties have produced some protection for public goods, but it is suggested that because they do not address triple dysfunction, serious neglect of these goods will continue and hostility will smoulder and at times explode between environmentalists and supporters of economic development. However, if both sides of these disputes understand the effect of triple dysfunction on natural capital as described below in §5.3, then they should be more able to understand each other and thus to negotiate constructive solutions.

Damage to natural capital from economic growth is apparent in many countries, whether they are governed democratically or not, so it is clear that different types of political systems have often been unable or unwilling to adequately control that growth. The 'scarcity multiplier' analysis developed in §5.3 attempts to explain this failure only for liberal democracies, but such failure in other political systems may have similar dynamics.

The scarcity multiplier describes liberal democratic governments as often unjustifiably depleting natural capital by the choices they make on the issue of whether to expand the economy. These political choices are likely to be incompetent

not only from triple dysfunction but because this particular issue has seven of the eight characteristics that are described in §4.1 as posing difficulties for decisions by democracies. Before setting out the scarcity multiplier analysis, these difficulties are reviewed, and then two concepts that are crucial for the analysis are explained in §5.2.

5.1.1 Characteristics of the choice on economic growth that confuse democracies

The question of whether to have more economic growth creates the following seven difficulties for political choice by democratic governments.

Complexity. As explained below in §5.3, expansion of the economy may produce positive feedbacks that defeat the social objectives of the expansion. These feedbacks create a complexity in the issue that is not seen by voters as they are busy with their lives and mostly do not think deeply about public policy.

Abstraction. Future expansion of the economy and the likely consequences of this are just ideas. As such, they have little personal impact and voters will give limited thought to them.

Obscurity. Important adverse consequences of economic growth develop slowly and may thus be imperceptible. Moreover, the people who produce these costs may be difficult for citizens to recognize and hold responsible because they are themselves. These effects may induce citizens to neglect to think in any depth about this issue.

Temporal remoteness of consequences. The adverse consequences of growth are mostly in the distant future; the beneficial ones are largely in the near future.

Pervasiveness. As almost all citizens support economic growth and thereby contribute to its consequences, avoiding these con-

sequences poses the massive problem of developing solidarity for unconventional (and counterintuitive) public policy.

COMPETITIVENESS. Attempting to resolve the issue inflames conflict between those concerned primarily with private goods and those with strong concerns for public goods such as the environment and the equitable sharing of employment and/or wealth. This polarity is close to the power — universalism polarity in human values that is discussed later in §8.1, which is similar to the hierarchist — egalitarian polarity described in §4.1. It is noted in §8.1 that, partly due to genetic predisposition, these diverging worldviews resist modification and have large and stubborn influences on human perception and action.

EXTERNALIZABILITY. The issue of whether to have more economic growth invites externalization of responsibility. It does so by posing the choice of how to match supply and want, which tempts voters to prefer the match to be made by managing their supplies rather than their wants. If wants are to be managed, citizens will have to be very well informed, not only about relevant issues that might persuade them to modify their wants but they would also need to be well informed about the readiness of fellow citizens to support them in such self-restraint. From the perspective of democratic government, managing the wants of voters internalizes the way the match is made — it is taken into the core of democratic politics — whereas if the matching is done by manipulating supply, it is largely externalized from politics. As internalizing the matching is extremely difficult for democratic politicians (see, e.g. §2.2.2), they externalize it.

The combination of these seven difficult characteristics in the issue of whether to have economic growth produces an almost 'perfect storm' of democratic failure. It is therefore chronic and widespread across democracies. It also has enormous impact, although this may only gradually accumulate. It is a failure of government that allows citizens to continue with accustomed ways of acting as individuals rather than as responsible members of society, so they reproduce and consume according to

private considerations and with scant regard for public goods. For some people, consumption may mean migrating to wherever they can do more of it. Such continuation of self-interested behaviour amounts to collective irrationality if it persists when it has become destructive for the society in which it takes place. When democratic dysfunction allows such persistence we have a boom constructing a bust, for consuming and populating will collide with the limits of natural capital. As we see below (e.g. 5.3.1, 5.3.2, and 5.3.3), although technological innovation may delay this impact, it is ultimately inevitable if the dysfunction persists. Global warming and ocean acidification are two current indications of the scale of some of these problems.

The mechanisms producing irrational preoccupation with economic growth are explained below in §5.3, but before this is done two essential concepts are now introduced. These are 'inflating want by supply' and the 'private goods bias'.

5.2 Two key concepts for the scarcity multiplier analysis

5.2.1 Inflating want by supply

The first primary democratic dysfunction, ambiguous delegation causing confusion about who directs public policy, allows citizens to neglect their role as directors of their democracy and focus on narrower interests. These interests may be those of individuals or sub-groups within that democratic society. Such narrow focus allows an apparently instinctive behaviour to assert itself without being disciplined by broader considerations of public goods. This particular behaviour is that of wants inflating when they are supplied — and also when such supplies are increased. This is referred to here as IWS: 'inflating want by supply' or 'inflation of want by supply'. As discussed later in §5.3.1, the IWS response means that the supply of a good or service tends to inflate wants not only for it (referred to below simply as a 'good') but for other goods as well. IWS applies to the supply of both private and public goods, but, as discussed in §5.3.1, this response is most pronounced with private goods.

IWS is a ubiquitous tendency and it has destructive aspects, one of which is that the satisfaction of having wants met by an increase in supply is subsequently at least partially eliminated by wants being stimulated by that increase. This decay of satisfaction often persists indefinitely through positive feedback, for when an increase in supply stimulates more want, the larger want provokes more effort to find, or buy, or make, bigger supplies, and if this succeeds, more want is evoked and so on. That erosion of satisfaction may escalate into outright frustration when expanding wants collide with the limits of finite natural resources. The natural human response of IWS therefore obliges societies to exercise strong self-discipline, which as discussed below under 'The scarcity multiplier' is a challenge that democracies are not equipped to meet. Adam Smith (1976 [1790], 140) identified this challenge when he wrote that

> man, according to the Stoics, ought to regard himself, not as something separated and detached, but as a citizen of the world, a member of the vast commonwealth of nature … [and] to the interest of this great community, he ought at all times to be willing that his own little interest should be sacrificed.

Andrew Bacevich (2008, 16) sees the United States as failing badly to recognize and rise to that challenge. He considers

> what it means to be an American in the twenty-first century. If one were to choose a single word to characterize that identity, it would have to be *more*. For the majority of contemporary Americans, the essence of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness centers on a relentless personal quest to acquire, to consume, to indulge … Yet the foreign policy implications of our present-day penchant for consumption and self-indulgence are almost entirely negative.

IWS is a positive feedback response not only by individuals, but also by whole populations. A society is likely to grow in response to an increase in the supply of something that its members want, either by more people being attracted to migrate into that com-

munity to take advantage of its increased supply, or by its birth rate being inflated by the increase in supply, or by its death rate being reduced by it, or by a combination of these reactions. If the increased supply creates a bigger population it will also have created a bigger aggregate want for supplies of everything that people want. More effort will then go into expanding the supplies of all these goods and any success in this may encourage the population to grow further and so on.

The general example of IWS is the propensity of all species to fully exploit their ecological niches. All replicating entities consume the food, oxidants, energy (e.g. sunlight), shelter and other things that are available to them that they need for replication, thereby enlarging their populations to the extent permitted by these supplies. If the limiting extent of supplies is expanded by more supplies becoming available, the replicator's population invariably increases to the new limit established by this expansion. In this situation, predation might be thought of as a negative 'supply', a reduction in the supply of shelter. The universality of such growth of consumption or 'want' as a response to an increase in supply suggests that it is a product of natural selection. Replicators that did not behave in this way would find their supplies taken over by those that did and would be more vulnerable to elimination by predators, especially those with IWS behaviour.

In the case of humans, an apparent exception to the population growth form of IWS is demographic transition, a failure of populations to respond in this way to expansion of their supplies of goods and services. This 'failure' usually occurs as a human population progresses from a low state of economic development to a more prosperous state where most citizens are well educated, child mortality is reduced, contraceptives are available and acceptable, and food, housing, transport and other goods and services are relatively well supplied. However, the lack of population growth IWS with demographic transition tends to be compensated for with an enhanced IWS in the individual, as increasing supplies of goods and services encourage each of them to want more. In addition, recent research indicates that when

a country develops beyond the human development index of 9, birth rates then tend to increase (Myrskyla et al. 2009), which would diminish the strength of demographic transition and encourage population growth IWS.

Organisms that show no evidence of consciousness, such as viruses, bacteria, plants and the simpler animals, cannot be described as displaying IWS because it seems unlikely that they experience wants. But their behaviour is similar, so perhaps IWS should be changed to 'inflation of consumption by supply' (ICS), as the universal biological response. This behaviour, whether we call it IWS or ICS, is so pervasive that when we consider humans, we might anticipate that extremely competent social choice is required if societies are to have the capacity to resist it when it is prudent for them to do so.

In economics, demand is want that is backed up by the purchasing power of the individual or entity that wants the relevant good or service. As used here, 'want' refers to such demand as well as to want for things that are not paid for by the individual consumer, such as public goods available to all for free from nature and also other public goods that are paid for only indirectly by consumers via taxation, such as government decisions and actions on such things as public infrastructure, public health, justice, education, foreign relations and economic management. In what follows, statements such as 'matching want and supply' should be understood to include 'matching demand and supply'. Similarly, 'IWS' includes 'inflating demand by supply'.

One form of IWS has long been recognized by economists: 'In the economics literature it is … well known that increased efficiency in the use of a resource leads over time to greater use of that resource and not less use of it' (Ekins, cited in UK Parliament 2006, 3). Increasing the efficiency of the use of a resource is equivalent to increasing its supply and the resultant 'greater use of that resource' is equivalent to a greater want for it, so this effect is IWS. This 'efficiency' form of IWS was first noted by the nineteenth century economist William Stanley Jevons, when improvements in the design of steam engines were making them more efficient in their use of coal. He wrote: 'It

is wholly a confusion of ideas to suppose that the economical use of fuel is equivalent to a diminished consumption. The very contrary is the truth' (cited in Owens 2011, 104). In 1979–80, the 'Jevons' paradox' was stressed by economists Daniel Khazzoom and Leonard Brookes as a crucial consideration for public energy policy. American economist Harry Saunders (1992) subsequently called this concept the Khazzoom-Brookes (or K-B) postulate. It has also been identified in agriculture, where it was dubbed the Borlaug paradox (Pearce 2011) after Norman Borlaug, the pioneer of the green revolution in agricultural productivity. The 'paradox' in that case is that when yields from agricultural land are increased there is no reduction of deforestation by farmers trying to increase their harvests, but the reverse because agricultural yields produce more money for clearing forest. As this type of effect is now well recognized it is no longer seen as a paradox or postulate and has been renamed the 'rebound effect' (Herring and Sorrell 2009). This term covers all commercial resources, not just those of energy and agriculture. Rebound is thus the effect that when a technological improvement allows a resource to be used more efficiently it raises its productivity, so that more of it is wanted and consumed. Those increases of want and consumption are driven in two ways: the reduced cost of use makes the resource more attractive as a substitute for other resources; and the money that can now be saved in using that resource can be used to increase investment in production capacity of any type and also to increase consumption in any good or service, so economic growth is boosted, which then further raises the demand for that resource. Economic growth also raises the demand for other marketed goods and services, which is a part of the comprehensive boost to many other wants for both private and public goods that is hypothesized as IWS. Because of the complexity of the rebound effect, Brookes considers this term misleading as it implies a simple one-input/one-output problem, when in reality it is more like a chain reaction with feedbacks (Owen 2011, 118). Energy experts Horace Herring and Steve Sorrell (2009) point out that for energy resources, the ef-

fect can be very significant but the ways in which it takes place are often not amenable to reliable measurement.

As noted above, the rebound effect is only a subset of all IWS responses. The complete set is larger in two ways. The first is that IWS describes inflations of want from increases in the quantity of supply as well as from increases in the efficiency of the use of that supply. The second is that IWS covers wants for public goods as well as for private goods. IWS may be thought to resemble Say's Law, the historically controversial early nineteenth century idea that was expressed by French businessman and economist Jean-Baptiste Say as 'products are paid for with products'. In 1808 James Mill restated Say's Law by writing that the 'production of commodities creates, and is the one and universal cause which creates a market for the commodities produced'. This is because the money paid for a supply immediately enables the supplier to exert a new demand of the same magnitude, which John Maynard Keynes summarized as 'supply creates its own demand'. IWS is quite different as it applies to public as well as private goods (so IWS refers to 'want', not 'demand') and also because it postulates that supply creates wants that are not just equal to wants for that supply, but which may be greater. This exacerbation of wants may occur through the positive feedbacks in per capita consumption and size of population that are noted above and explored below in §5.3.

The next subsection reviews the tendency for public goods to be underprovided by democratic governments. §5.3 then shows how this underprovision permits a complex of four IWS systems to indefinitely escalate the scarcity of natural resources within democratic jurisdictions.

5.2.2 Private goods bias

It was noted in §2.1 that public and private goods usually compete with each other for the resources needed for their production and maintenance. An underprovision of public goods will therefore usually signify, if not actually be caused by, a bias towards the provision of private goods. As triple dysfunction, in common with much other political theory and observation, in-

dicates that democratic governments often under-supply public goods, we may express this by saying that they have a 'private goods bias'. Notwithstanding this bias to choose private goods to the detriment of public goods, it is obvious that democratic governments do make some attempts to discourage wants for, and supplies of, private goods. Examples are differential taxes (such as excises and progressive income tax) and labelling laws aimed at protecting consumers. However, such measures are usually introduced only after considerable pressure (either from special interests or from the general public) that largely results from the development over time of the recognition by many citizens that there are good reasons why some of their wants for private goods should not be satisfied. However, triple dysfunction indicates that such reforms will not entirely eliminate the private goods bias.

It should be noted that the idea of a private goods bias in democracies is not contradicted by the recognition that these polities may also have some anti-market bias. Anti-market bias might appear to be a bias against the provision of private goods, as the market provides many or most of these goods. Caplan (2008, 30–36) describes anti-market bias as a tendency among citizens to reject market solutions to problems in favour of government solutions because they feel that the market is unethical, as buyers and sellers are driven by self-interest. As a result, crucial functions of the market are often treated with suspicion and, in some parts of the world, rejected. Four examples of this behaviour are: (1) interest payments are considered to be outright gifts to the rich instead of payments for delaying consumption and risking failure to repay; (2) profits are regarded as gifts to the rich instead of earnings for providing goods and services that people will pay for; (3) prices on pollution are viewed as permission to pollute instead of incentives to improve environmental quality as cheaply as possible; and (4) paying a price for something that is offered for sale may be considered to be largely a gift to rich business-people who conspire to extort monopoly prices. Anti-market bias in citizens, to the extent that it occurs, tends to make their democratic governments decide issues that

would be more sensibly resolved by the market. Public and/or private goods may thereby be underprovided. The private goods bias of democratic government differs from anti-market bias in that it directly under provides only public goods. So, while anti-market bias tends to have democratic governments making a wider range of decisions than they should, the private goods bias distorts those decisions to select private goods at an excessive cost to public goods.

Supply bias. A special form of private goods bias is supply bias, a tendency of democratic governments to supply goods (whether private or public goods), rather than to ignore, or try to discipline, citizens' wants for these in situations where this supply will cause some public goods to be underprovided to an extent that outweighs the satisfactions of wants that the supply is intended to create. Supply bias is a type of private goods bias because it is a tendency for government to choose the private good of supplying the wants of individuals or sub-national entities (which are usually wants for private goods) instead of choosing the public good of ignoring or disciplining these wants in the interests of broad public welfare. Supply bias, along with any other form of private goods bias, reflects the strong tendency for politicians to follow the wishes of citizens, as noted in §2.2.2 ('Citizens as directors'). These wishes, as discussed in §2.2.3 ('Ignorant directors'), tend to focus on private rather than public goods.

Some observers have recognized supply bias by remarking on a tendency for politicians and citizens to try to solve public issues with technical solutions that produce greater or more efficient supplies, rather than by controlling wants. For example, in his renowned essay 'The Tragedy of the Commons', Garrett Hardin (1972, 251) noted that 'change in human values or ideas of morality' was required if problems with 'no technical solution' were to be solved. An example of supply bias is the reluctance of the Australian and US governments, for example under Howard, Rudd and Gillard in Australia and G.W. Bush and Obama in the US, to respond to problems of global warming, peak oil and

energy independence by trying to get their publics to minimize their wants for energy. One way they might approach this is to limit the size of their populations through policies to reduce birth rates and immigration. Instead, they have preferred to supply whatever energy is demanded, with technology that either reduces emissions (such as nuclear, wind and solar energy) or expands the supply (for example, by fracking shale and coal seams for oil and gas) or uses the existing supply more efficiently (for example, by more effective insulation of buildings) (e.g. Bush 2006). Of course the deployment of such supply strategies are constrained by politicians' desires that their costs for citizens do not conflict with citizens' wants for personal purchasing power.

Thus, for both private and public goods, democratic governments tend to match wants and supplies by managing supply more readily than want. This supply bias is a type of private goods bias as it damages and neglects public goods by supplying wants for private goods that are not disciplined in order to protect public goods.

5.3 The scarcity multiplier

The following analysis describes democratic governments producing mounting problems by inflating want with supply (IWS) through decisions that have a private goods bias (including its supply bias variant). This mirrors and reinforces similar, concurrent decision-making by private enterprise, so that both behaviours together produce the problem of economic growth pushing against both social limits (e.g. Hirsch 1977) and the physical limits of natural capital. Scarcities in positional goods (see §2.2.3.2) and natural capital are thereby escalated with positive IWS feedbacks. As this process is self-reinforcing it is labelled the 'scarcity multiplier'.

The example of the multiplier described below is the invariable response by democracies to opportunities for economic growth in which natural capital can be 'macro-allocated' from the ecosystem into the market, which will then 'micro-allocate'

it (Costanza and Daly 1992). Macro-allocation of natural capital is the transfer of materials or energy from the ecosystem (which is the macro-system that holds stocks of material and energy that may be extracted without paying a price) to the market (a subsystem of the ecosystem) for micro-allocation, in which those stocks are converted to priced goods and services.

A crucial observation on the macro-allocation of natural capital to the market is that of ecological economists Robert Costanza and Herman Daly (1992, 41), who state that it 'should be viewed as a social or collective decision rather than an individualistic market decision.' This is because most natural capital comprises public goods, such as rivers, air, soils, mineral deposits, stocks of fish and wildlife, native vegetation, natural genetic diversity, wilderness, much of the physical space on land, sea and in the air, solar radiation and the climate. The market is unable to sensibly allocate public goods because they are freely available to all and therefore do not have a market price that could guide their allocation. It thus falls to government or some other non-market institution to allocate public goods. This makes politics of fundamental importance for the rational macro-allocation of natural capital. When government malfunctions, this macro-allocation may be destructive and, in democracies at least, it drives scarcity multipliers.

5.3.1 The mechanism

The conditions under which a scarcity multiplier will be driven by democratic political decisions within a given region are as follows.

1. The region in which it occurs has a resident population with an electorally representative liberal democratic government.
2. Migration to and from other regions is possible.
3. Economic conditions are well developed, so a basic level of affluence has been achieved: say over US$15,000 per capita (Common and Stagl 2005, 199). This has produced demographic transition, so the size of the population is currently

controlled largely by the influence on migration of the economic opportunities in the region.
4. Other regions present higher and lower opportunities for earning income. These induce emigration and immigration for this region, which in combination with its birth and death rates may produce a tendency over time for its population to grow, shrink, or maintain its size.
5. The natural capital (both public and private) of the region is, with few exceptions such as air, limited. The per capita availability of natural capital to residents is higher than that in many other regions.
6. Virtually all types of natural capital (both public and privately owned) in the region are in some type of use to some extent, so there is a degree of competition between wants for these uses. Many of these wants may be expressed as political wants rather than as economic wants (which are called demands).

To illustrate these conditions and their multiplication of the scarcity of natural capital, I describe a case from an Australian state. In the first decade of this century there was considerable public dispute over whether to: (a) dam the Meander River in northern Tasmania, to produce private goods in the form of employment and income from agricultural irrigation and hydroelectricity (plus, as a secondary effect, the public 'good' of trout fishing in an industrial impoundment); or (b) not dam the river, to protect opportunities for Tasmanians and tourists to enjoy the mainly natural public goods of the area. These goods were: the exceptional scenery of a forested mountain valley (which would be damaged by both the dam and its reservoir with a summer draw-down zone hundreds of metres wide); rare native quolls (carnivorous marsupials, approximately the size of a domestic cat); and forms of appreciation of the river based on natural seasonal flows and largely natural surroundings, such as trout fishing, rafting and canoeing. The dispute arose because it became apparent that projected economic returns from a dam in this place might pay for its construction and operation, so op-

tion (a) became attractive to farmers in the region and to other Tasmanians favouring economic growth.

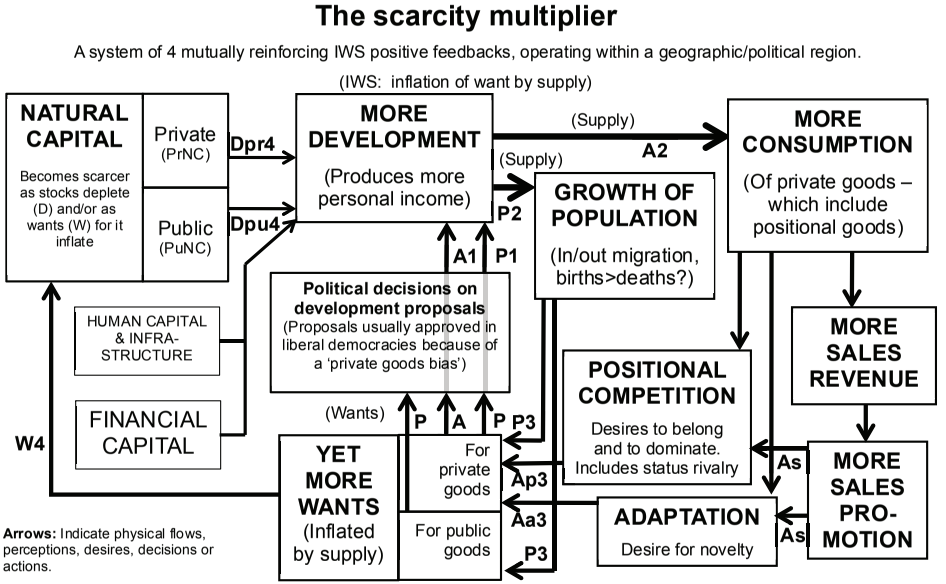
It must be noted that the private goods primarily produced by (a) would be taxed to finance consequent new public goods such as infrastructure and government services. Moreover, the production of those private goods and consequent public goods would tend to make the economy of the region grow further, producing more private and public goods. The same effects will be produced to some degree by (b) if its primary protection of natural capital supports commercial activity such as tourism and/or the immigration of creative and entrepreneurial talent seeking an attractive environment for work and residence. As in (a), any private goods produced by (b) will be taxed to finance consequent new public goods, and all these activities help the economy to grow. The possible chain of consequences for each option may therefore be summarized (without quantification) as follows.

a. Dam → private goods → public goods (services, infrastructure) → more private and public goods (services, infrastructure) → etc.
b. Not dam → public natural capital protected → private goods → public goods (services, infrastructure) → more private and public goods (services, infrastructure) → etc.

The essential difference in possible outputs is that (a) does not protect public natural capital (denoted below as PuNC) whereas (b) does. Politicians will react to these options with a private goods bias, including its supply bias variant. So if (a) seems to offer a greater or more certain supply of private goods than (b), then politicians will tend to favour (a) and ignore its damage to PuNC. The following four-step sequence gives the likely political choice and its chain of consequences. This sequence is shown diagrammatically in Figure 5.1, where the steps have the same numbers and are prefixed with letters indicating what produces them. For example, the figure shows step 2 occurring in two ways, labelled A2 and P2. It is the P process (P for popula-

tion growth) that is described in the following sequence. The A process is introduced later.

1. Public dispute arises on whether to dam or protect the river, signifying some scarcity of both private goods (water rights, electricity, employment and income) and public goods (PuNC in the forms of natural scenery, endangered quolls and freeflowing rivers). A political decision is required on which scarcity is the greater cost to society and therefore warrants mitigation, or prevention of its escalation. The decision is made with a private goods bias, including its supply bias variant, so it is likely to be political decision (a), to dam the Meander to convert PuNC public goods into a supply of private goods in the form of irrigation water and hydroelectricity. This political decision and consequent development is shown in the centre of Figure 5.1 by 'Political decisions … ' producing 'More development'. Step 1 is shown there as A1 together with P1 and is a political decision that is driven in two ways (P and A). As indicated above, the A process is described later in this section (§5.3.1), after the description of the P process is completed. The development produced in step 1 by political decision (a) will create more employment and income in the region — which could be considered to be either the whole of Tasmania or its central northern part, which is an area of about 15,000 square kilometres supporting around 150,000 residents.
2. Those increases in employment and income in this region (say, all of Tasmania) encourage its population to grow as indicated by P2 in Figure 5.1. They do this by attracting migrants from other regions (outside the state) and by retaining Tasmanian residents who might otherwise migrate to other regions for more employment and income (see conditions 2, 3 and 4 above).
3. That expansion of population increases aggregate want in the region for all the private and public goods that people want (arrows P3 in Figure 5.1).



IWS positive feedbacks: P: population growth IWS. **A:** affluenza IWS. Affluenza is a compound feedback that comprises 3 IWS feedbacks – positional competition (Ap), adaptation (Aa) and sales promotion (As)

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System steps: 1 Political decisions. **2** Population growth (**P2)** and affluenza (**A2**). **3** Inflation of want **(P3** – from population growth, and **A3** – from increases in wants of each person). **4** Escalation of scarcity of natural capital from increases in wants for it (**W4)** and depletion of it (**Dpr4, Dpu4**).

Fig. 5.1. The scarcity multiplier.

4. Some of this increase in want is for more of the public and private goods that are provided from the natural capital of the region, which is indicated by W4. This natural capital is limited, so the increase in wants for it means that its perceived scarcity rises (see the Natural Capital box in Figure 5.1). That rise lifts the scarcity of both PuNC and privately owned natural capital (PrNC — for example, freehold land) above their scarcities at the time of the initial step 1 from political decision (a). The scarcities of both PrNC and PuNC will be further increased if step 1 physically depletes them (Dpr4 and/or Dpu4 in Figure 5.1).

The rise in scarcity of any type of PuNC (such as our free-flowing river in a beautiful, largely natural valley with endangered native fauna) means that this type becomes more valuable in the eyes of the public, so it then appears less likely that politicians will repeat their step 1 decision to convert more of that type into private goods. However, Step 3 (P3 in Figure 5.1) pushes them to provide more private and public goods so they respond with a second political decision. That decision will have a private goods bias, so it will tend to be for more private goods at the cost of public goods, so we have a second step 1 (P1). A second phase of development follows, converting more PuNC into PrNC or other private goods. This expansion of the supply of private goods evokes a second step 2 (P2), followed by a second step P3 and step W4. The second step 3 will tend to repeat the effect of the first step 3 and so the 1–2–3–4 sequence may be repeated several times. This feedback is basically the loop of steps 1–2–3–1–2–3 and so on, with W4 (wants for natural capital) as well as step 1 being caused by step 3. Step 1 then causes Dpr4 and Dpu4 (depletion of private and public natural capital) as well as causing P2.

To see how long this feedback will continue to operate and therefore how scarce it may make PuNC (PrNC will be considered later), we must inspect the process more closely. Each step 1 diminishes the quantity of PuNC that remains (via Dpu4 in Figure 5.1), making it scarcer and thus perceived as more valu-

able by citizens, so that they give more emphasis to politically protecting its remnants. In the case of PuNC in the form of free flowing rivers, as more of them get dammed, those citizens who become concerned about this will place a higher value on the remaining natural and wild rivers. This means that the step 1 political decision of the multiplier will tend to shift from choice (a) to choice (b). However, such a shift will not take place until the private goods bias of the political process has cycled the multiplier to produce some underprovision of this PuNC. However, as particular types of PuNC become underprovided in this manner, the exploitation that does this is shifted away from these PuNC by the rising public perceptions of their values, onto other PuNC that have not yet gone (or gone so far) through this process. This substitution of less scarce PuNC for more scarce types tends to stop the rising scarcity of any particular PuNC from shifting the political decision at step 1 from (a) to (b), so the under provision spreads widely across different types of PuNC. In the example of hydro-electricity and freshwater from freeflowing rivers, as such rivers become rare the satisfaction of rising wants for energy and water will tend to shift from damming more rivers to using PuNC that is perceived as being more available because there is less want for it, such as (for energy) windy sites for wind turbines and (for irrigation) urban waste water, which is likely to be more expensive to treat and deliver than river water. The result is that the scarcity of PuNC as a whole continues to escalate and the costs of using PuNC increase as less economically attractive PuNC (e.g. waste water and wind) are substituted for PuNC resources that are becoming scarcer (such as rivers for freshwater and hydro-electricity). Such substitutions often further raise the scarcity of PuNC by creating new environmental costs, for example, wind farms may damage scenery, worry people with low frequency noise and kill native birds. In Tasmania, the latter problem is threatening the endangered wedge-tailed eagle and may finish off one of the world's rarest and most endangered species, the migratory orange-bellied parrot. Such gradually rising costs of growth, both monetary (costs of private goods) and intangible (losses

of public goods), tend to be overlooked by citizens focused on the immediacy of the private goods of employment and disposable income. This compels politicians to pursue private goods via economic growth and minimal taxation, with muted regard to whether those goods are worth the concomitant erosion of public goods.

The 1–4 sequence thus produces a feedback loop that progressively converts more and more PuNC to private goods. As this loop continually escalates the scarcity of the natural capital of the region in which it occurs, it is called the scarcity multiplier. This process will persist until the natural capital of the region becomes scarce enough to lower its economic opportunities to the level of those in places that were previously less well-endowed in terms of their ratio of natural capital to population. As this may eliminate the incentives driving the migration effects of step 2 (P2), it may block further feedback and scarcity multiplication may cease. However, while this block is developing, the remnant relatively high per capita availability of natural capital in this region may attract people looking for the lifestyle that it provides. As the Department of Economic Development in Tasmania (Tasmania 2007) has boasted: 'More and more people are flocking to Tasmania because we offer a lifestyle that has almost disappeared from the modern world.' In its enthusiasm for economic growth, the Department appears determined to ignore the awkward fact that this 'flocking' will erase that lifestyle. We have here an unabashed display of the private goods bias of democratic government. As growing scarcities of natural capital in Tasmania (or in any other region with the conditions specified above for the multiplier) reduce both economic and lifestyle attractions, the migration effects producing growth of population will diminish and the loop may break when the scarcity of natural capital here is equivalent to that elsewhere. The early stage of this process is described for Tasmania in the Appendix, which looks at the effect of natural capital on growth of population over two centuries of colonization and industrial development.

The scarcity multiplier is a *positive* feedback because its initial input and drive, the step 1 political decision (a) to allocate natural capital from public to private uses, is repeated to some degree by each cycle. It is also an IWS response, in which supply increases wants by increasing the size of the population (step P2). Although net immigration is predicted to eventually halt with increasing scarcity of natural capital, the scarcity multiplier will keep operating past that point because it has another drive operating in parallel with that of growth of population and which is less affected by rising scarcities of natural capital. This second drive makes the multiplier stronger as well as more persistent. It is the IWS signified in Figure 5.1 as A, which we might consider to start with A2, where the increase in supply of private goods from more development stimulates a rise in consumption by each citizen because the increase in supply of private goods reduces prices and increases incomes. The 'A' label for this IWS stands for 'affluenza', an ailment described by economists Clive Hamilton and Richard Denniss (2005, 3) as the 'unfulfilled feeling that results from efforts to keep up with the Joneses'. This status rivalry is part of the socioeconomic competition for what are known as positional goods. In addition to goods valued for the social status they confer, positional goods include other products or services that are in scarce supply relative to the number of people in a society, such that not everyone can have access to them. For example, as Hirsch (n.d.) explains, education can be at least partially a positional good: 'The value to me of my education — the satisfaction I derive from it [i.e. the interesting and well paid work it gives me access to] — depends on how much education the man ahead of me in the job line has.' Competition for positional goods is therefore a 'zero-sum game' in which my gain creates your loss and vice versa (Hirsch 1977, Frank 2005, Schneider 2007).

Three consequences of A2 result in an aggregate increase in want from step 3, which is shown in Figure 5.1 as Ap3 and Aa3 reinforcing P3, while they themselves are strengthened by As. Ap3 and Aa3 increase want for private goods only, whereas the population growth step 3 (P3) increases wants for PuNC and all

other public goods as well as for private goods, including those that are natural capital (PrNC). So the two types of step 2 (A2 and P2) work together to push wants at step 3. Although this process increases wants for public goods (including PuNC) and private goods (including PrNC), these increases are biased by affluenza towards more wants for private goods. Political decision-making then adds its private goods bias to this emphasis on private goods, so each cycle of the feedback converts more and more PuNC to private goods and the scarcity of PuNC is multiplied.

The affluenza drive of the scarcity multiplier is persistent and strong. As indicated in Figure 5.1 it arises primarily in positional competition and adaptation and, as previously noted in §2.2.3.2, both these behaviours escalate wants for private goods and thus increase efforts to supply them. Consequent increases in supplies of these goods enable positional competition and adaptation to further increase wants for them (Ap3 and Aa3), so both responses produce their own IWS positive feedbacks by stimulating development projects. In addition, both positional competition and adaptation are intensified by sales promotion (labelled As in Figure 5.1), which as noted in §2.2.3.2 may also maintain itself as a positive feedback that strengthens if it increases sales, as it is designed to do. We therefore have another IWS in which advertising raises sales (i.e. supply) that increases producers' revenues, enabling them to increase their advertising, further increasing wants and thereby sales (supply) and so on, which is Galbraith's 'dependence effect'. Affluenza is thus a compound positive feedback of three IWS feedbacks, one of which, sales promotion, boosts the other two and may get stronger over time.

The three components of affluenza cooperate to overturn the law of diminishing marginal utility. This has been a fundamental principle of economics, that while extra income makes a big difference to people's happiness when they are struggling with physical poverty, it contributes very little to the happiness to those who are no longer poor. Affluenza erases this effect; it

re-establishes people's wants as they are 'satisfied' by increased income.

An important difference between affluenza IWS and population IWS is that affluenza IWS inflates aggregate want by increasing the wants of each individual, whereas population IWS inflates aggregate want by increasing the number of individuals. The total impact of these two IWS on aggregate want is therefore calculated by multiplying the population and affluenza impacts together — not by summing them.

The simultaneous operation of the affluenza IWS complex (the A steps in Figure 5.1) and the population growth IWS (the P steps) means that even after the latter has been stopped by natural capital depletion becoming as acute as that elsewhere (see condition 5 above), the A feedback will persist. The scarcity multiplier will therefore keep running to produce indefinitely deteriorating living conditions as the ratio of natural capital to population declines. Economist Michael Schneider (2007) has expressed this as follows.

> Recognition of the importance of positional goods leads to two pessimistic prophecies relating to the future of mankind. It suggests, first, that even if an infinite quantity of consumer goods could be produced in an infinitesimally short period of time, individual human beings would not be happy with their economic lot; Veblen [1899] can be 'credited' with being the first to have implied this prophecy. It suggests, second, that even if the rate of growth of the world's population were zero the world's non-renewable resources would ultimately be exhausted, due to human beings' infinite pursuit of status; the 'credit' for being the first to imply this prophecy goes to Hirsch [1977]. All is not lost, however. We could all become stoics, accepting that status is available only to a minority. This does not imply the abolition of ambition, however. To adapt Alain de Botton, Stoicism does not recommend inferior status; 'it recommends that we neither fear nor despise it' (Botton, 2000, p. 98).

5.3.2 Extreme scarcity from the private goods bias

As discussed in §2.2.2 and §2.2.3, the basic themes of government policy in liberal democracies are driven mainly by public opinion, but most citizens are disengaged from thinking widely and deeply about public goods, especially PuNC, so the minority of public opinion that expresses careful thinking about this tends to be ignored by government. This is 'excessive compromise', one of the three ways that the triple dysfunction hypothesis views as producing the private goods bias in the political decisions that drive the scarcity multiplier.

Excessive compromise might be expected to drive the multiplier to exacerbate scarcities of PuNC and PrNC to the extent that these become so obvious and serious that the attention and concern of the usually disengaged majority is aroused, so that those citizens also demand that their government prevents natural capital from becoming more scarce — even if their private goods (such as employment and income for employees and profits for employers) must be restricted in order to achieve this. However, it is difficult to see this happening because the disengagement of most voters prevents them from realizing that the rising scarcities they experience are caused, not only by each person wanting private goods to an extent that reduces the quantity and quality of natural capital, but also by the presence of too many people, most of whom are doing this wanting. Moreover, the inattentiveness and ignorance of voters on this problem of population size is cultivated by the business lobby, which presents only those aspects of the problem that favour its interests as it argues for cheap labour, for ready-made expertise in the form of skilled immigrants and for larger populations of consumers and investors. This lobby has considerable financial ability to manipulate both public opinion and politicians, not only on the issue of the size of the population, but also to get them to want more private goods, which is partially indicated by As, Ap3 and Aa3 in Figure 5.1. The part that is not indicated there is the influence of business lobbyists in encouraging the private goods bias in political decision-making. The combination of excessive compromise and the business lobby

may therefore eventually push the A and P feedbacks to escalate the scarcity of both PuNC and PrNC to extremes that produce such hardship and stress for the mass public that democratic government becomes impossible across large jurisdictions such as provinces and nations.

5.3.3 Three reinforcements of the scarcity multiplier

So far in this analysis, the scarcity multiplier looks like a persistent social mechanism that eventually produces severe degradation of natural capital, then social stress that may foster religious fanaticism and political collapse — unless it can be stopped by reforming the political system so that it no longer has a private goods bias and is therefore able to control both affluenza and growth of population. The urgency of such reform is emphasized by the three following reasons why a multiplier may be even stronger and more persistent than indicated by the foregoing description. The first two of these reasons are likely additional stimulations of wants for private goods and the third is a positive feedback in which the private goods bias supports affluenza while affluenza fosters the bias.

POSSIBLE ACCENTUATION OF WANTS FOR PRIVATE GOODS FROM GROWTH IN POPULATION. It might be anticipated that the multiplier's population growth step 2 (P2) will not affect the political decision made (with a private goods bias) at step 1 in the consequent cycle of the multiplier because a bigger population has a proportionally bigger aggregate want for both public and private goods. However, if that growth of population adds more (or less) wants for private goods than for public goods, then it will reinforce (or reduce) the effect of the private goods bias in the political decision at step 1. It will not increase (or decrease) the bias, but will push political decisions in the same (or opposite) direction that the bias tends to take them.

What will actually happen depends on the circumstances, but one that seems likely to occur would reinforce the multiplier by adding more citizen want for private goods than for public goods into the choice between (a) and (b) that precedes step 1.

As much of the growth of population will come from immigration, the desires of migrants will affect the ratio of private/public goods wants that politicians express in their policies. The newcomers will often be from less affluent places, many of which are heavily populated and therefore have a relative per capita scarcity of natural capital, which may have cultivated a strong focus on earning a living or acquiring financial wealth. Immigrants may therefore have a higher want for private goods than the population they are joining. Another source of this attitude may be that such immigrants have had relatively limited opportunities (such as access to high quality outdoor environments, to leisure time, to education and to income) to learn how to use natural capital to enhance their quality of life. To be specific, they may not be accustomed to living and holidaying in spacious rural or natural situations that facilitate pursuits such as fishing, hunting, horse-riding, gardening, hobby-farming, all-terrain vehicle use, observing wildlife, surfing, diving, skiing, mountaineering, wilderness backpacking, kayaking and river rafting. Any such effects of immigration at step 2 would strengthen the cultural drift noted above as being produced by affluenza, towards greater wants for private goods.

Accentuation of wants for private goods from human adaptation to loss. The distress of citizens at losses of PuNC due to the scarcity multiplier will fade as time and generations pass, leaving them with lower expectations or wants for these goods. As De Waal (1996, 201) observes, humans are 'born adaptation artists.' Layard (2005, 229) notes that if 'things get better, we after a while take them for granted. If they get worse, we also eventually largely accept them'. Adaptation to loss occurs not only within the individual, but between generations, for when children grow up in a situation that the older generation recognizes as degraded because of the earlier experiences of its members, the new generation will consider it normal. These young people have known nothing better so they unconsciously tolerate the situation, no doubt employing instinctive coping responses, as observed by De Waal below in §5.3.6.

This inter-generational adaptation to loss takes much longer than the adaptation to gain described above for affluenza and is a different process. With affluenza, a gain in the supply of private goods is fairly quickly adapted to by the individual; so that after a few months or perhaps years she feels that she really requires a higher level of supply. Both inter-generational and intra-generational adaptations to loss occur with natural capital whether it is PuNC or PrNC. Although humans are more sensitive to losses than to gains, their feelings of loss usually fade with time (Layard 2005, 141–42, 167–68, 229) so the individual's sense of loss of natural capital may diminish over their lifetime. Both intra-generational and inter-generational adaptations to loss will therefore work together with the private goods bias (without changing that bias) to escalate public support for the choice of (a) in step 1 of the scarcity multiplier, assisting it to convert PuNC into private goods. Adaptation to loss thereby shifts the culture from having strong interests in the natural environment, towards a greater focus on people, the artefacts they make and the things they do. This raises the question of whether a culture adapted to crowding is healthier, more fulfilling and more sustainable than one that is not. Evolutionary psychology should help to answer it (for an example of this approach, see the Schwartz analysis of motivational values presented later in §8.1).

THE PRIVATE GOODS BIAS SUPPORTS AFFLUENZA WHILE AFFLUENZA FOSTERS THE BIAS. The private goods bias is likely to cause the public cost of the influence of affluenza (a negative public good) to be ignored, so that affluenza (sales promotion, positional competition and adaptation) remains unregulated and free to focus citizens more and more onto private goods. So the private goods bias supports affluenza. At the same time, politicians tend to compete with each other in following citizens as affluenza intensifies their wants for private goods, which means that politicians tend to accentuate their private goods bias. In other words, the bias strengthens because citizens and their political agents pay progressively less attention to public goods. So affluenza fosters

the private goods bias, while it supports affluenza. Affluenza therefore drives the scarcity multiplier not only by producing more want by citizens for private goods (as seen in steps Ap3 and Aa3) but also by tending to strengthen the private goods bias at step 1, with each cycle of the multiplier.

SUMMARY. It seems likely that although escalating scarcities of PuNC should increase its value to citizens, this may not happen because the escalation will be concealed from them, in three ways: (a) by affluenza increasingly focusing their wants onto private goods; (b) possibly by immigration focusing their wants more strongly onto private goods; and (c) by their intra- and inter-generational adaptation to loss. While citizens are prevented in such ways from perceiving increasing values of PuNC, politicians will also undervalue PuNC with their private goods bias. That undervaluation is likely to be maintained or even exacerbated over time because the private goods bias is encouraged by affluenza, distracting politicians from appreciating public goods, including the public good of eliminating affluenza.

Democratic governments will therefore persist in the face of increasing scarcities of PuNC to further diminish it wherever this supports the production of more private goods. The scarcity of PrNC escalates at the same time, as a growing economy demands more of it. This escalation may occur more easily than that of PuNC because the private ownership of PrNC may inhibit citizens at large from viewing its growing scarcity as a problem they have in common and which therefore requires correction by collective action. Instead, those who own PrNC may welcome its growing scarcity, as they can make more money by selling it as its price inflates. So citizens may fail to recognize the growth of scarcity of PrNC as a negative public good (it raises costs for subsequent generations) that they should ask their politicians to halt. With such behaviour, each generation will create more scarcity for the next, in both public and private natural capital. This syndrome is alive and flourishing in Australia as its government allows foreigners to buy Australian

PrNC (such as Darwin's port, residential properties and other freehold land) which accelerates the escalation of its price.

5.3.4 The influence of each IWS system and their control

Either population IWS or affluenza IWS may be enough on its own to drive a damaging scarcity multiplier. If affluenza IWS is blocked, immigration from other regions with fewer PuNC exploitation opportunities may continue to drive population growth (P2) as long as such a difference between this region and any others lasts. As noted above, relatively high wants for private goods by immigrants may assist the private goods bias to drive the multiplier through its step 1 political decisions of type (a) to convert PuNC into private goods. Immigration may thus overcrowd this region to the extent of overcrowding elsewhere on the planet, so the multiplier could eventually produce a very high scarcity of natural resources through population IWS alone. If this is prevented by government restriction of immigration but the affluenza IWS is permitted to operate, that alone may drive the multiplier to indefinitely high levels of scarcity of both PuNC and PrNC.

Affluenza may be countered by devices that provide incentives for people to minimize their positional competition and adaptation. These devices should focus on public goods as well as on private goods. The private goods focus should give incentives for people to refrain from wanting more — including, as Hamilton and Denniss (2005, 34–35) put it, to 'want what I have' rather than to 'have what I want'. One such device would be laws restricting sales promotion. A modest start in this direction was suggested in §4.2.3 with Herman Daly's (2009, 4) call: 'Advertising should no longer be treated as a tax deductible ordinary expense of production.' Devices that focus on public goods may combat affluenza by helping citizens with collective choice, so that their choices of public goods are easier, clearer, better informed and more deliberative; therefore more able to compete against the choices for private goods that they could make instead. Such facilitation of collective choice appears to

require a public forum that assists citizens to jointly deliberate and select strategic public goods, such as controls on advertising and goals on population size. A proposal for this type of institution is given in Part 2.

5.3.5 Motivators of the scarcity multiplier other than political decisions to privatise public natural capital

The multiplier may be stimulated in more ways than that shown above — which is a conversion of public goods into private goods, as by damming the Meander River. The central box of Figure 5.1 indicates that a crucial drive in that version of the multiplier is the political choice of whether to privatise PuNC. There is however, another drive that is assumed for the same step but not explicitly stated there: the desire of private entrepreneurs for development projects. As discussed below, this alone will propel the multiplier in the case of proposals that do not require political approval to privatise PuNC. There are three types of such proposals: To add value to existing privatisations of PuNC; to produce more income from existing PrNC; and to produce more income without utilizing natural capital. As the last of these would not directly deplete natural capital and the first two may deplete it as collateral damage (such as new forms of management further damaging wildlife, scenery and so on), much of their exacerbation of its scarcity may be by elevating wants for it (indicated by W4 in Figure 5.1) producing crowding effects and raising prices of PrNC.

ADDING VALUE TO PRIVATISED PUBLIC NATURAL CAPITAL RATHER THAN PRIVATISING MORE OF IT. Consider, for example, a new value-adding ('downstream processing') project in a region, such as a pulp mill that would use public forest already commercially used in that place to produce wood chips for export. If this new project was environmentally benign, it would appear to be an unmitigated benefit for the region as it would produce more market return from PuNC (public forest) that is already used for private goods (the income and employment from wood chip

sales). However, the increase in income and employment from the pulp mill would fuel both A2 and P2, generating scarcity multiplication.

In 2003 a proposal for a project of this type in Tasmania began a controversy that became increasingly acrimonious, socially divisive and politically corrupt (Beresford 2015). The proponent was the timber company Gunns Ltd., which by 2006 was the largest wood chip exporter in the southern hemisphere. It proposed to build and operate a AUD$2.5 billion pulp mill (Wells 2011), which would be the biggest private project ever undertaken in the state, with the potential to sustainably boost its population by 2%. This proposal created intense public dispute over potential environmental impacts and associated damage to tourism, fishing and wine production, but those arguments did not include the scarcity multiplication that the development would produce (even if it adversely affects other industries to cause some loss of production in those areas). Despite the public's environmental concerns, the state government approved the proposal and, in its eagerness for economic growth, circumvented the official assessment process being undertaken by its own Resource Planning and Development Commission. This display of private goods bias provoked widespread public outrage against corruption in government. Notwithstanding this deficit of political legitimacy, the federal government exercised its own private goods bias to support the state government by approving the proposal in 2007. Part of this bias was government failure (arguably an unwillingness) to recognize the falsity of the promise of such developments: As shown by the scarcity multiplier analysis, contrary to expectations they do not satisfy citizens' wants for more employment and more income, instead they are likely to increase them. In this case the private goods bias is expressed by public policy that ignores longer-term public goods.

In September 2012, Gunns Ltd. became insolvent and collapsed, abandoning its mill proposal. This was due to a combination of factors, including the demise of the East Asian market for wood chips from Tasmanian old-growth forests (due to

cheaper, higher-quality resource from regrowth plantations in Vietnam and South America), the high value of the Australian dollar (due largely to Australia's mining boom) and the expense for Gunns of coping with the anti-pulp mill campaign in Tasmania, which included the revision of the design of the mill, revising environmental impact assessments, legal action against twenty prominent environmentalists and changing its supply source in Tasmania from old-growth to plantations (partly in response to environmentalists pressuring Asian paper makers to avoid using pulp made from high conservation value old-growth forests). In addition, Gunns had difficulty obtaining financing for the project because the vociferous and sustained public opposition made potential creditors wary of being seen to be associated with it and also because of its doubtfulness as an investment in view of competition from cheaper pulp on the world market.

The intensity of public argument over this project indicates that even though it had official approval, it did not have a firm 'social licence'. If scarcity multiplication had been included with the other arguments against the pulp mill, it is possible that the dearth of social licence would have intensified and become politically recognized as quite rational, forcing the state and federal governments to withdraw their approval. In the future, unless scarcity multiplication is made a public consideration, it appears inevitable that sooner or later another proposal for a pulp mill will be made and that this will follow the pattern discussed above for the dam on Tasmania's Meander River. That project was approved by the state government and water flowed over the spillway in September 2008. In the case of the pulp mill, the necessary resource is still there and growing — as regrowth forests and plantations. The temptation that this offers requires Tasmanians to think carefully about whether they want their island to carry a bigger population. If they do, then a new pulp mill will help them get it.

DEVELOPMENT THAT OFFICIALLY UTILIZES EITHER NO NATURAL CAPITAL OR JUST PRNC. Decisions to initiate these two types of project

tend to be a matter for private entrepreneurs acting within existing environmental and other laws and permits, rather than requiring environmental impact studies and high-level political approval. In the scarcity multipliers generated in these two ways, as well as in the preceding two versions, PuNC might be unofficially utilized and damaged by the externalization of costs, such as by discharging unlicensed wastes.

To visualize the scarcity multiplier with no official use of PuNC and with or without the use of PrNC, Figure 5.1 would give the picture with only two alterations. One is to replace the wording in the central box 'Political decisions on development proposals (Proposals usually approved …)' with just 'Private enterprise decisions on development projects'. The other is to add the label 'Externality' to the arrow Dpu4 (from 'Public' natural capital to 'More development') to indicate that in this case of basically private enterprise decision-making, any such use of PuNC is neither officially sanctioned nor is the state paid for it; so it is a cost externalized from the market to the public at large.

As this modification of Figure 5.1 substitutes private enterprise decisions at step 1 for political decisions at this point, it substitutes one form of private goods 'bias' (a private enterprise motive) for another (government failure), so that a similar orientation of decisions is still the central drive of the multiplier. The focus of private enterprise on producing private goods will therefore provide drive for the multiplier whether government approval to use PuNC is required or not — provided that other conditions are conducive to it, which are those specified at the outset of §5.3.1 together with the circumstances necessary for business, such as the availability of markets, labour, materials, infrastructure, energy, technology and finance.

When such conditions are conducive to the scarcity multiplier, government action is required if any of its four versions are to be stopped. The causal chains of Figure 5.1 indicate that this may involve one or more of the following measures: (a) refusal to allow more PuNC to be privatized (whether as an externality or not); (b) combating positional competition and adaptation (for example, with laws that limit sales promotion, with incen-

tives for citizens to deliberate and choose public goods rather than private goods, and with measures to reduce inequality); (c) taking measures that slow or halt growth of population; or (d) refusing to approve many proposals for commercial development. Tourism and eco-tourism ventures are often viewed as highly acceptable forms of such development, but as they also may contribute to scarcity multiplication in any of the modes described above, they too should be assessed for this effect as part of any governmental approval process.

5.3.6 Costs and benefits of the multiplier

The scarcity multiplier operates as self-propagating, expanding sequences of commercial developments of all sizes, many of which are encouraged by political decisions that appear rational to both voters and their political agents because the political and market systems present them with incentives to favour private over public goods. Two major costs of this process are that it makes development *reproduce needs for more employment and income* similar to and possibly bigger than those the development was politically intended to satisfy, and at the same time it *increases the scarcity of natural capital.* These two costs are experienced as frustrated wants for private and public goods and they may subsequently produce a third cost: *forced changes to the culture* as successive generations try to cope with the increasing scarcities.

The version of the multiplier shown in Figure 5.1 produces the second cost (making natural capital more scarce) by progressively converting PuNC into private goods and also by increasing the number of people wanting to use both PuNC and PrNC. Although this process produces other public goods by generating tax revenue, those goods must serve more citizens and they will be limited by the private goods bias in government decisions on tax rates. In addition, the extra public goods provided in this way cannot substitute for some of the types of PuNC that are lost, such as wilderness, biodiversity, living space, arable land and natural stocks and flows of freshwater. Moreover, those extra, tax-financed public goods require paid work by

citizens, in contrast with the free services from the PuNC that was eliminated to produce them. These frustrations of increasingly scarce public and private natural capital appear likely to doom citizens' aspirations for a higher quality of life. The rise of environmental disputes over the last half-century indicates that this regression has now become a very real problem. Over the decades ahead it is possible that the inexorability of this escalation, combined with the very apparent inability of democratic governments to recognize it, let alone prevent it, will frustrate those with a social conscience so that fewer citizens may attempt to resist it. An example of such resignation may be the recent diminution of concern about global warming by citizens in many democracies, as indicated by a 'shocking deficit of political will' at the Rio+20 conference (Pearce 2012b). This may be an example of the multiplier's third cost noted above, of forcing change in the culture as a coping measure.

The multiplier also produces a fourth and fifth cost. The fourth is that it *encourages inequality of wealth* with its private goods bias and its affluenza IWS. As people are enticed to consume more, some have the ability or the position to gain consumptive advantage over others. Inequality was described in §4.2.3 as discouraging work-sharing, which fuels unemployment while limiting quality of life and productivity. And unemployment fosters inequality so that the situation tends to deteriorate in a positive feedback. Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett (2009) have found that unequal societies have significantly worse health and social problems than societies with more economic equality. Moreover they found that the relationship is causal (2009, 190–96), with inequality creating or exacerbating problems in social trust, mental illness (including drug and alcohol addiction), life expectancy, infant mortality, obesity, children's educational performance, teenage births, homicides, imprisonment rates and social mobility. To explain this, they note that inequality

> is a powerful social divider … Our position in the social hierarchy affects who we see as part of the in-group and who as out-

> group — us and them — so affecting our ability to identify with and empathize with other people … The search for a mechanism [that causes inequality to damage health] led to the discovery that social relationships (as measured by social cohesion, trust, involvement in community life and low levels of violence) are better in more equal societies. (Wilkinson and Pickett 2009, 51, 192)

They conclude that the major cause of the relative success of more equal societies is that people relate to each other in a more supportive way (2009, 192–93). Rather predictably, as will be seen later from the discussion in Chapter 8 of liberal-conservative differences, Wilkinson and Pickett's work has provoked much criticism, such as that published by the Democracy Institute, from writer Christopher Snowdon.

The fifth cost of the multiplier is also produced by its affluenza feedback. Hirsch (1977, 87) called this the 'commercialization effect', the

> effect on the characteristics of a product or activity of supplying it exclusively or predominantly on commercial terms rather than on some other basis — such as informal exchange, mutual obligation, altruism or love, or feelings of service or obligation.

This effect is generated by the positional competition, adaptation and sales promotion of the affluenza side of the scarcity multiplier. As they focus people increasingly on earning and spending money and on valuing things in monetary or commercial terms, the prospect of such external reward crowds out the valuing of things by internal motivations such as those quoted above from Hirsch. As Sandel (2012, 122) puts it: 'When people are engaged in an activity they consider intrinsically worthwhile, offering them money may weaken their motivation by depreciating or 'crowding out' their intrinsic interest or commitment.' One of his illustrations is the following exchange.

> The American Association of Retired Persons asked a group of lawyers if they would be willing to provide legal services to needy

> retirees at a discounted rate of $30 an hour. The lawyers refused. Then the AARP asked if they would provide legal advice to the needy retirees for free. The lawyers agreed. Once it was clear they were being asked to engage in a charitable activity rather than a market transaction, the lawyers responded charitably. (Sandel 2012, 121)

Economists Bruno Frey and Reto Jegen summarize the implications of the commercialization effect as follows:

> Arguably, the 'crowding-out effect' is one of the most important anomalies in economics, as it suggests the opposite of the most fundamental economic 'law', that raising monetary incentives increases supply. If the crowding-out effect holds, raising monetary incentives reduces, rather than increases supply. (quoted in Sandel 2012, 122)

This means that the commercialization effect can make the production of goods and services *less efficient* because intrinsic motivations that produce them quite well without external monetary incentives are crowded out when the latter are applied. For example, in donating or selling blood, the replacement of 'feelings of service or obligation' in donating with the monetary incentive in selling (as is done to some extent in the USA) results in chronic shortages, wasted blood, higher costs and greater risk of contamination (Sandel 2012, 123). However, a more significant cost of the commercialization effect is that it fosters a *selfish attitude,* such as that described by economist Larry Summers.

> We have only so much altruism in us. Economists like me think of altruism as a valuable and rare good that needs conserving. Far better to conserve it by designing a system in which people's wants will be satisfied by individuals being selfish, and saving that altruism for our families, our friends, and the many social problems in this world that markets cannot solve. (quoted in Sandel 2012, 130)

To which Sandel (2012, 130) replies:

> This economistic view of virtue fuels the faith in markets and propels their reach into places they don't belong. But the metaphor is misleading. Altruism, generosity, solidarity, and civic spirit are not like commodities that are depleted with use. They are more like muscles that develop and grow stronger with exercise. One of the defects of a market-driven society is that it lets these virtues languish. To renew our public life we need to exercise them more strenuously.

Perhaps the US displays the commercialization effect writ large, as its politics lacks a left wing that stresses the importance of sharing and other civic virtues and is dominated by individualism such as that of the gun culture and the Tea Party, while, as King observes, there 'are few countries in the world whose collective ideology is more pro-business than that of the United States' (see §3.2). Perhaps the strong tradition of philanthropy in the US is an individualistic response to atrophy of civic virtue at the collective scale.

Against these five ways in which the multiplier is costly, a possible benefit is that it helps more people to live in the region in which it operates. However, sooner or later this is at the cost of rising scarcities of natural capital, which creates an increasingly technological, commercialized, expensive and narrow lifestyle. This combination of having a bigger population while each person has a higher cost of living and lower quality of life is very hazardous, because increasing the population at the risk of the happiness of the individual may result in a rapid and severe reversal from a situation of moderately positive value where the average person generally feels somewhat satisfied, to one of strongly negative value in which there are more people, most of whom feel more or less stressed from crowding effects. In this connection, it is relevant to note De Waal's (1996, 200–201) assessment that

> coping with stress is not the same as getting rid of it; constant behavioural (and probably also physiological) countermeasures are necessary under crowded conditions. All of these techniques are

> part of the impressive adaptive potential of the primate order … Human populations with long crowding histories, such as the Japanese, the Javanese and the Dutch, each in their own way emphasize tolerance, conformity and consensus, whereas populations spread out over lands with empty horizons may be more individualistic, stressing privacy and freedom instead … Adjusting the definition of right and wrong is one of the most powerful tools at the disposal of *Homo sapiens,* a species of born adaptation artists.

The possibility of rapid and severe reversal of quality of life is envisaged because as people get more stressed, they are likely to become more conservative, less tolerant and more religious. Although such responses may strengthen cohesion within groups, that cohesion may increase conflict between groups. Such tendency for social instability may make the ethical theory that increasing the size of the population compensates for lower quality of life much too simplistic (for discussions of that theory, see Ryberg and Tännsjö 2004).

Many years ago, zoologist Desmond Morris (1967, 177) asserted that we

> already know that if our populations go on increasing at their present terrifying rate, uncontrollable aggressiveness will become dramatically increased. This has been proved conclusively with laboratory experiments. Gross overcrowding will produce social stresses and tensions that will shatter our community organizations long before it starves us to death.

The results of laboratory experiments may not translate well to human society, but if 'gross overcrowding' progresses at a 'terrifying rate', then De Waal's 'behavioural countermeasures' of 'born adaptation artists' may be overwhelmed. This type of social collapse may be happening now with the failure of the 'Arab spring' (except for Tunisia), the collapse of Syria and the rise of the 'death cult' Islamic State. It is frequently depicted in film and literature, such as Shane Meadows' 2007 movie *This Is England* and J.G. Ballard's 2006 novel *Kingdom Come*. Such works focus

on social dysfunction that appears to be caused by poor quality of life. Prudence dictates that we allow ourselves either plenty of 'Lebensraum', or several generations to adapt to crowding. The former appears far less risky and much more pleasant, but it requires each nation to restrict the size of its population so that (a) its *domestic* natural capital seems abundant to each citizen and (b) their wants for *external* natural capital do not compete too much with the wants of others.

5.4 Implications of the scarcity multiplier

The scarcity multiplier is an example of the government failure of underproviding public goods that is predicted by the triple dysfunction hypothesis (see §2.5 and Figure 2.1, p. 126). The multiplier underprovides public goods by making benefits (in the form of supplies of private goods) produce costs (in the form of scarcities of public goods). This means that the bigger the benefits, the bigger the consequential costs, an effect that can make conventional cost–benefit analyses (CBAs) of development projects totally misleading. To avoid this, CBAs must be preceded by competent political decisions on whether to limit the IWS feedbacks that drive the multiplier — those of population, positional competition, adaptation and sales promotion. In order to achieve that political competence, our hypothesis suggests three democratic dysfunctions must be corrected so that the people then provide good directorship for their democracy. This threefold correction appears to require one or more new institutions that reduce ambiguity of delegation by giving citizens the incentive and assistance to deliberatively participate in government, especially in developing strategic public policy.

In doing this, citizens may see a need to choose limits for the size of their population. To see such a need and also to choose limits, they will need information about the long-term costs and benefits of both high and low ratios of population to natural capital. Unfortunately, research on this is neglected and public debate about it is rare, superficial and distorted by xenophobic, racial, religious and cultural attitudes on immigration and birth

control. As observed in §4.2.1, scholars have noticed that an initially widespread public debate on overpopulation and human carrying capacity was quickly followed by aversion to further participation in such discourse. Forty-four years after Paul Ehrlich's *The Population Bomb,* the Rio+20 summit failed to make an explicit link between population growth and sustainable development (Sulston 2012). This 'Hardinian taboo' (see §4.21) could be, at least partly, a learned response to the inability of democracies to rationally deliberate desirable sizes for their populations, and it blocks attempts to develop effective public policy for sustainability. The quality of life that can be sustained in a particular region or nation largely depends not only on the quantity and quality of its natural capital, but on limits to both the size of the population using this capital and the wants of each individual. The public choices that must be made to select and attain a desirable carrying capacity therefore require a high level of deliberative public participation and cannot be done by most (perhaps all) democracies without new institutions to facilitate it.

To use Tasmania as an example, controlling the operation of the scarcity multiplier in this state demands a sustained public deliberation on the long-term size of population that Tasmanians wish to have. This deliberation must be facilitated by social science data on the costs and benefits of low and high ratios of natural capital to population, and these evaluations must be expressed as sustainable quality of life, not as monetary yields or losses. If such public deliberation resulted in citizens consistently expressing — say every year, for a decade — a desire for a particular firm limit to the size of their population, the discourse could then concentrate more on selecting their method for achieving or maintaining that limit. The mechanics of the scarcity multiplier suggests that if Tasmanians chose to stop their numbers growing further, they would have two options for implementing that choice: (a) restricting the size of the Tasmanian economy (so that the state becomes less attractive for migrants to enter and for residents to stay in); or (b) that the state secedes from Australia so that it can directly control

the size of its population through Tasmanian laws and policies that restrict its immigration and perhaps manipulate its birth rate. The choice of option would require sustained public deliberation among Tasmanians, and this may indicate to them that restricting the size of their economy will not only produce economic hardship but may even fail to achieve its objective by encouraging the birth rate to climb in a reversal of demographic transition. Public discussion of secession may indicate to both Tasmanians and other Australians that the growth issue would be tackled most effectively at the national level — and that this in turn would be assisted by greater international efforts to restrict growth of the global population. As with state and national public policy, at the global level there is also an urgent requirement for new institutions that facilitate the sustained public deliberation required by such issues. For more on the Tasmanian case, see the Appendix.

The scarcity multiplier is a complex of interacting positive feedbacks that are classified in §5.2.1 as IWS — feedbacks that inflate the wants of citizens for public and private goods by supplying their wants for private goods. This concept of 'inflating want with supply' is proposed as a crucial replacement for the conventional but myopic assumption that wants are satisfied by supplying them. IWS accepts that this is the *initial* response, but it then looks further by asking: 'so what is the effect of that satisfaction?' As we have seen, the answer is often that the satisfaction increases aggregate want and thereby produces future dissatisfaction, which turns the conventional idea on its head. The initial satisfaction of want does this by driving population IWS and affluenza IWS (positional competition IWS plus adaptation IWS, both being stimulated by sales promotion IWS) so that more unsatisfied want is produced. The current assumption that 'supply satisfies' must therefore be replaced by its approximate antithesis, that 'supply is likely to dissatisfy'. This replacement becomes necessary when we take into account the medium to long term as well as the short term. IWS thereby describes an important effect of economic growth in developed economies over the last half-century: Despite doubling and tripling of real

incomes (the supply of individual wants) in many developed economies, the percentage of citizens in those countries that report themselves as 'very happy' has hardly altered and in the US and the UK has declined (Jackson 2009, 40). So despite increase in supply, or because of it (according to scarcity multiplication), individual wants have not been satisfied and in some cases have been inflated. A survey of 61 countries has shown that above an average annual income of around US$15,000, life-satisfaction hardly responds to increases in income (Jackson 2009, 40–42). As noted in §2.2.3.2 ('Distraction by adaptation'), the level of income that citizens regard as being what they require closely follows real increases in their income.

To apply the concept of IWS at a global scale, we might consider the hypothetical (but likely) case of future industrial utilization of the natural capital of Antarctica. In June 2012 the former leader of the Australian Greens Bob Brown and veteran Australian environmentalist Geoff Mosley proposed that Antarctica, the world's largest remaining wilderness, be more firmly excluded from commercial use by declaring it a World Heritage Area. Currently, the 1991 Protocol on Environmental Protection (the Madrid Protocol) to the Antarctic Treaty commits the Parties to the Treaty to comprehensive protection of the Antarctic environment, including dependent and associated ecosystems. This protection encompasses a ban on mining and makes Brown and Mosley's proposal seem superfluous. However, perhaps their thinking might be understood as embodying a recognition of IWS that has led them to apply its logic in two ways. The first application is that the IWS systems of the scarcity multiplier indicate that global economic growth will persist despite rising scarcities of natural capital. Of course, this applies IWS to authoritarian regimes as well as to democracies, but that seems appropriate as around half of the world's nation-states are democratic to some degree and even authoritarian ones may exhibit IWS behaviour. This implies that, sooner or later, these scarcities will become so acute that the Madrid Protocol will be abandoned, as either individual nations or the global community as a whole resort in desperation to utilizing the natural

capital of Antarctica. Something like this is already happening in the Arctic as the sea ice retreats, but this is more predictable as that region is not covered by a protective protocol. The prospect of the Madrid Protocol eventually collapsing starts to make it sensible for conservationists to try to develop a more impressive international taboo on Antarctic exploitation by having the region declared World Heritage. The prudence of this move is bolstered by applying IWS in a second way. This is that IWS indicates that supplementing the global supply of private goods by using the natural capital of Antarctica will not satisfy global human wants for these. To the contrary, it is likely to further inflate them. Supply from Antarctica is therefore very likely to put off the day when humanity recognizes (not just with words but also in behaviour) the physical limits of the planet, so that when it finally recognizes them and then tries to curb its growth of population and consumption, the accumulated damage to planetary natural capital, the task of curbing growth and the risks of conflict will all be greater.

As scenarios such as this suggest, IWS may be the most important of many issues that require much more thought than is usually given to public policy by citizens and their political agents. This type of requirement for more thought has been called 'thinking beyond stage one' by public policy scholar Thomas Sowell (2004, 4). He describes it as responding to the promise of the benefits of a new public policy by asking: 'And *then* what will happen?' On further thought, consequences of those benefits may be predicted, which is a 'stage two' realization and should be responded to with: 'And what will happen after that?' More thought may reveal the likelihood of stage three consequences, to which the rejoinder is: 'And then what will happen?' And so on, if that appears useful. Sowell (2004, 5) claims that thinking

> beyond stage one is especially important when considering policies whose consequences unfold over a period of years. If the initial consequences are good, and the bad consequences come later — espe-

> cially if later is after the next election — then it is always tempting for politicians to adopt such policies.

As the scarcity multiplier is a complex of several IWS feedbacks, each of which extends beyond the view of 'stage one' thinking, it is well hidden from citizens. Major effects of economic growth are thus ignored, with citizens and their political agents assuming that the production of more income and employment will satisfy their wants for those things. The first of the three claims made at the beginning of this chapter is that economic growth is now failing to deliver on that promise, so that rather than satisfy wants for more employment and income, it exacerbates them. The falsity of that promise is seen here through the scarcity multiplier analysis, but it was much earlier seen by Hirsch as being guaranteed by competition for positional goods alone — without invoking the other drives of the scarcity multiplier (adaptation, sales promotion and population growth). *The New York Times* reported him on January 12, 1978 as observing that, because of widespread and growing demands for positional goods, material growth can 'no longer deliver what has long been promised for it — to make everyone middle-class' (Hirsch 1978).

The second claim listed at the outset of this chapter is that it is no accident that the deceit of this false promise rules democracies, for triple dysfunction limits their capabilities to analyse such problems to their root causes and then to apply the systemic remedies that such analysis may discover. Ambiguous delegation means that neither citizens nor their political agents are clearly charged with those responsibilities of diagnosis and prescription. Excessive competition between political agents further diverts them from providing public goods, creating opportunities for wealthy private enterprise to use its money and influence to manipulate public opinion and politicians. And the final element of triple dysfunction, excessive compromise, means that the ignorance of most citizens overrules the wisdom of the few, so that public policy suffers and, in particular, the falsity of the promise of economic growth goes unnoticed.

The scarcity multiplier analysis may be categorized as ecological economics for two interrelated reasons. The basic reason is that in its step 1, the analysis utilizes the recognition of ecological economics that decisions on macro-allocating public natural capital from the ecological system to the economic subsystem must be made by government (as noted above in the preliminary section of §5.3). These macro-allocation decisions cannot be left to the market because that system allocates excludable goods according to prices determined by their supply and demand. As public natural capital is non-excludable, it has no price unless government chooses to impose one and can enforce it. Therefore only a non-market institution such as government can make rational choices on the macro-allocation of public goods to the economic subsystem, including the macro-allocation of public natural capital. A further motive for having government make macro-allocation decisions on this natural capital is that they will confront government with the country's per capita levels of this capital, which should remind politicians (and citizens) to consider — and plan to achieve — the size of population that is most desirable in view of its limited stocks of this capital. This decision is another that cannot be made by markets and must be made by government, for the ratio of population to natural capital is a public good.

The other reason for categorizing the scarcity multiplier analysis as ecological economics is that it demonstrates that discipline's dependence on political science. This is implied in the previous paragraph by the notion that choices to macro-allocate public natural capital to the economy (which are ecological economic choices) must be made by governments. To do this competently, governments must be entirely free of private goods bias and any other type of failure that might prevent them from providing optimal levels of public goods. As the triple dysfunction hypothesis indicates that democratic governments fail to some degree, ecological economics requires that new institutions be designed to reform them, which is a task for political scientists and is tackled below, in Part 2.

As noted in §5.2.1, IWS is a pervasive reflex. It is a ubiquitous biological response that is in no way confined to humans. IWS is therefore deeply embedded in our psyche, which implies that democratic governments must be very competent indeed if they are to stop driving the scarcity multiplier. The necessary self-restraint is counterintuitive. As Richard Dawkins (2001) has observed: 'Sustainability does not come naturally.' We must therefore expect that until democratic government is reformed, the scarcity multiplier is the norm, relentlessly producing endless forms of boom-and-bust. A recent example of such failure of government at both state and national levels is provided by journalist Paul Cleary's (2011) book *Too Much Luck: The Mining Boom and Australia's Future*. Boom-and-busts vary in scale from that of a mine producing a town that becomes a ghost a few years or decades or centuries after the lucky strike, to a region, a country, or the whole planet overexploiting its natural capital, both renewable and nonrenewable, a cycle that may take years, decades, centuries or millennia. As the scarcity multiplier's population IWS indicates, much of the boom in these cycles is growth in population, and as we have seen, just the population IWS on its own may drive the multiplier to extremes of scarcity. If a boom and bust is local, the bust may be painful but not lethal as the bloated local population can move to more supportive parts of the country. But if the scope of the boom and bust is national, multinational or global, then the enlarged population may not be able to escape. The severity of such a bust is due not just to depletion of natural capital, but also to the number of people trying to live on what is left.

As triple dysfunction tends to make democratic governments of countries with advanced economies boost their scarcity multiplier, they cannot be trusted with decisions on economic growth. Those decisions have a private goods bias that undervalues public goods and thereby fuels damaging scarcity multipliers. When politicians declare they are 'getting the balance right' between economic growth and conservation in their decisions on development projects, they are wrong as they are not 'thinking beyond stage one' to anticipate inflation of want

by supply. Their political survival does not allow them to do it, because their constituents are stuck in stage one. This might be visualized in Figure 5.1, with public discourse and thinking generally encompassing steps 1 and 2, then failing to see further to steps 3, 4, back to 1 and around again and again, indefinitely. Until democratic governments are reformed to eliminate this myopia, their endorsements of further growth should be taken as good arguments against it. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, this is its third claim: Democratic governments of advanced economies must eschew economic growth until they are reformed to be able to make competent decisions on it.

5.5 Conclusions for Part I

In Chapter 2, the basic structure of electorally representative liberal democracies was predicted to cause, via 'triple dysfunction', a degree of failure in their governance. To test this hypothesis, two cases of failed democratic policy were examined to see whether triple dysfunction could account for them. It appeared to do this, so Chapters 3, 4 and 5 investigated other cases of government failure in liberal democracies and found that they also seemed to be explained by triple dysfunction. All of these cases indicated that triple dysfunction inhibits the development and implementation of strategic, or fundamental, long-term policy, such as: the selection of desirable limits for populations; controls on positional competition, adaptation and inequality; sharing employment; and developing the intra-national and inter-national cooperation needed to limit global warming. It was predicted in §2.5 and also at the conclusion of §4.1 that triple dysfunction would make government fail mainly in strategic policy, and although the discussions of strategic issues in Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 support that prediction they may be regarded as falling short of confirming it.

Nevertheless, as these examples of government failure appear to show triple dysfunction being realised, they encourage it to be seen not merely as a tentative 'hypothesis' of failure, but as a somewhat firmer 'theory' of failure that might be reliable enough

to guide the design of corrective measures. Triple dysfunction 'theory' is therefore applied in Part 2 to design a new institution to help liberal democratic governments improve their provisions of public goods. The running of that institution in the real world of politics might therefore provide an experimental test of triple dysfunction theory. In addition to the forward and backward mappings of Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5, the possibility of such experimental testing strengthens the idea that this theory is 'falsifiable', which (as philosopher of science Karl Popper observed) is necessary if it is to be regarded as a scientific theory. Some discussion of this aspect is given in the Afterword, but for now we proceed to Part 2, employing this theory to shape a prescription for curing or minimizing government failure.

PART II
PRESCRIBING A REMEDY

6
THE PEOPLE'S FORUM: A DELIBERATIVE AID FOR LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES

Triple dysfunction theory views failure of liberal democratic governments as arising from their electoral systems. This suggests three different types of remedy: (a) countering the deleterious effects of electoral systems, (b) altering these systems so that they produce better effects, or (c) eliminating these systems, perhaps by replacing them with others. The last of these approaches may be to use a non-electoral method of selecting representatives, or to eliminate representation by attempting direct democracy, or to abandon democracy itself. A new institution designed to implement option (a) is now proposed because it appears more feasible to implement in current democratic contexts than either (b) or (c). If (a) works it should improve the political capacity to then implement either (b) or (c), as well as increase the competence of the polity to decide whether it is prudent to do so.

This new institutional design is called the People's Forum (for short, PF or the Forum). In this chapter, PF is given a broad description and then evaluated in two ways. One evaluation is a comparison of this design with principles that have been theorized as being required for deliberative participation in democratic government (the categorization of PF as a deliberative institution is discussed below). The other evaluation is a com-

parison of PF with eight other institutional designs of similar scale of operation that have been suggested for improving democratic governance. Chapter 7 then provides more details of the Forum's design and additional discussion on whether it should function as intended.

Triple dysfunction theory indicates that if the People's Forum is to improve democratic government, it should do three things. It should remove the ambiguity of delegation by making it clear that it is the people who direct government policy; it should reduce either the excessiveness, or the destructive effect, of competition between politicians; and it should reduce the compromising of the political influence of relatively informed and considered public opinion by the political influence of less well-developed public opinion. The Forum is designed to achieve the first of these objectives by being a very visible public institution that encourages and helps the people to exercise responsible directorship. As the development of strategic policy is a crucial part of directorship (discussed mostly in §2.2.2, §2.2.4 and §2.5) the Forum must help citizens to focus on this. The second objective is to be pursued by the Forum helping the people to moderate the degree of competition between politicians and reduce the extent to which the remaining competition may damage policy. These effects might be achieved by the Forum replacing some of the political activity of politicians, and again the crucial area in which to do this is strategic policy, as noted in §2.3.5. The third objective, of reducing the compromising of the political influence of informed opinion by the influence of ill-informed opinion, is pursued by the Forum being designed to facilitate the development of mass public opinion and also to give more political influence to that section of this opinion that is more likely to be well developed. Again, such developed and influential opinion must cover strategic policy; otherwise much tactical and operational policy will, sooner or later, become ineffectual or damaging.

These three objectives for the Forum may be condensed into two by combining the second and third into the objective of *improving the quality of public policy, especially strategic public*

policy (as this is the central aim of those two objectives) and restating the first (which is to make it clear that it is the people who direct government policy, especially its strategic component) as *developing public legitimacy for government policy, especially strategic policy.* The Forum's mission may therefore be expressed as (1) improving the quality of public policy, especially strategic public policy and (2) developing public legitimacy for this policy.

The three design objectives that are specified by triple dysfunction for the People's Forum clearly require public deliberation. The first objective is for the people to direct public policy and to do this with special attention to strategic policy. This demands careful public deliberation. The second objective, of reducing damage to public policy from excessive competition between politicians, requires citizens to take over some of their policy work and/or devise ways of reducing their competition, which again demands public deliberation. The third objective, that the political influence of citizens' informed and considered opinions is less compromised by the influence of their ill-considered ones, arguably also requires public deliberation. The meaning of 'public deliberation' that is applied here is broader than that defined by political scientist Michael X. Delli Carpini and colleagues (2004, 319) as *discourse* with other citizens that helps them to 'reach judgements about matters of public concern'. Discourse includes talk, discussion and debate in formal or informal settings, via any medium including face-to-face exchanges, telephone conversations, email and internet forums, but it excludes 'self-deliberation' (Delli Carpini et al. 2004, 318–19), which is the thinking and learning of citizens that may be stimulated by their observations of the views of others and of information and events relevant to public issues. Delli Carpini and his colleagues exclude self-deliberation about public affairs from public deliberation because it does not involve personal reciprocal exchange, but it is included here as part of democratic public deliberation because people do this when they recognize and consider issues. As political theorist Robert Goodin (2003, 54–55) argues,

> it remains significant how very much of the work of deliberation, even in external-collective settings, must inevitably be done within each individual's head … The challenge facing deliberative democrats is thus to find some way of adapting their deliberative ideals to any remotely large-scale society, where it is simply infeasible to arrange face-to-face discussions across the entire community.

Political philosopher James Bohman (1998, 401) has defined deliberative democracy as 'any one of a family of views according to which the public deliberation of free and equal citizens is the core of legitimate political decision making and self-government'. Political scientist Michael Saward (2001, 365) offers a similar view. 'That deliberative democracy comes in many shapes is an understatement … However, a simple dichotomy between circumscribed and uncircumscribed variants of deliberative sites and forums captures with reasonable accuracy the institutional aspirations of various strands of deliberative theory.' Saward defines the circumscribed extreme as a consciously designed forum with a limited number of participants, who engage face-to-face with a limited agenda of issues and use tight procedures for discussion. The uncircumscribed extreme is a spontaneous group or network of an indeterminate number of people who may never meet but engage for an indefinite time with informal procedures on a self-generated, fluid set of issues. As will be seen from the following description, the People's Forum is circumscribed in several ways as it has many specific features, such as a regular schedule for voting on a carefully composed set of questions: but it is also uncircumscribed in such ways as a degree of adaptability of the agenda, an indeterminate number of participants, no organisation of group discussions and an indefinite period of engagement with each question.

6.1 The mission, strategies and shape of the People's Forum

As stated above, the mission of the People's Forum is to improve the quality of public policy — especially in strategic areas — and

to produce strong legitimacy for this policy in the eyes of citizens. While the theory of triple dysfunction points to this as the necessary mission, its third dysfunction (that of excessive compromising of the political influence of informed public opinion with the political influence of ill-informed public opinion) suggests two strategies for executing that mission. These are the two actions that appear necessary to minimize that third dysfunction. The first is to *raise the standard of mass public opinion* (especially in strategic public policy); and the second is to produce *greater political influence for the part of mass public opinion that is likely to be better developed.* As well as minimizing the third dysfunction, these two strategies should execute the mission of PF because, acting in concert, they should improve the quality of public policy (especially strategic policy) while making it legitimate in the eyes of citizens (because in a democracy, political influence ultimately depends on public legitimacy). These two strategies also tackle the first two parts of triple dysfunction, which they must do if they are to execute the mission of PF. The first two dysfunctions are addressed as follows: first, by ambiguity in delegation being minimized by both strategies giving the director's role to the people; and second, by damage to policy from excessive competition between politicians being minimized by the people's directorship replacing some of the decision-making by politicians. This replacement is done not only with some policy being produced by citizens instead of by politicians, but also by citizens (potentially) devising policy or new rules that moderate competition between politicians. To summarize, then, for the People's Forum we have:

The mission:

- improving the quality of public policy, especially strategic policy
- developing public legitimacy for this policy.

The strategies for achieving the mission:

- accelerating the development of mass public opinion, especially on strategic issues

- producing political influence for the part of mass public opinion that is likely to be relatively well developed.

To execute its two strategies, the People's Forum employs a repetitive, nonbinding referendum or poll with an agenda that is largely supervised by the public. These features, together with many others described below, are intended to stimulate and facilitate an unhurried and, in some respects, organized and careful consideration of strategic issues by citizens. As currently practiced, referendums cannot do this well, if at all, because they usually combine most or all of the following four features: a proposition is put to the vote only as a binary choice; it is voted on just once; the result binds the legislature to enact that choice; and propositions are chosen by elites. This gives referendums the image of all-or-nothing contests that cannot afford the reflection of deliberation. Political theorist Simone Chambers (2001, 231–32, 236, 240–42) describes this as happening in three ways: the framing of the question is not negotiable; the vote is irreversible; and a majoritarian situation is presented in which citizens' willingness to deliberate is displaced by their need to win. This discouragement of deliberation is also abetted by the news media 'adopting election coverage rules as the standard of news presentation for referendums' (Jenkins and Mendelsohn 2001, 229).

The question of whether heuristics can substitute for deliberation to assist citizens to vote on issues according to their existing interests is of limited significance for the People's Forum because its major strategy is to accelerate the development of public opinion. Deliberation is necessary not only for this, but for constructive popular control of the agenda and also to stimulate demands for new information that may be needed for both the elites who provide heuristic cues for citizens and for citizens themselves if either group is to be knowledgeable and competent on the strategic issues presented by the Forum. As the purpose and design of the People's Forum's poll or referendum are quite distinctive, it may be useful to recognize it as a new type by

giving it the technical name of *opinion development poll,* which offers the attraction to sceptics of abbreviating it to 'odpoll'.

To establish itself as a part of the system of government, the Forum's poll (odpoll) must become a widely recognized event that attracts significant levels of public interest, public involvement and public status. Development of public status would indicate that the Forum was starting to execute its second strategy. For the execution of both strategies, the technology that is employed is important (e.g. Lupia and Sin 2003), but the essential feature is the way the poll is organized (Flanagin et al. 2006, 32–33). The emphasis of the Forum's design on effective organization should allow it to work to a useful degree with technology no more advanced than postal mail for voting, together with print media to introduce the ballot paper, to facilitate much of the public discourse on the issues presented and to publish the voting results. However, modern communication technology makes it much easier to introduce and run this institution.

6.1.1 The focus of the Forum

The People's Forum is not intended to do work that is suitable for panels of citizens that come together to deliberate issues. Such groups may convene as one group or they may operate as several that meet in plenary sessions and thereby involve hundreds of members. They may meet face-to-face or online. A citizen panel or a coordinated set of these can only be a very small sample of the population of a state or nation, because the participants must be able listen to each other. Where the legitimacy (to all members of a polity) of the decisions of such panels arises from the opportunities for participation that they offer to all members of the polity, then these panels will restrict themselves to issues that can be managed by small communities, for it is only the members of these that will have significant opportunities to participate.

As the Forum is primarily designed to address issues that only very large communities have a prospect of managing, it offers participation to unlimited numbers of citizens. To create the prospect that their participation may be powerful it concen-

trates on issues of strategic significance (which, as discussed in the introductory part of §2.2, would help reduce the ambiguity of delegation), so that the collective development of citizens' ideas is focused on long-term, fundamental public policy of regional, national or wider concern. The Forum is thereby designed to help citizens direct government to prevent and rectify causes of problems, rather than to treat symptoms. To help with this systemic, strategic approach it must assist citizens to question their basic assumptions and attitudes, as these may underlie the problems. But this approach can influence government policy only if the resultant changes in attitudes are widespread through the polity. For this to happen, any advocacy by the Forum must be seen by all or most citizens as legitimate, so it should occur in full view of all who care to take an interest and any citizen must be able, if they wish, to contribute to the maintenance or reform of the attitudes being debated and voted on.

The type of issue the Forum is designed to deal with can thus be described as fundamental and long-running. As an example, the issue of whether to have a presidential political system would be suitable for the Forum, but the issue of who is to be the next president would not. 'Long-running' is specified for the Forum not only because fundamental issues have long-lasting as well as systemic effects, but also because, as noted below, the institution would function by addressing the same issues for many years, so the issues themselves must be those that remain relevant for such periods. Even after an issue is politically decided and acted on, the Forum may continue to address it if there is reason to believe that citizens want, or should want (in the opinion of the Forum's managers, as discussed below), to keep their choice under review.

The Forum's focus on fundamental, long-running issues is necessary for it to clarify democratic directorship and thereby correct the first democratic dysfunction. It is only by determining strategic policy that popular rule can provide effective directorship for a polity and thereby make it a fully functional democracy. If popular rule does not consciously and deliberately do this (which §2.2.3 and §2.2.4 describe as largely the current

situation) then either the polity will drift somewhat aimlessly in terms of fundamental goals, or some other influence will take charge and direct the polity at this strategic level. Such undemocratic direction will, of course, largely control the polity in future tactical and operational policy as well.

6.1.2 The structure of the poll

Each voting event of a People's Forum that is conducted for a particular society or group of societies would usually be repeated at regular intervals of sufficient length to allow some possibility of development in public opinion. In contrast with continual polling, such separation of polls also makes it possible for all those who are concerned to express themselves at the same time, which potentially makes the result for each poll a set of preferences that amounts to a democratic social choice. An established People's Forum might therefore conduct its voting events at the same time each year. This periodicity should also prevent citizens becoming fatigued with too much voting. However, in the start-up phase of a People's Forum, the poll might initially be held quarterly or half-yearly a few times to stimulate public interest. As noted in the previous section, this poll is repetitive, so it would endeavour to ask the same sets of questions on the same issues each time it is held. These issues, the questions, and the menus of answers offered for each question, are selected by the poll managers and set out in a 'ballot paper' available to the public as a free booklet and also on a website. An issue, or a question, or a menu of answers would only be changed (by the managers, as described in 'Ballot paper' below) if it is found to be unsuitable or if the public has made up its mind and is no longer evolving its view. Such stabilizations of opinion would be identified by the poll as it shows levelled trends in opinions over successive polls, as discussed below. New issues would be placed on the ballot by the People's Forum managers whenever suitable topics become apparent to them. However, as noted below under 'Ballot paper' and in more detail in §7.2.13 (E3, E2), the public will have a large degree of control over this agenda-setting.

Voting would be voluntary, a self-selecting process that invites all electors (citizens legally eligible to vote) to participate. Voters would be free to respond to as many or as few of the issues and questions as they like. One 'vote' may comprise answers to any questions on any of the issues presented at a polling event. As noted above, the poll results would not be binding on legislatures, merely advisory. Initially this political influence is likely to be much weaker than that of conventional opinion polls, but due to the effects of the structure of the People's Forum described below, it should become stronger and exceed the influence of opinion polls as public deliberation and voting continues over the years. Repetition of the same questions over many years would provide a consistent agenda, promoting continuity in the associated public debates. This should facilitate the development of public opinion on these questions and create or accelerate trends in the opinions of that part of the community that is voting. The annual repetition of the poll would allow these trends to be plotted. On those questions where participating opinion is stable, or where the trend has flattened out in the last few years of polling, the process would indicate that the community in general is satisfied with these views. These questions could then be taken out of the poll.

6.1.3 Voting process

The People's Forum poll would be open for voting for a week each time it is held, to give time for public interest to be stimulated by daily progressive tallies during that week and to help ensure that those who intend to vote do not forget to do it. Votes are to be lodged by telephone or internet. Tallying would be electronic and thus virtually instantaneous, so that each night of the week of polling the cumulative results on selected issues may be shown on television. The internet and print media could also give daily updates that might cover all the issues on the ballot and include charts illustrating the voting trends on each issue over the years up to the present event. At least in the early phase of operation of the Forum, this media coverage would not be legally required because this would make establishment of

the institution much more difficult by requiring strong government support. It is hoped that many media outlets would see a potential for growth in public demand for their coverage of the Forum's activities and therefore provide it to help that demand grow and expand their ratings and market. They could expect this effect not only during the week of voting, but also in the form of a sustained increase in demand for information on the subjects covered by the ballot paper. The manager of one television channel in Australia has been asked about providing free daily coverage of voting in such a system over one week each year and he indicated an interest in doing this as a news and current affairs service. Forum managers would encourage such cooperation by issuing daily summaries of the voting, ready for transmission and printing.

Ways of ensuring one vote per elector per poll are discussed in §7.2.13 (E22), which focuses mainly on using the electoral roll in the Australian situation. The ideal voting security system would allow spontaneity of voting, so that registration is not a prerequisite and the elector can vote on impulse at any time during the week the poll is open. Spontaneity of voting allows those who become concerned about the way the poll is currently going in particular issues to vote and to urge others to vote before it closes at the end of the week. Such interactions should help to get people involved in the process during the week of voting and this may encourage wider discussion and deliberation of the issues presented throughout the year in anticipation of the next poll. Voters who decide to change a vote they have lodged may do so before the poll closes. Voting on impulse would work against the objective of giving political influence to citizens who have given serious thought to issues (see §6.3.4 below), but it should help to draw the hitherto disengaged into the process. People who become involved in voting in this way may then pay more attention to the issues and develop their deliberative inclinations and skills by dealing with the types of questions posed, as explained under §6.1.4 below. It may be anticipated that holding the poll open for a week and allowing voters to change their vote during this period may encourage manipulation by special

interests, perhaps by scare tactics applied through the media. This seems unlikely to be effective because voters will have had the previous year to reconsider the issues and any sudden intensive attempt to sway them at the time of polling may look obviously underhand. Interests that are attacked in this way will have a few days to respond to some of it before the close of the poll and may also carry on their counterattack through the year before the next poll. A positive aspect of such competition is that it should increase the discussion of issues and thereby facilitate deliberative effects between polls. If manipulation during the polling event becomes a real problem, then voting can be made irrevocable and the event could also be restricted to one day. Further consideration of countermeasures against manipulation is given in §7.2.10.

Having the voting event run for a week and allowing voting on impulse may be important practices only for the first few years of polling, in order to encourage as many citizens as possible to become involved. It may then seem advisable to move out of the introductory phase by making prior registration obligatory, and/or to reduce the voting period to a weekend or a day, in order to make voting a more premeditated act, thus giving the results a more deliberated status in the eyes of the public. However, these changes may not make the poll results reflect a more considered opinion as they would help the strongly prejudiced to be well represented. This effect, together with reduction of the public exposure of the poll during voting, may lower its profile or status and thus the deliberation it stimulates. These changes are therefore not recommended at this stage, but experience in managing a People's Forum may indicate that they are worth trying.

6.1.4 Ballot paper

A People's Forum ballot paper would treat an indefinite number of fundamental long-running issues. As well as being extensive, this agenda should include the most controversial of such issues, to provide something of interest to as many people as possible and to stimulate public involvement. Although the number

of issues treated could be very large, the attention span of the public will limit publication of poll results by the mass media to perhaps a hundred issues, and of these, less than 10 might be focused on at each poll. Newspapers may be inclined to cover a much greater number of issues than television and radio. If the number of issues voted on is very large, complete listings of the results and trends may be published in other outlets such as websites, magazines, technical journals and books. A Forum for a nation of federated states would provide different ballot papers for each state to pose questions on state affairs as well as questions on national policy, and these different papers would be coordinated so that the same national questions were posed in all of them.

The description of each issue that the ballot paper gives should be concise and limited to perhaps less than a page. Where appropriate, the description should relate an issue to others that the ballot paper invites respondents to consider, before answering the questions on that one. Several questions would be posed on each issue and where possible these would include 'justification questions' that inquire into the reasons for the voter's response to preceding questions on that issue, in order to promote the questioning of prejudice, world views and values. Poll results on justification questions should also stimulate constructive public debate on those questions between polls. Each question on the ballot is to be accompanied by a range of answers for the voter's choice. Other types of questions would also be posed where appropriate and feasible, such as the action that is desired of government, the voter's understanding of how that action would work and his or her willingness to pay, as discussed below in §7.2.2 (E13) and §7.2.4 (E14).

As the menus of issues, questions and answers offered to the voter would be on public display in the ballot paper for years, criticism and endorsement of these menus would be invited from the public and plenty of time would be available for reactions by both the managers of the poll and the public. It would thus be an open process that places the managers under constant public scrutiny to ensure relevance, comprehensiveness

and competence in the selection and framing of the menus of issues, questions and answers. The penalty for a public perception of poor performance would be the collapse of the People's Forum through distrust, ridicule and boycott by citizens.

The ballot paper would help citizens deal effectively with an issue if the description it gave and the questions it posed summarized the problem to a few crucial concepts that are described in a manner that is easily understood and helpful. Complex issues of technology, risk and values must be distilled to their essentials and questions must be incisive and oriented to problem-solving. The managers of the poll should be well informed on political issues and have skills in issue analysis, question technique and the psychology of public deliberation.

6.1.5 The execution of the Forum's strategies

The execution of both of the Forum's strategies fundamentally depends on its ballot paper. For the first strategy — encouraging the development of mass public opinion on strategic issues — the paper must cover those that are the most important for citizens to carefully consider. Politicians avoid some of these because they confront electors with costly choices. The ballot paper must help to solve issues by focusing on causes and this may include addressing other, related issues, so these must also be placed on the ballot, with each referenced to the others. As the Forum's polls will reflect any development of opinion that such tactics facilitate, its results should become widely known for reflecting relatively well-considered opinion and this should generate political influence for these polls. The Forum's first strategy will therefore help to execute its second strategy as well: that of producing political influence for the best developed policy ideas.

The second strategy is deliberately elitist in that it aims to empower the views of those who are more concerned with the issues and therefore more likely to be well informed on them. Rather than being a problem for democratic equality of opportunities for participation, this elitism may help to ameliorate disengagement from politics by encouraging the disengaged to

join the 'elite' by voting in the Forum and publicly debating its questions.

If these polls are to create a strong political influence for the opinion they help develop, they must become popular public institutions. Such popularity would be indicated not just by whether a significant proportion of the electorate votes in Forum polls, but also — and mainly — by the status of their results in the eyes of the public. This status should show whether the general public expects government to implement the Forum's findings. If these polls are actually run they would be compared with conventional opinion polls, which should draw the attention of the public to the hazardous influence of the latter. Public communication scholar Leo Jeffres (2005, 617–18) observes that in public opinion polls there is a

> well-documented public willingness to offer opinions on topics citizens know nothing about and respond to ambiguous questions about fictitious public affairs issues … In a democracy, and the consumer society, the public itself, political leadership, and influentials need 'feedback' about each other for the system to work. The question is whether we can improve poll results to merit the position surveys occupy in society today.

The People's Forum is intended to provide a positive answer to Jeffres' query, for it provides a poll that should reflect less suggestion and ignorance and more considered judgement. Some of this judgement will be developed by the continuity of debate and the deliberative nature of this discourse that would be promoted by the Forum's repetitive process. By showing trends in the development of opinion the Forum might also indicate whether more sophistication appears likely to be developed in the near future.

The five main ways by which the Forum is intended to function are given below in §6.3, followed by more detailed specifications of its mechanisms and explanations of these in Chapter 7. The broad view in §6.3 of the functions of this design is utilized there to judge its probable performance by evaluating how

well it should perform those functions. However, before this is presented, the next section develops the procedure to be used for that evaluation.

6.2 Evaluating democratic institutions

As triple dysfunction theory diagnoses failure by democratic government, it might be expected to provide a framework for evaluating the potential effectiveness of new institutions for improving democratic government. However, perhaps it would place too much faith in a particular theory to use it not only to guide the design of a new institution to improve government (as done at the beginning of this chapter and in §6.1 and §6.1.1), but to compare the promise of this design with that of others of similar purpose — especially as the others may have other virtues in addition to correcting triple dysfunction or compensating for it. Further reason for not using triple dysfunction theory for such comparisons is that a design that corrects triple dysfunction may produce other dysfunctions as it operates, or it may not be of a type that is politically or economically feasible to install and operate. The People's Forum and competing designs are therefore evaluated more directly and comprehensively (below in §6.3 and §6.5.2 respectively) by assessing how well they should assist existing representative liberal democracies to perform. For this purpose we must specify what we mean by good performance.

The specification of objectives for democratic government that is developed below is derived primarily from Graham Smith's (2009, 12) helpful concept of the 'desirable qualities or *goods* that we expect of democratic institutions' (emphasis in original), but our derivation necessarily transforms expectations of democratic institutions into expectations of what those institutions should do for democratic government. Smith proposes two classes of expectations for a democratic institution. The first is its provision of *democratic goods,* which 'arguably … embody Robert Dahl's classic criteria of a democratic process' (G. Smith 2009, 13). In Smith's terminology, democratic

goods are effects that are, or might be expected to be, *realized* by an institution (Smith 2009, 12–13), which differs from Dahl's (2006, 8–10) approach in that his democratic criteria are *opportunities* for the realization of such effects. Smith specifies four democratic goods: (1) *inclusiveness,* the degree to which citizens of diverse social perspectives are involved in the decision-making process of the institution being assessed; (2) *popular control* of decision-making by the institution, which means control (by those participating in the institution) of its problem definition, its option analysis, its option selection and the implementation of the options it selects; (3) *considered judgement* by participants in the institution (G. Smith 2009, 25); and (4) the *transparency* of its process to all citizens, whether they participate directly in that institution or not. Smith's second class of the goods 'that we expect of democratic institutions' (2009, 12) is *institutional goods,* which are those things that we expect of any institution. These fall into two subclasses: the *efficiency* of the institution and its applicability or *transferability* to the situation in which it must operate. That situation is defined by the type of *democratic political system* in which the institution must function, the *scale* of that political system (the size of the polity) and the type of political *issue* that is addressed.

We now review whether Smith's *democratic goods* are goods that contribute to good democratic government. As democratic government is government by the people, good democratic government is good government by the people. This would seem to be not only good government in terms of its outcomes, but also good interaction among the people as they govern; that is, as they investigate, debate, discuss, consider, understand and choose those outcomes. Dahl (2006) has emphasized that in a democracy such interaction must express political equality among citizens. The democratic goods of an institution's contribution to good democratic government might therefore be expected to be its contributions to both governmental outcomes and political equality, which are here called *governmental goods* and *political equality goods.* Smith's democratic goods of an institution are therefore replaced here with its *governmental*

goods and its *political equality goods*. This replacement invites us to exclude Smith's fourth democratic good, transparency, from both these new goods and transfer it to the class of institutional goods. This is necessary because the transparency of an institution cultivates trust in it and acceptance of it by all citizens; so an institution with this good has an essential element of *transferability* to democracies, which is one of the two subclasses of institutional goods. It should be noted here that institutional goods are not only goods of the institution but also goods of the institution's contribution to government; because efficient, transferable institutions will make more contribution than those that are inefficient or poorly transferable.

The replacement of the *democratic goods* of an institution with its contributions to democratic government in the form of *governmental goods* and *political equality goods* requires consideration of what those goods are. To recognize governmental goods, the criterion used here is the public choice notion stated in §2.1, that a government is good if it produces a good provision of public goods. To judge whether this provision is good, Beetham's (1992, 42) fifth principle of liberal democracy is used: The judgement is to be made by citizens. This seems just, because it is the people who need, use and ultimately provide or maintain public goods. As good government does a good job of providing public goods, it follows that it must be very democratic because it will provide or maintain those important public goods that comprise political equality. But the converse is not necessarily the case, for although a very democratic government will provide political equality this may not be sufficient for good government. Other public goods may be neglected, not least because political equality may give some (or much) political influence to citizens who are ignorant or excessively self-centred, in which case government outcomes might be improved by moderating this equality. One element of such moderation could be Dahl's approach of specifying political equality as the *opportunity* for equal political action, rather than as the actual *realization* of equal political action.

As good government will provide political equality, it might be thought that we can delete political equality goods as a separate class and account for them as governmental goods. However, this is not done here because these two types of goods are significantly different. As discussed below, governmental goods are an institution's capabilities to assist government to provide public goods of all types, whereas political equality goods are an institution's capabilities to assist government to provide only those public goods that comprise political equality (four of which are identified below in 6.2.1).

This replacement of Graham Smith's democratic goods of an institution with governmental and political equality goods is accompanied by changing the meaning of goods being *realizations* for *participants* in an institution, to being *opportunities* for realizations by *all citizens,* as conceived by Dahl (2006, 8–10). The exception to this is transparency, the only one of Smith's democratic goods of an institution that may be experienced by all citizens of the polity (G. Smith 2009, 12). Governmental and political equality goods are thus contributions that an institution makes for all citizens, while it functions as a part of their government. Partial replacement of the democratic goods of an institution with goods that are an institution's contributions to government also draws attention to what a government must do to perform well — that is, what it must do to make a good provision of public goods. Two governmental goods are suggested as necessary for this. One of them is a conversion of Graham Smith's democratic good of the realization of considered judgment on public policy issues by the participants in an institution, which Dahl treated by specifying that democracy requires equal and effective opportunities for citizens to develop enlightened understanding. As with political equality goods, Dahl's concept and term are used here for this governmental good of *enlightened understanding* because specifying it as an opportunity rather than as a realization makes it much more feasible for an institution to provide it to all citizens of a polity as it operates as a part of government. The other governmental good suggested here is that, as it is often the case that only

some of the citizens of a polity have enlightened understandings of a public goods issue, those understandings of some citizens should prevail over the ignorance of the others in the shaping of public policy. This good is here called the *political prevalence of enlightened understanding*. We now might note what may be a remarkable coincidence, or an admirable consistency, or a sneaky manipulation: Providing the two governmental goods identified here turns out to be the twofold strategy the People's Forum would use to achieve its mission (see §6.1 and §6.1.5).

It was noted above that a good government must be very democratic because it will provide or maintain the public goods that comprise political equality. We can therefore drop the specific objective of designing an institution to produce good democratic government and simply focus on designing one to produce good government. We now inspect political equality goods, governmental goods and institutional goods more closely, to make sure that all goods in each class are covered.

6.2.1 Political equality goods

Robert Dahl (1998, 37–38; 2006, 8–9) gives the following five basic criteria for an ideal democracy:

1. Equal and effective opportunities for all members of the demos to *communicate their views* on public policy to other members, before the relevant policy is enacted (Dahl's 'effective participation' criterion).
2. Equal and effective opportunities for all members to *vote on enactment* of policy (which includes equality of their votes).
3. Equal and effective opportunities for each member to learn about policy proposals (Dahl's '*enlightened understanding*' criterion).
4. Exclusive opportunity for the members to *control the agenda*.
5. *Inclusion* of virtually all adults and social groups as having these four rights as members of the demos. The *inclusion* provided by a political institution is the extent to which it provides both *presence* and *voice* to citizens of all social perspectives. Presence is active participation and voice is the

> hearing afforded any participant, together with his or her influence over the output of the institution (G. Smith 2009).

It is suggested that Dahl's third criterion of opportunities to gain *enlightened understanding* is fundamentally different from his other criteria, as it appears necessary for quality of participation rather than equality of participation. If Dahl's equalities of participation (criteria 1, 2, 4 and 5) are to produce good government (a good provision of public goods), they must be complemented with a high quality of participation, that is, *enlightened understanding*. The availability of equal and effective opportunities for *enlightened understanding* is therefore considered to be a governmental good (as previously noted), while Dahl's criteria 1, 2, 4 and 5 are considered to describe political equality goods.

In this section, then, we have replaced three of Smith's four democratic goods of an institution (inclusiveness, popular control and considered judgement) with the following five goods of an institution's contribution to government: four political equality goods (opportunities to communicate, to vote, to control the agenda and to include citizens of all social perspectives) and one governmental good (opportunities for enlightened understanding). The attention that this replacement gives to political equality implements Dahl's (1998, 36–37) recognition that this equality is fundamental to democracy: 'all the members are to be treated (under the constitution) as if they were equally qualified to participate in the process of making decisions about the policies the association will pursue'. In this statement, Dahl's 'as if' indicates a concern for the justice of all members having the freedom or right to participate, rather than a concern that all members actually do participate. Consistent with this meaning, Dahl (2006, 10) later emphasized the significance of rights. 'Democracy consists, then, not only of political processes. It is also necessarily a system of fundamental rights.'

As noted previously, Graham Smith's democratic good of popular control of an institution is control over its problem definition, option analysis, option choice and implementation of the choice. Popular control of problem definition and op-

tion analysis are addressed here at the level of an institution's contribution to government by the political equality goods of polity-wide opportunities to *communicate views* and *control the agenda* (Dahl's criteria 1 and 4), while popular control of option choice is addressed by the political equality good of polity-wide opportunities to *vote on enactment* (Dahl's criterion 2). The ingredient of political equality that is classed by Graham Smith as a democratic good of an institution but which is not explicitly provided for a whole polity by those three political equality goods is popular control of the implementation of policy choice, but this may be considered to be produced for the whole polity by those three political equality goods, as it should be effected, over time, by political pressure applied by citizens through their equal and effective opportunities to *communicate views,* to *control the agenda,* and to *vote on enactment.* The fourth political equality good of *inclusion* should also apply pressure for implementation.

6.2.2 Governmental goods

Opportunity for *enlightened understanding* was classified above as a governmental good, which means that the degree to which this opportunity is provided by an institution that is performing as a part of a system of government is not only a part of the value of that institution, but a part of the value of that government as well. As we have seen, a good government is one that makes a good provision of public goods. As it is the people who need, use and ultimately provide and maintain or dispose of public goods, it is only they who have the moral authority to decide what provision of these is good or bad. To do this competently they need to be well enough informed to be able to recognize public goods and assess their benefits and costs. So they need equal and effective opportunities to gain enlightened understanding of these goods. Such opportunities will therefore help produce good government, and as this makes a good provision of public goods, those of political equality will be well provided and that government will thus be very democratic. As indicated above at the conclusion of the opening part of §6.2, the provi-

sion of opportunities to gain enlightened understanding would essentially implement the first strategy of the People's Forum, which is to accelerate the development of mass public opinion on strategic issues.

However, this governmental good is not enough to produce good government because opportunities for enlightened understanding will not ensure that all citizens, or even just a majority of them, are enlightened on every important issue, so the provision of public goods may be flawed (and as we have seen, in some cases such as public goods of long-term significance, very badly flawed) by the political influence of those citizens who are uninterested in, or incapable of, enlightenment on such issues. This problem is the third part of triple dysfunction, excessive compromise. There is, therefore, the need for a second governmental good from institutions: That they enable the understandings of relatively enlightened citizens to have much more political influence than the understandings of the others. It is therefore proposed that the other strategy of the People's Forum, to have the 'political influence of informed citizen opinion prevailing over that of less informed citizen opinion', describes a second governmental good, which is here called the *political prevalence of enlightened understanding*. On its own, this good is antidemocratic because it allows some citizens a greater presence and/or voice than others, thereby blocking the political equality good of equal and effective opportunities for all social groups to be *fully included* in *communicating their views, voting on enactment* and *controlling the agenda*. If *political prevalence of enlightened understanding* operates in a government that is democratic, it is because democracy is provided, not by governmental goods, but by political equality goods. These create the conditions for citizens who are ignored by *political prevalence of enlightened understanding* to reject this situation, or to acquiesce in it, or to endorse it. They may attempt to reject or endorse by using their equal and effective opportunities to participate.

There may also appear to be a need for innovations to provide 'defence against manipulation of the public interest' (G. Smith 2001, 77), which would constitute a third governmental good.

However, this defence is essentially provided by the combined effects of the two governmental goods described above. Equal and effective opportunities for all citizens to gain *enlightened understanding,* together with *political prevalence of enlightened understanding,* should protect the democratic development of public policy from being distorted or blocked by special interests. Accordingly, the assessment of the provision of these two governmental goods by an institutional design must include scrutiny of its capacity to resist political corruption by corporations, by other powerful private interests and also by public authorities. The latter may have self-serving or ignorant agendas that they attempt to implement with manoeuvres such as co-opting citizens; exhausting their capacity to participate with lengthy, laborious or costly procedures; exploiting their emotive reflexes for narrow political gains; or using public funds to blind them with propaganda. It is concluded that we need only two governmental goods.

6.2.3 Institutional goods

Institutional goods are the desirable qualities we would expect of institutions in general, and as the institutions we are considering are to be parts of systems of government, then 'institutional goods' are goods that are contributed to government by institutions. Graham Smith (2009, 13, 26–27) proposes four institutional goods: one of *efficiency* and three of *transferability*. *Efficiency* is the degree to which the institution minimizes the costs it imposes on both citizens and public authorities, so it includes economy of time and effort for participants, as well as financial economy. The *transferability* of an institution for facilitating government is its ability to work in three contexts: the type of *political system* (its political, social, economic and cultural practices), the type of *issue* dealt with and the *scale* of the application of the institution, from local to global government.

As noted above in §6.2, one cause of failure in transferability might be a lack of transparency to citizens of how the institution works, which causes them to distrust and reject it. *Transparency* to all citizens is therefore considered here to be an insti-

tutional good of transferability to democratic *political systems,* rather than as a democratic good of an institution as in Graham Smith's classification. Another characteristic of an institution that affects its transferability to democratic political systems is the *feasibility of introducing the institution*. This is a crucial component of transferability because whether the institution functions depends entirely on whether it can be introduced into the existing democratic environment and run for sufficient time to generate a popular support that sustains it as a part of the political process. As deliberative democracy theorist John Parkinson (2006, ix) notes, proposals for deliberative institutions must show: 'how to get to those end points from where we are now. Otherwise the dream of a genuinely deliberative democracy will remain just that, a dream'. The major determinant of *feasibility of introduction* in democracies appears to be whether the institution is a type that can be introduced by a private initiative or whether its introduction requires a political will that produces financial backing and executive action by government. In a democracy, such political will is usually much more difficult to develop than a private initiative, because while the latter may require the motivation of just a few people with the necessary money or technical expertise or other type of power, the raising of political will is likely to require the motivation of many thousands or millions of people. An adequate private initiative in this field might be to establish a small-scale version of the new institution that can later be expanded and converted to full-scale political application, or the writing and publishing of a book that describes the innovation and the case for implementing it, which motivates interest groups or individuals with the resources to run a polity-wide trial. Such a demonstration to the public may then develop political will that elicits support from government so that the institution is maintained, strengthened and introduced into other polities.

The obstacle of the difficulty of raising political will is partly created by politicians being averse to new institutions that significantly change politics because they are oriented to, self-selected for and experienced in dealing with the current political

system. Graham Smith (2005, 113) has noted that 'public authorities lack the will, resources and freedom to embrace democratic innovations.' Observing the US political environment, Gastil (2007, 646) offers a similar view:

> Leaders in both parties … are likely to reject any serious threat to a status quo that both sides believe, in their hearts, favors their own party. Special interests accustomed to easy access to government will likely resist the idea with even more ferocity, and … there is no reason to doubt their power.

The Citizens' Assemblies of British Columbia and Ontario illustrate some of the limitations imposed by the requirement that political will is needed to introduce an innovation. Although this requirement did not prevent that device from being introduced in Canada, it appears to have constrained its design and application to the extent that those Assemblies were made impotent. These constraints were that implementations of their findings were subject to both a referendum and a minimum 60% supermajority in that vote, if they were to change the status quo. In addition, the need for political will to instigate these Assemblies has, to date, constrained their application to an issue that citizens are very obviously distrustful of politicians handling — the issue of electoral reform. Citizens' Assemblies provide a way for politicians to be seen to have that type of issue addressed without being suspected of corrupting the outcome.

It seems, then, that if an innovative political institution with potential for significant impact requires political will for its introduction, its *feasibility of introduction* is likely to be low, but if private initiative and funding is sufficient to introduce it, then this feasibility may be high if the design is promising in terms of its other institutional goods and also its political equality and governmental goods, for these features could make it attractive to potential private initiators.

The incentive given by a design, for all citizens to use it as a means of participating in democratic government, might appear to be another transferability good. As Graham Smith (2005, 113)

observes: 'Citizens must believe that participation will make a difference … that the results of participation exercises are able to influence decision-makers … Citizens must be respected and given incentives (or a reason) to participate'. Whether a design is 'open', in that it allows participation in it by all citizens, or whether it is 'closed' to the general public, by restricting participation with mechanisms such as election or random selection, citizens' *incentive to use that institution* is taken here to be the incentive they have to use it by approving it and expecting their government to sustain it and implement the policy choices it recommends. This incentive is not interpreted here as citizens' incentive to use an institution by participating in it, because very few can experience this incentive with closed designs.

Incentive to use the institution should arise from 'what most psychologists believe are the four core motives that influence our decision-making in social dilemmas … understanding, belonging, trusting and self-enhancing' (Van Vugt 2009, 41). However, the degree to which an institutional design might evoke these motives may be judged by inspecting the institutional, political equality and governmental goods that have already been selected. The institutional good of *transparency* will produce trust and the institutional goods that address *strategic issues* at the *scale of large polities* in ways that work with the political system (political, social, economic and cultural practices) may foster understanding, belonging, trust and self-enhancement. Political equality goods (*communication between citizens, voting, agenda control by citizens* and *full inclusion*) and governmental goods (*enlightened understanding* and *political prevalence of enlightened understanding*) will also evoke understanding, belonging, trust and self-enhancement. Any assessment of citizens' *incentive to use the institution* will therefore duplicate the assessments of these other goods, so it is not included as yet another good in this evaluative framework of political equality, governmental and institutional goods.

6.2.4 Evaluating goods of democratic institutions

The foregoing adaptation of Graham Smith's evaluative framework changes the number of goods to be assessed from eight to twelve. Smith's eight are his four democratic goods of inclusiveness, popular control, considered judgement and transparency, together with the four institutional goods of efficiency and of transferability to political system, scale and type of issue. The twelve that are now proposed comprise three sets: the first is a set of four political equality goods — those of inclusiveness and of opportunities to communicate, to vote and control the agenda; the second is a set of two governmental goods — enlightened understanding and its political prevalence; and the third is a set of six institutional goods — those of efficiency and five types of transferability to liberal democracies, which are suitability for those political systems, applicability to strategic issues, applicability to polities of large scale, transparency of the institution and feasibility of introducing it to the political system. This change from eight to twelve goods enables some of them to be more specific and may therefore make it more meaningful to try to judge how well each good is likely to be provided by a particular design for the government within which it is to function. Such judgement may be expressed by choosing a numerical rating for each good, and this is done below in §6.3 for the People's Forum, with the results summarized in Table 6.1 (p. 287). This assessment is repeated in §6.5.2 for the goods that appear likely to be generated by three more designs, and all four designs are compared in Table 6.2 (p. 312). This comparison is a very simplified overview and must be regarded as only a rough indication of the relative promise of these four proposals. However, it is a comparison that may be systematically reviewed in three ways: by reconsidering how well each design might provide each good; by considering whether different goods should be given different weightings (Tables 6.1 and 6.2 assume that each is equally important); and by considering whether the evaluative framework itself needs changing. As emphasized above, this framework assesses provisions of goods that are 'goods' for all citizens of the polity, not just for those who participate in the

institution being evaluated. It may be tempting to favour a design that promises high provisions of goods that are only 'goods' for those who participate in the institution, but if the institution does not provide those goods for government, then it does not warrant such approval as its purpose is to assist the provision of good government.

The basis for this assessment of the People's Forum is now prepared by describing its five major functions. Each description is followed with a subjective evaluation of the likely execution of PF strategies and the likely provision of goods by that function.

6.3 Five major functions of the People's Forum

The five major functions that are now described give a broad account of how the People's Forum should execute its two strategies and provide institutional, political equality and governmental goods. These five functions are: public deliberation of issues; public deliberation about what issues are deliberated; focus on basic or fundamental issues; meritocratic influence; and economizing cost and the effort required from citizens. At the conclusion of the description of each of these functions an evaluation is made of how well that function is anticipated to contribute towards the two strategies of the Forum and its three classes of goods. The strength of each contribution is indicated by ranking them as 'very low', 'low', 'moderate', 'high' or 'very high', and at the end of this survey Table 6.1 lists and adds up these anticipated effects on the Forum's execution of its strategies and its provision of goods.

6.3.1 Public deliberation of issues

The People's Forum would provide a slow process that allows years for public judgment to evolve. Its poll would be open for all electors to vote. This opportunity for voluntary participation should encourage citizens to publicly debate and deliberate the issues on the ballot paper, so that this paper becomes an agenda for those activities. The Forum would impose minimal control

over citizens' deliberations as it would not facilitate deliberation by mediating individual discussions, and its agenda would be open to citizens' suggestions for amendments while providing only basic information on the issues it presents. However, the agenda would aim to produce more considered judgements by the public by facilitating greater focus and continuity in the current processes of public argument and inquiry. It would do this with its selection and framing of issues, its incisive choices of questions and its consistent repetition of these over many voting events. Most of the changes made to the agenda would be to add new issues and withdraw others as they are resolved. Public discourse should be encouraged by the periodicity of the vote as this would give annual feedback to the people on what those who are engaged are thinking, why they are thinking that and how their views are changing. This should provoke and inform further reflection, enquiry, discussion, debate and the demand for accurate and relevant information. The People's Forum poll would only be open for voting by citizens on the electoral roll of the state or nation, but as the process would be public and transparent, the whole community could contribute to the arguments, to the search for information and to the development of public opinion.

Evaluation. The function of public deliberation would help to execute the first strategy of the People's Forum, the development of mass public opinion. The strength of this is rated 'low' because of citizens' confirmation bias (e.g. Haidt 2012, 89–90) and widespread political disengagement. The function would also assist (as a 'moderate' effect) the execution of the second strategy (producing political influence for the part of public opinion that is likely to be relatively well developed) by registering only the views of citizens who are interested in the issues treated by the Forum.

One institutional good of *efficiency* and four of *transferability* should be provided by this function. *Efficiency* (high) is provided by eliciting deliberation with a list of crucial questions rather than by the direct mediation of a myriad of debates and dis-

cussions. The four transferability goods that should be provided are: a widespread acceptability of this function by citizens in *liberal democratic political systems* (very high); its applicability to policy development on *strategic issues* (very high); the *transparency* of the deliberative process (high); and the suitability of this process for *large-scale* democracies (very high). This function would also provide the political equality good of opportunity for all citizens to *communicate their views* to each other (high). As it would contribute to both governmental goods it would also help to execute the two strategies of the Forum. The first governmental good would tend to be supplied (low) by the function providing more opportunity and incentive for all to gain *enlightened understanding* (noted above as the first strategy) and the second governmental good, *political prevalence of enlightened understanding* (noted above as the second strategy), would tend to be supplied (moderate) by the function producing a public recognition that the Forum registers (while also helping to develop) wisdom that is worthy of strong political influence.

6.3.2 Deliberating what is to be deliberated

The People's Forum would assist deliberation of public policy by providing a forum not only for specific issues, but for debating at least three aspects of this process: (1) which issues should be run; (2) the most useful questions to pose on these; and (3) the scope of each menu of answers that is offered to voters. As the ballot paper would publish the People's Forum menus of issues, questions and answers, these menus will always be open to criticism or endorsement by citizens. The voluntary voting of the poll will thus oblige its managers to preface the ballot paper with an invitation for citizens to comment on it and to suggest new issues, questions and answer options. Any controversy on such aspects of the ballot paper should lift the profile of both the poll and the issues it treats — and if such controversy is handled well by the managers of the Forum, then this should encourage more citizens to deliberate its issues and vote in its polls.

EVALUATION. As this function is an extension of the public deliberation function, it should also help execute both strategies of the People's Forum (first strategy, low and second, moderate), which is also a provision of some of the two governmental goods of *enlightened understanding* (low) and *political prevalence of enlightened understanding* (moderate). Public deliberation of the agenda should also provide two institutional goods of transferability: *transparency* that will help generate the political will to maintain the institution (high), by making it attractive to citizens of *liberal democratic political systems* (high). This function also provides the political equality good of equal and effective opportunities to *control the agenda* (high).

6.3.3 Examining basics

Public polling expert Daniel Yankelovich (1992) has stated that public opinion on an issue often develops slowly over a long period, such as ten years or more for one that is complex. This may be an understatement, for it seems likely that the process may stall on issues where underlying assumptions remain unrecognized and/or unquestioned, as seems to have happened with racial equality in much of the US for a century after the Civil War. Illusions may therefore arise of public judgment having developed completely when a potential remains for it to be radically transformed by more thought and information. The long, slow and open-ended deliberation of the People's Forum should be especially suited to such public examination of basic assumptions, ideology and world view. Its transparency to scrutiny by all citizens would help to raise new questions, evidence and insights. The 'justification questioning' referred to in §6.1.4 above and the other types of questions discussed in §7.2.2 (E11, E12, E13), should facilitate critical inquiry and help the public shake itself free of prejudicial hang-ups. It may be found that for some issues deliberation may never end, as each generation may want to think for itself and re-examine the foundations of its opinion. In such ways, the People's Forum may help citizens reassess not only their public policies and laws directly, but also indirectly by helping them review and develop their values, world view

and culture. Slovic and colleagues (Kahan et al. 2006) have emphasized that culture is a crucial determinant of the quality of deliberation, so a positive feedback may take place in which the Forum's fostering of public deliberation helps citizens improve their deliberative skills. Jackson (2009, 203) regards such cultural growth as crucial for our future, for example because 'the cultural drift that reinforces individualism at the expense of society, and supports innovation at the expense of tradition, is a distortion of what it means to be human.'

Evaluation. The focus on fundamentals in public policy should help execute both strategies of the Forum. This may only happen to a 'low' degree with the first strategy — facilitating the development of mass public opinion — because of the confirmation bias of citizens and the disengagement of many from politics. The effect on the second strategy is rated 'moderate' because as the Forum operates it is likely to produce a broad public realization that it focuses on fundamentals, which should create a public expectation that politicians be guided by its findings. The focus on fundamentals should promote the institutional good of *efficiency* of operation (high) by placing limited expenditure and citizen effort where it might be most effective in improving public policy. This focus also creates the institutional goods of transferability to fundamental or *strategic issues* (very high) for any *scale* of polity (very high). By laying out for inspection the fundamental policies that underpin other policies — those that are medium term (tactical) and short term (operational) — this function should enhance the *transparency* of public policy-making (very high). It should also contribute to the political equality goods of opportunity for citizens to *communicate their views* to each other (moderate) and to *control the agenda* (moderate). This function should also make a crucial but nevertheless faint (low) contribution to the governmental good of opportunities for gaining *enlightened understanding* (as discussed above for the Forum's first strategy). And as discussed above for the second strategy, the focus on fundamentals should produce (to

a moderate degree) the governmental good of *political prevalence of enlightened understanding.*

6.3.4 An element of meritocracy

Meritocracy is often considered incompatible with democracy. As it is government by those citizens with the ability to govern well, many citizens are excluded, so government by 'the' people (in the sense of 'all the' people) does not appear to be achieved. Those citizens lacking the capacity or interest or time for this work are discouraged or prevented from participating, and the political equality at the core of democratic practice appears to be thwarted. However, as discussed in §6.2 (in its opening section and in §6.2.1), Dahl (2006, 8–10) defines this equality as equality of opportunity, or a right, rather than equality of action. To maintain this right we must be careful that a meritocratic institution does not prevent citizen participation but merely encourages those with the ability to contribute constructively to do so. Those who are not encouraged by a meritocratic design to actively engage should at least be encouraged by it to passively support its meritocratic function by approving it or acquiescing in it. Citizens may be inclined to do this if such a design allows them to become actively engaged at any time they choose, such as if they became concerned about political trends.

Conventional opinion polls have no meritocratic effect as they systematically sample whole communities. This sampling damages the competence of democratic governments with views that are ill-informed, as discussed in §2.4. The People's Forum would limit this damage by using the self-selective sampling of voluntary voting to bypass views that are ill-informed due to disengagement. The Forum should thereby produce some of the governmental good of *political prevalence of enlightened understanding,* which may trouble those who emphasize the importance of political equality for democracy. However, as noted above, Dahl (2006, 9) specifies this equality as 'equal and effective opportunities' to participate politically, rather than equal participation by every citizen. The apparent conflict here may seem to be between good democracy (good democratic

government) and good government, but, as discussed in §6.2, there should be no conflict as a good government is a very democratic one.

Caplan (2008, 197–98) emphasizes that as voters tend to be irrational, an element of meritocracy is essential if democratic government is to work well.

> A test of voter competence is no more objectionable than a driving test. Both bad driving and bad voting are dangerous not merely to the individual who practices them, but to innocent bystanders … Most worries about de jure or de facto changes in participation take the empirically discredited self-interested voter hypothesis [SIVH] for granted. If voters' goal were to promote their individual interests, nonvoters would be sitting ducks. People entitled to vote would intelligently select policies to help themselves, ignoring the interests of everyone else. There is so much evidence against the SIVH, however, that these fears can be discounted. The voters who know the most do not want to expropriate their less clear-headed countrymen. Like other voters, their goal is, by and large, to maximise social welfare. They just happen to know more about how to do it.

The degree to which the self-selective sampling of a Forum's poll will reflect more sophisticated views than opinion polls may be limited in the first few years of that Forum's operation, because people who are concerned about public issues but do not value public goods or are ill-informed will vote along with others who are also concerned but more inclined to consider the value of public goods or are better informed. Across a succession of polls by the Forum, the encouragement that this process should give to broad public deliberation may succeed in increasing the sophistication of mass public opinion (see §6.3.1 and §6.3.2 above; also §7.2.2). However, any such deliberative effect is likely to be greatest with the section of the public that is interested enough to vote in the Forum's polls, so this engagement should significantly differentiate these results from those of opinion polls. The meritocratic effect of the Forum should therefore occur in two

ways: (1) bypassing the opinions of those who choose to remain disengaged and (2) facilitating the development of the opinions of those who do engage. In addition to being meritocratic, the Forum may also slightly lift the sophistication of mass public opinion through the public visibility of the discourse that it fosters.

Any public disapproval of the meritocratic self-selection of the Forum's voting should be moderated by awareness that self-selective voluntary voting is used by almost all liberal democracies to appoint presidents and representatives and by many for referendums. Acceptance and appreciation of this 'elitism' may increase with time, because as the Forum operates it will be compared with random sample opinion polls, which should help citizens recognize the danger of giving political influence to the apathy and ignorance expressed in the latter. This elitism may therefore come to be widely regarded by citizens as reason to accord special status and political influence to Forum polls, so that a low voter turnout (say, five per cent of those eligible to vote) does not impress citizens (and therefore does not impress their politicians) as a good reason to ignore their results and trends. To the contrary, low turnouts may be taken to mean that the results reflect only the views of those citizens who are really interested in the issues covered. Exposure of the general public to the Forum process should therefore slowly develop a public expectation that political representatives should be guided by its findings, which is the Forum's second strategy. Of course, this potential for political influence will encourage special interest groups to mobilize their supporters to vote in the Forum and to produce propaganda to sway other potential voters to their point of view. This should help rather than hinder the public deliberation of issues, for such groups are likely to be opposed by others expressing different views and voting accordingly in the Forum's polls. The Forum ballot paper should help guide these debates in constructive directions by its balanced descriptions of the issues and its choice of the most crucial questions for each issue.

Dogmatic personalities will be attracted to vote in the Forum, but this should give them more exposure to opposing viewpoints and information, for the Forum's issue descriptions and questions would be designed to do this. Moreover, dogmatists, along with more reasonable people, will feel obliged to publicly engage with the arguments that oppose theirs. The Forum's repetitive polling would prolong such discussions and arguments and help them stay focused over many years on specific questions by maintaining substantially the same agenda. In this situation participants will need to understand opposing arguments to see how they might improve their own to lift the vote for their view in future polls. The Forum may thus help dogmatists, as well as open-minded participants, to develop more reflective, informed and socially responsible thinking. However, especially in the early years of a Forum's operation, some dogmatic people may reject it as an insidious evil because its questioning approach calls for openness, dialogue and exchange of ideas, which abjures their belief in faith. As political theorist John Dryzek (2006, 47) observes: 'Those asserting identities may feel insulted by the very idea that questions going to their core be deliberated. What they want is instead 'cathartic' communication that unifies the group and demands respect from others.' As discussed in §7.2.2 (E10) and more fully in Chapter 8, there are genetic and learned psychological limits to the loosening of dogmatic attitudes, but any achievements in this direction should help improve democratic governance.

The intention of the People's Forum to bypass those who remain disengaged is not so much an attempt to ignore people who are alienated or demoralized, but to develop political influence for those who think about and want to express their views on public goods problems that are persistent and important — which includes the problem of alienation. The Forum may be able to help ameliorate alienation by sustaining a public discourse on what to do about it and by giving public-spirited citizens a platform for advocating the interests of those who are alienated (see Caplan's view above). The operation of the Forum also offers the marginalized an opportunity to have a say

that is currently not available to them. It may even give them an incentive to do this, for if they hear that its polls 'bypass the disengaged' they may suspect this refers to them and rebel against this treatment by voting. Some of them may then discuss their views with others who also feel alienated and urge them to vote as well.

EVALUATION. It is noted above that the meritocratic function of the Forum should give it political influence, which means that the Forum would be executing its second strategy — the development of political influence for that part of public opinion that is most likely to be well developed (moderate effect). The political influence that the Forum develops from its meritocratic effect should also help to execute its first strategy of developing mass public opinion as it should provide citizens with incentive to vote in the Forum and thereby to take more interest in the issues it covers (low effect).

The meritocratic function will produce the institutional good of *efficiency* (high) by enabling those who are not interested in democratic work (such as learning about issues and contributing to public debate) to leave this to those who are. A little of each of the political equality goods of equal and effective opportunities for members to *communicate their views* to each other on public policy (rated low), to *vote* (low) and to *control the agenda* (low) may be generated by meritocracy because the political influence it creates for the Forum should encourage all citizens to use it — by debating the issues it deals with, by voting in its polls and by reviewing its agenda. This incentive may not be generated in the first few years of operation of the first Forum that is run in a polity, but could develop as it becomes established and gains a reputation for potential or actual influence. A contribution to the political equality good of *full inclusion* (very low) will only be made if the Forum's meritocratic function arouses the interest of hitherto politically disengaged citizens. Political influence from meritocracy should foster the governmental good of opportunities for *enlightened understanding* (the Forum's first strategy) by encouraging citizens to vote

in the Forum and thereby to take more interest in the issues it covers (low effect). The direct effect of the Forum's meritocracy is to produce the governmental good of *political prevalence of enlightened understanding* (anticipated to be a moderate effect, as indicated above for the Forum's second strategy).

6.3.5 Economizing citizen effort

Any attempt to increase political participation by citizens must minimize the time and effort it demands from them (Beetham 1992; G. Smith 2009, 18–19). For the People's Forum to work under this constraint, no more than one poll per year (after an initial year or two of more frequent polling to establish its public profile) seems both necessary and sufficient. Limiting the frequency of polling to no more than once a year may also allow time for public discourse to produce some change in the opinion that is registered by successive polls. Economy would also be produced by the Forum focusing on helping the public to indicate only the broad strategic directions in public policy, for this would leave the mass of detailed tactical and operational decision-making within these guidelines to politicians. The 'economy of time' provided by the design of the People's Forum is further discussed below in §7.2.13 (E10).

Evaluation. Economy of effort and time invites citizens to engage with the Forum and thereby assists it to execute its first strategy of developing mass public opinion. This is judged a low effect due to citizens' disengagement from politics and their confirmation bias.

Economy would also produce the institutional good of *efficiency* (moderate) by minimizing the input required from citizens to make the institution work. It also helps to deliver the transferability goods of suitability for *liberal democratic political systems* (high) and *feasibility of introduction* (moderate) to these systems. Economy of citizen effort also helps to provide all four political equality goods: those of all citizens having equal and effective opportunities for *communicating their policy views* to each other (moderate effect); to *vote* (moderate); to *control the*

agenda (moderate); and to experience *full inclusion* (moderate). By minimizing the task for citizens, this function also fosters the governmental good of opportunities for them to gain *enlightened understanding* (low effect, as above with the Forum's first strategy).

6.3.6 Summary of anticipated contributions by five major functions of the Forum

The contributions that are anticipated to be made by these five functions towards executing the Forum's strategies and providing goods are listed in Table 6.1. The anticipated contributions are summed in the right-hand column by rating them on a scale of 0–5, where 0 means that the Forum cannot execute a strategy or provide a good and 5 signifies that it should be very effective in doing so. With the partial exception of the institutional good of *feasibility of introduction* (as discussed below), these ratings are assessed from the preceding summaries of functions in which anticipated contributions to strategies and goods are described as being either nonexistent or somewhere on a scale of very low to very high. Readers may, of course, give different ratings according to their interpretations of how well the Forum would perform. The ratings in Table 6.1 are later compared in Table 6.2 with goods ratings for three other institutional designs, to judge which might be the most promising to try out at an operational scale.

The preceding descriptions of the five functions indicate that the Forum may only do a patchy job of executing its first strategy — facilitating the development of mass public opinion on public issues of strategic importance. Those citizens who have some interest in these issues should be assisted by the Forum to develop their knowledge and opinions while the great majority of citizens may substantially ignore the institution, so the total contribution of the five functions to this strategy is given the low rating of 2. The Forum is given a high rating of 4 for anticipated execution of its second strategy (producing political influence for the section of public opinion that is most likely to be highly developed) because its meritocratic function may start to work

Strategies of PF and goods that PF may produce	The anticipated contributions to PF strategies and goods by five major functions of PF					
	1 Public delib-eration of issues	2 Deliberating the agenda	3 Examining basic issues	4 Meritocracy	5 Economizing citizen effort	Total anticipated contributions (scale: 0–5)*
STRATEGIES						
First Strategy	**low**	**low**	**low**	**low**	**low**	**2**
Second Strategy	**mod**	**mod**	**mod**	**mod**	**–**	**4**
GOODS						
Institutional Goods						
Efficiency of institution	high	–	high	high	mod	4
Transferability of institution						
To political system (lib. dem.)	*v high*	*high*	–	–	*high*	*4*
To type of issue (strategic)	*v high*	–	*v high*	–	–	*5*
To scale of polity (large)	*v high*	–	*v high*	–	–	*5*
Transparency	*high*	*high*	*v high*	–	–	*4*
Feasibility of introduction	-	–	–	–	*mod*	*3***
Political Equality Goods						
Communication	high	–	mod	low	mod	4
Voting	-	–	–	low	mod	3
Agenda control	-	high	mod	low	mod	4
Full inclusion	-	–	–	v low	mod	2
Governmental Goods						
Enlightened understanding	low	low	low	low	low	2
Political prevalence of en. un.	mod	mod	mod	mod	–	4

Table 6.1. Anticipated contributions to PF strategies and goods by five PF functions. * The anticipated total effect of the five functions on the Forum's execution of a strategy and on its provision of a good depends to some extent on the number of functions that contribute and especially on the expected effectiveness of each contribution. For example, all five functions should make some contribution to the good of *enlightened understanding*, but each is expected to be slight, hence the anticipated total effect is rated low, at 2 on the 0-5 scale described under §6.3.6. ** For feasibility of introduction see §6.3.6.

well after the Forum has been running for some time and has become widely understood by participants, commentators and the general public.

From the preceding descriptions of anticipated provisions of goods by the five functions, the Forum should do a good job with the institutional good of *efficiency,* so the anticipated total contribution to this by those functions is rated 4. Of the five institutional goods comprising transferability, applicability to *type of political system* (liberal democracy) is given a high rating of 4 because the Forum is expected to be welcomed into liberal democracies by their citizens as a continuation of the current trend for them to seek issue-based ways of doing politics that bypass ideologies and traditional party-based work. The Forum should also be effective in helping to manage *strategic issues* (5); and at coping with *large-scale* (5) polities such as state, national, multinational and potentially even global governance. *Transparency* (4) is rated high as the first three functions are expected to allow close public scrutiny of the Forum. The transferability good that is only slightly accounted for by this limited (see §7.1 below) selection of five functions is *feasibility of introduction* (3), but this is rated fairly high as the Forum's design allows it to be introduced to a liberal democracy by private action, an approach that is discussed in general terms above in §6.2.3 and in relation to this institution in §6.4 and §7.2.12 below.

For political equality goods, the five major functions should provide good opportunities for all citizens to *communicate their views* to each other (4), to *vote* (3) and to *control the agenda* (4), but *inclusion* (2) will be poor as many citizens will remain uninterested in public affairs, especially the strategic policy that the Forum will focus on. The governmental good of opportunities for all citizens to gain *enlightened understanding* (2) should only be slightly provided, because of the disengagement of many citizens. The governmental good of *political prevalence of enlightened understanding* (4) should be well provided, if transferability is high, which appears likely.

6.4 Initiating and running the Forum

The potential 'market' for the People's Forum initially comprises liberal democratic state and national governments. It might then be adapted to also serve in multinational and global governance. Its operation in liberal democracies may set examples that encourage publics under less democratic and even authoritarian regimes to press for its establishment in their polities. A government could finance a People's Forum as an independent service to the public and in doing so may have it managed by an NGO or a private business to ensure that it is seen by the public to be free of government control. Several attempts to interest politicians in this system have indicated that they are unlikely to provide it unless citizens experience it, develop a desire for it and then urge their governments to fund it. A demonstration trial therefore appears to be a necessary first step for its implementation. The design of the Forum enables such a demonstration to be done without government support, so funds for this purpose might be sought from private sources such as philanthropic foundations, NGOs, citizens (via crowdfunding), opinion polling companies, media businesses, telecommunications companies or corporations interested in promoting their image or in improving government policy to create greater strategic certainty for corporate investments. A trial of the Forum could be initiated by an existing NGO or by a few citizens who formed an NGO for this purpose. Such a body would attempt to raise the necessary money and, if successful, this would be used to hire a small team of perhaps ten people to establish and run the Forum. As noted in §6.1.4, 'issues of technology, risk and values must be distilled to their essentials and questions must be incisive and oriented to problem-solving.' The management team must therefore include members with a good knowledge of political issues and with skills in issue analysis, in poll question technique, in the psychology of public deliberation, in business management and in information technology. This team would arrange for some work to be outsourced, such as advertising the polls and applying information technology, so that they could

focus on designing and compiling the ballot paper, on public relations, on supplying polling results and analysis to the media and on the overall management of the Forum. If the first year or two of the Forum's operation generates positive public interest, this may start to develop political pressure for it to be accepted as a formal part of the apparatus of democratic government. If this pressure became strong, the state may take responsibility for funding the Forum, but its management must remain independent of government and entirely in the hands of its staff. The regulation of these managers would be done by public pressure, for if the People's Forum acquired a public reputation for bias, or irrelevance, or some other serious defect then citizens will destroy it by not voting in it and by encouraging their politicians not to fund it and to ignore its results.

In the Australian situation, the island state of Tasmania should be a good laboratory for a trial as its physical separation from the rest of the nation gives Tasmanians a distinct sense of being in a position to influence their future. The size of the Tasmanian population, at half a million, should be sufficient for vigorous debate on fundamental, long-term issues. This state also has an extensive and continuing experience with very divisive issues so it should welcome a new way of approaching these. The cost of a five-year trial of the People's Forum here, based on telephone and internet voting, free hard-copy plus website ballot papers and some advertising, may be around AUS$10 million. After five years such a test should be indicating whether the poll is starting to develop public acceptance as a political institution. During this period it may not have generated political influence, but may be raising anticipation of this, attracting increasing voter participation, facilitating public thought on key issues and showing trends in its voters' opinions on the issues it treats. The initiation of such a trial might stage the first three polls at six month intervals, to generate publicity for the Forum and to quickly pass through any backlash vote in reaction to initial poll results. Subsequent polls may then be annual events.

An obstacle to such a trial in Australia is that the federal government is prevented by law from making its electronic

electoral roll available to private interests which are not legally authorized to use it. If a non-government group is running the trial, this would preclude the possibility of high security impulse voting as discussed above under §6.1.3, but this problem may be tackled by the Forum running a sequence of polls without serious voting security. If this relies on a website ballot paper without free hard copy, the cost of a five year demonstration may be around AU$5 million. This should enable the public to see the potential of the system, so if citizens then wanted it trialled as a functioning political institution, pressure of public opinion may elicit cooperation from the government, together with financial backing from this or other sources, to permit a fully operational poll. Once this was established and running successfully it may provide an example of public participation that attracts wide interest from around the world, prompting politicians or citizens to introduce the People's Forum to other states and nations and possibly adapting it for international and global applications.

6.5 The People's Forum compared with principles and designs for deliberative democracy

As the People's Forum is designed for large-scale operation it has an overarching reach that could use input from other devices that operate with limited scope. Such limitations may be that these devices cannot treat a large number of issues at the same time; cannot facilitate deliberation of issues with fundamental or systemic impacts; and cannot include very large numbers of citizens in their deliberations. An example of a device that has at least the first and last of these limitations is the Deliberative Poll®, which is briefly described below in §9.1. This device could give some indication, each time it is run, of what an operating People's Forum is likely to do for public opinion some years in the future, on one issue — if that one is not strongly affected by other issues. If Deliberative Polls or other devices of limited scope are deployed carefully for this forecasting function, they might produce effective publicity for the People's Forum, helping it to attract more voters, to generate more public de-

liberation and to exert more political influence. Such deliberative mini-publics (which are statistically reliable samples of the population) could also assist a People's Forum by providing local, intensive sites of deliberation that contribute something to the broader development of public opinion, adding a little to the wisdom registered by the Forum. In return, People's Forums would assist the operation of such mini-publics by presenting state, national or global expressions of influential public opinion that they might be able to contribute to. Saward (2001) has proposed that cooperation between direct and deliberative democratic devices would improve democracy and Smith (2005, 112) observes that if 'different innovations are able to increase and deepen citizen participation in different ways, then the creative and imaginative combination or sequencing of democratic innovations has the potential to improve the effectiveness of citizen involvement in decision-making processes'. Political scientist Carolyn Hendriks (2006, 499, 502–3) sees this as a necessity for deliberative devices, because 'unless a micro forum is closely connected to its macro discursive setting, then it risks drowning in a sea of other public conversations.' She therefore advocates an 'integrated system of public deliberation' in which 'structured deliberative arenas work together with some of the more unconstrained, informal modes of deliberation operating in civil society'. As the People's Forum has the potential to encourage very large numbers of people to simultaneously deliberate a large number of fundamental issues it may provide the basis of such an integrated system.

6.5.1 The People's Forum compared with principles for deliberative democracy and public management

As the People's Forum is a deliberative design, criteria for ensuring public deliberation in democratic government should help to indicate the Forum's potential to perform. Political scientist Archon Fung and sociologist Erik Olin Wright (2003) have proposed such criteria in the form of principles and 'design properties' of 'Empowered Participatory Governance' (EPG). Their first

principle is a focus on practical problems and concrete concerns of society at local levels. The People's Forum has this focus but only in an indirect way as it is designed for systemic treatment, which means attending to fundamental causes of problems. The other two principles of EPG are more easily recognized in the design of the Forum and they call for deliberative democracy. They are: bottom-up participation and the deliberative generation of solutions. In addition to these three principles, the People's Forum broadly follows the three 'design properties' of EPG. The first of these, devolution of power, would not be to local bodies as in EPG, but would go further, to citizens. The second design property, centralized supervision and coordination, is basic to the Forum as this is what its managers would do. The third, a 'state-centered' approach, to 'colonize state power and transform formal governance institutions' (Fung and Wright 2003, 22) is a crucial feature of the People's Forum, for if it proved effective its popular acceptance would urge the state to enact the policy trends that evolve in its poll results.

Peter Levine, Archon Fung and John Gastil (2005, 273–74) have observed that within the community of political theorists advocating deliberative innovations for democracy, there appears to be broad agreement that any such device should:

1. have realistic expectations of political influence;
2. include key stakeholders and publics in deliberations;
3. foster informed, conscientious discussion working towards common ground;
4. use neutral, professional staff to help participants through a fair agenda;
5. earn broad public support for its recommendations;
6. be sustainable .

They also note (Levine et al. 2005, 274–77) that full consensus is often not possible but benefits flow from trying to develop it; that organization is vital; and that scale is important, i.e. scaling 'out' to reach as much of the public as possible as well as scaling

'up' to address concerns at strategic levels, such as state, national and global. Levine, Fung and Gastil (2005, 238) stress

> the importance of an open-minded, ongoing discovery of one another's possibly changing values and interests, which we call dynamic updating … [P]articipants in productive deliberation should continually and consciously update their understandings of common and conflicting interests as the process evolves.

The People's Forum appears to address all of these concerns to some degree. The specification of neutral, professional staff is met, not by providing facilitators and expert advice on issues for panels of citizens, but by having the Forum's polls administered by professionally qualified staff who may consult with specialists on issues and on the content of the ballot paper, especially on the selection and description of issues, the selection of questions and the flagging of connections between different issues and questions.

Journalism scholar David Ryfe (2005, 59, 57, 63–64) observes that deliberation by citizens is episodic, difficult and tentative; that it is driven by feelings of accountability, by high stakes and by diversity of views; and also that it is facilitated by rules, leadership and learning by deliberating with others who are skilled at it. The Forum appears to accommodate or use most of these responses. Its facilitation of deliberation by rules, by leadership, and by deliberating with those who have such skills is attempted by the presentation of a well-designed ballot paper. Elizabeth Theiss-Morse and John Hibbing (2005, 243) emphasize that face-to-face deliberation is difficult for the general public, mainly because many citizens are uncomfortable talking about policy, lack interest in politics and are busy doing other things that seem personally more relevant to them. They make this observation from numerous focus groups on politics that they have conducted around the US and from 'a careful review of the empirical evidence [which] suggests that many people lack the motivation to engage in civic life generally and politics specifically … joining groups is not a way of embracing politics but a

way of avoiding politics' (Theiss-Morse and Hibbing 2005, 244). The People's Forum is designed to cope with this reluctance by not relying on meetings of citizens; by utilizing a poll to provide incentives to think about issues; and by designing the ballot paper to facilitate this.

Legal scholar and ex-chief of the Obama Administration's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Cass Sunstein (2002), has expressed concern that a tendency for people to discuss issues in like-minded groups or 'enclaves' creates extreme views. He notes that the individualization facilitated by wealth and technology divides communities because it helps people to associate with those who have similar views. For example, political blogs can create partisan communities who demonize each other. To try to prevent this, Sunstein (2002, 188, 195) suggests that the

> trick is to produce an institutional design that will increase the likelihood that deliberation will lead in sensible directions, so that any polarization, if it occurs, will be a result of learning, rather than group dynamics … It is desirable to create spaces for enclave deliberation without insulating enclave members from those with opposing views, and without insulating those outside the enclave from the views of those within it.

The People's Forum would work against such insulation by publicizing poll results that show not only the differing views of citizens but some of their reasons for these differences. This would invite the public to debate those reasons and deliberate on them, so that people either get closer to consensus or understand their differences better, which may help them to eventually agree that the majority should prevail. For more on polarization and how the Forum would tackle it, see E13 in §7.2.2.

A potential problem for any system of governance is the probability that incentive compatible devices (ICDs) will impair the cooperative dispositions of citizens (Orbell et al. 2004). ICDs are instruments such as laws or tax schemes that align the self-interest of the individual with the interest of the group. As

the framing of choices by these devices obviates the need for citizens to invoke ethical concerns about public goods, these concerns may atrophy or their development may be neglected (Frohlich and Oppenheimer 1996). This makes the fostering of ethical individual responsibility and the improvement of collective welfare difficult to combine in formal institutions (Frohlich and Oppenheimer 2003). Democratic institutions should therefore not rely exclusively on ICDs. The People's Forum should not encounter this problem because it invites citizens to maintain and develop their social responsibility by involving them in devising and choosing ICDs. They would do this by contributing to the compilation of the ballot paper and by using the Forum's polls to express themselves and to hear each other.

Brian Head and John Alford (2008) report that research and practical experience in public management suggests that the social complexity of 'wicked' problems requires that they be managed by wide-scale collaboration. They recommend that this be done with systems thinking that has an outcomes focus and also by 'adaptive leadership'. Leadership scholar Ronald Heifetz (cited in Head and Alford 2008, 20–21) has described this as a 'mobilizing of adaptive work' in which the public manager

> leads organizational members and/or stakeholders *themselves* in doing the collective work of identifying the problem and developing ways to deal with it. In effect, those who are led are asked to perform the shared leadership role of setting a direction (emphasis in original).

So those who are led are asked to lead, by 'setting a direction'. This is the remedy suggested for democracies by the triple dysfunction hypothesis: that the people should become active, competent directors. The People's Forum is designed to assist them to do this by facilitating their collaborative communication. Head and Alford specify that such institutions must build trust and commitment in stakeholders and other parties: the Forum may do this by being transparent, by being vulnerable to rejection by citizens and by making the execution of its policy

recommendations contingent on a general level of acceptance, as discussed below in §7.2.9.

6.5.2 The People's Forum compared with other proposed deliberative designs

The People's Forum is now compared with designs that are similar in purpose, as they are intended to develop public policy across the large scale of liberal democratic polities, mostly by means of enlightened understanding by citizens. As noted previously and discussed below in §9.1, many more deliberative devices have much merit, but as they do not aim for transferability to large scale they are not comparable with the Forum.

The comparison given below starts with descriptions of three previously proposed designs. Each description ends with an assessment of that design's apparent capacities to provide the goods defined above in §6.2. In these assessments, suggested ratings of these capacities are given in brackets after the name of each good. As was done for the People's Forum in Table 6.1 (p. 287), these ratings are on a scale of 0 (cannot provide that good) to 5 (very effective in providing that good). Of course, readers may give ratings that differ from those allocated here, according to their judgements of the likely effectiveness of the design in question. As emphasised above in §6.2.4 each of these ratings is the extent to which the institution is assessed to contribute a good to government, not the extent to which the institution generates that good for those who directly participate in the institution. A preliminary comparison of these three designs and the People's Forum is given in Table 6.2 (p. 312). This comparison is then expanded with observations on five more design proposals.

6.5.2.1 The Popular Branch

The Popular Branch was proposed by legal scholar Ethan Leib (2004) as a mini-public that would enhance the representativeness of the US federal government and facilitate its policy development. This institution would comprise 525 citizens compulsorily selected as a stratified random sample of all those US citizens

who are eligible to vote, and it would work in one location as 35 juries, each with 15 members also selected as stratified random samples (Leib 2004, 23) and which compare their deliberations in plenary sessions. The Popular Branch would consider issues nominated by citizen-initiated referendums (CIR) that achieved a response of at least ten per cent of US voters. Each issue would be deliberated for a few days with facilitation similar to that of the Deliberative Poll, including the presentation of balanced information on the issue being dealt with. The findings of the Branch would become law, so its establishment would require amending the US Constitution.

It would appear that as the Popular Branch deals with one issue at a time, it may be limited to producing findings at rates that may be much slower than one issue a week, depending on the complexity of the issue. This may be a bottleneck and could produce flawed conclusions by deliberating some issues before fully considering others that are strongly related to them. Another problem is the need for political will to establish and maintain the Branch. Leib (2004, 135) hoped that this would develop through citizens and politicians experiencing events such as Deliberative Polls, but he concedes 'it is hard to expect politicians, who often feel they don't have enough power, to delegate it back to the people'.

INSTITUTIONAL GOODS. As the structured deliberation of the Popular Branch means that only one issue can be deliberated at a time, the agenda of issues to be deliberated in a given period, say a year, is a matter of public contention that calls for popular control, so CIR is to be used to select the issues to be treated. This limits *efficiency* (3) as CIR is very expensive: It now costs more than US$1 million to place a measure on a CIR ballot in California (Lupia and Matsusaka 2004). Leib's design is based on the assumption that strictly representative samples deliberating in a structured manner are essential for enhancing democracy, a view that has also been expressed by political scientists James Fishkin and Cynthia Farrar (2005, 77): 'The most significant challenge ahead is to find ways to adapt, institutionalize, and

take the deliberative poll to scale while preserving its defining elements.' These elements include a large random sample of citizens and their systematic exposure to different points of view.

Random sampling creates a difficulty with *transparency* (2) that may produce low transferability to democratic polities: the people may not have faith in deliberations from which the vast majority of them are excluded. Deliberation must take place at lower as well as at elite levels in order to develop not only laws and policies, but the attitudes and opinions that are needed to sustain them (G. Smith 2003, 86). If fundamental changes in law and policy are to be supported over the long run by citizens, then those who choose to take an interest must be able to understand these changes and have an opportunity to influence them. John Parkinson has noted this legitimacy problem in schemes such as Leib's and calls for

> us to loosen the tight institutional restrictions some early theorists had inadvertently imposed on deliberative designs, allowing us to think about legitimacy as being created across multiple deliberative moments in a wider deliberative system … involving many more people in deliberative democracy than any one micro-deliberative process could ever manage, even though not all of them can deliberate in the technical sense. (Parkinson 2006, 174)

Another problem for transferability is a lack of *feasibility* (1) of introduction that arises from the need for political will to initiate and run the Popular Branch. Transferability to *type of political system* (4) is anticipated to be high as some form of it should be applicable to any liberal democratic culture.

The Branch's restriction to handling one issue at a time is likely to cripple transferability to fundamental, *strategic issues* (1), because issues that are strongly related may be overlooked. The root causes of many problems with public goods will be neglected through attention to symptoms that are more apparent or urgent and thereby produce good responses to CIR. The selection of agenda items by CIR does not guarantee enough public deliberation on the selection and sequencing of items on the

agenda. On some strategic issues, competent policy may depend on the adjustment of popular values and priorities. At the very least this requires public deliberation, so the exclusion of citizens by the sampling that selects the members of the Branch will impede or block progress. The final transferability good is applicability to *large-scale* (4) national government, which is high as the Popular Branch is specifically designed for this purpose.

Political equality goods. The random sampling of the Popular Branch provides virtually no extra opportunities for all citizens to *communicate their views to each other* (1) on those matters it deals with. It also excludes opportunities for all citizens to *vote on policy* (0). In addition to deficits in efficiency and transferability, another effect of the financial cost of CIR would be to limit opportunities for popular *control of the agenda* (2). *Inclusion* (4) of all socioeconomic, ethnic, cultural and other groups should be fairly well achieved by the stratification of the random sample.

Governmental goods. Opportunities for all citizens to gain an *enlightened understanding* (1) of the issues being dealt with are largely absent in the Branch's process. It appears likely that the special interests who manipulate the actions of elected representatives could also influence the politics of randomly selected representatives. As both types of representative are a very small fraction of the electorate, special interest operatives will be able to exert some influence on how they vote and who attains leadership positions within their assemblies. As journalist Jonathan Rauch (cited in Snider 2007, 4) observes, random sample panels 'won't be insulated from politics but will be insulated from accountability.'

The governmental good of the *political prevalence of enlightened understanding* (2) would only be provided by the Popular Branch to a very limited degree. Although the publication of the considered verdicts of the Branch may give a little support and political influence to the views of well-informed citizens, the likely poor transferability of the Branch to strategic issues may

confuse any such support and influence on these fundamentals of public policy.

6.5.2.2 The People's House

Political scientist Kevin O'Leary (2006) proposes a deliberative improvement of American national government through a much larger sample of 435 deliberating groups called local citizen assemblies, each of which has 100 randomly selected citizens who choose to accept the role. Members are limited to two-year terms and each assembly would represent a congressional ward in addition to its current representation by a member of the House of Representatives. Local citizen assemblies would conduct their business face-to-face, two or three evenings a month and they would be linked by internet, so that together they form a decentralized national 'Assembly' of 43,500 delegates. In the first stage of its establishment, as envisaged by O'Leary, this Assembly would not have formal power, but its deliberations and votes could inform Congress and the president. The agenda for the Assembly would be set by a national steering committee of 50 people randomly selected for a two-year term from 435 candidates, each of whom is nominated from each of the 435 citizen assemblies. Agenda items would be selected from the Congressional legislative program, with a focus on bills passed either by the House of Representatives or by the Senate and awaiting ratification by the other. As the whole national Assembly would have to deal with each legislative proposal at the same time, it would deal with a very restricted number of these each year.

Stage two of O'Leary's proposal is the People's House, which is the national Assembly after it is empowered by constitutional amendment to help set the legislative agenda and to have the capacity to veto bills passed by the House of Representatives or the Senate. The House of Representatives and the Senate could each override a People's House veto with a 60 per cent vote. The People's House would also have the 'gate-opening' power

> to force a floor vote on certain bills heretofore stuck in committee and destined to die. Other positive powers include the authority to

> initiate bills in either the House or the Senate, the power to offer amendments to bills under consideration on the floor of the House or the Senate, the ability to pass formal instructions to individual representatives, and the right to draft at-large resolutions addressed to the House of Representatives or the Senate as a whole. (O'Leary 2006, 8)

The members of the citizen assemblies would receive $100 per month for their contributions and the 50 members of the steering committee would each be paid $75,000 per annum as their work would be a demanding and crucial job that may require full time commitment (O'Leary 2006, 159). The latter salary would help 'to assure the integrity and honesty of these delegates when they are the focus of lobbying efforts by various interest groups' (O'Leary 2006, 249n32). These remunerations total US$55,950,000 and this must be increased to more than US$60 million by the cost of support, including that of 25 technical and administrative staff.

O'Leary (2006, 113–26) summarizes the mission of the People's House as giving a voice to the public, curbing the excessive influence of special interests, providing the public with a mechanism for breaking legislative deadlock and producing a fairer aggregation of electors' preferences. Although the People's House is designed as an addition to the US system, in some similar form it may be adaptable to other democracies, including parliamentary types and those with proportional representation from multimember electorates.

INSTITUTIONAL GOODS. The People's House design provides moderate *efficiency* (3) in that its total financial cost of over US$60 million per annum is spread among all citizens (O'Leary 2006, 159). It may lose some efficiency by frustrating legislators, as discussed below under governmental goods. However, as noted there this loss may produce a governmental good.

Transferability to democratic political systems will be limited by the lack of *transparency* (3) to all citizens that arises from the random sample structure, but this may be compensated to

some extent by the large number of representatives, making them fairly accessible to citizens. Another limitation for transferability is that the *feasibility of introduction* (2) of the People's House depends on the development of the political will to create the legislation to establish the Assembly and then to amend the Constitution to transform it into the House. O'Leary (2006, 130–32) suggests that this problem could be overcome by introducing the system in just a few states, to start to develop a national political will for the Assembly. But even an introduction on this scale requires political will that may not be possible to generate (Gastil 2007, 646). Another difficulty for *feasibility of introduction* is that each prospective member of the national Assembly / People's House is unlikely to have the incentive to 'give up a good portion of their lives to seriously grapple with public policy issues' (Snider 2007, 4) when they are only paid $100 per month and are merely one voice among 43,500, which in turn is a body that would only have some influence on legislation.

Transferability in respect of *strategic issues* (2) may be restricted because the Assembly/People's House cannot simultaneously deal in a comprehensive manner with a multitude of issues. This is likely to cause crucial interconnections between issues to be neglected, including examinations by citizens of their own values and priorities. The national steering committee can only place on the agenda those issues that all 435 local citizen assemblies could consider as a national Assembly or as a People's House in a period of a few months or a year, so a very restricted number of issues will be attended to annually. The tendency of the People's House to focus on the current legislative program of Congress reinforces this effect. Furthermore, the random sampling of the House will do little to facilitate deliberation across the demos. The People's House may therefore be rather blinkered, disjointed and inflexible in its deliberations. Symptoms of issues may be attended to while fundamental causes are ignored. Any such confusion of priorities in deliberation may limit the development of public opinion and culture, blocking the enactment of reforms that could work. This effect of random sampling is also noted below as producing a deficit

in the governmental good of opportunities for citizens to gain enlightened understanding. In contrast to this deficit, however, transferability to *large-scale* (4) national governments in various liberal democratic *political systems* (4) appears quite practicable.

Political equality goods. The Assembly/People's House would provide some increased opportunity for all citizens to *communicate their views to each other* (3) because the very large sample of 43,500 would attract public attention to their deliberations. This large number of representatives would also give citizens more access to these political agents, which should motivate citizens to communicate their views on policy, to both representatives and other citizens. Opportunities for all citizens to *vote on policy* (0) are not provided by this design. Opportunities for all citizens to *control the agenda* (2) are limited as their input must pass through the People's House and then through the 50-member National Steering Committee, which is largely restricted to helping Congress set the agenda. *Full inclusion* (4) of social groups should be achieved by the very large sample.

Governmental goods. As noted above, because the Assembly / People's House design does not invite all electors to actively participate, it is unlikely to encourage many citizens to think more effectively about issues. This deficit of opportunities for developing *enlightened understanding* (2) is likely to mean that the quality of the legislation and public policy that elected politicians can produce with the assistance of the Assembly / People's House is somewhat limited by a lack of mass public support. The same defect is predicted above for the Popular Branch, but the People's House should not perform as badly in this respect due to its much more widespread presence in the community. Even so, the 43,500 members of the People's House may be limited enough in numbers to enable special interest operatives to distort or prevent the development of enlightened understanding (Rauch, cited in Snider 2007, 4).

Any disconnect between the deliberated views of the People's House and mass public opinion may cause the veto power of the

People's House to frustrate legislators in their role of representing mass opinion. This frustration may be wearing for legislators, despite their ability to overrule the People's House with a 60 per cent supermajority vote, but these political struggles — arising from what might seem to be inefficient design — may cultivate two governmental goods. The first is some stimulation of public debate and education about the issues involved, which is taken into account by the rating of 2 suggested above for *enlightened understanding.* The second governmental good is some demonstration to citizens that their politicians should defer to the deliberations of the People's House because it represents public interests more competently than the mass of citizens can manage via the political influence of their often disengaged and thus often ill-informed public opinion. This limited governmental good is a slight tendency for the People's House to produce *political prevalence of enlightened understanding* (2).

6.5.2.3 Pyramidal democracy

In contrast to the addition of mini-publics to current representative systems by the Popular Branch and the People's House, a quite radical change has been suggested independently by political scientist Stephen R. Shalom (2005; 2008) and mathematician Marcus Pivato (2009). Pivato calls this system pyramidal democracy and points out that a three-tier approximation to it is currently used for participatory budgeting in many cities in Brazil. He notes that it is not a new idea, having been discussed as early as the seventeenth century.

Pyramidal democracy is intended to completely replace current democratic provincial and national governments with several tiers of popular assemblies in which each tier is composed of representatives from the tier below. All citizens in a nation are invited to attend an assembly or 'node' (Pivato 2009) in the primary tier and each of these nodes would elect one member to represent it at similar-sized nodes in the second tier, which would likewise elect representatives to nodes in the third tier and so on, up to one supreme node that constitutes the top tier. This node performs the ultimate legislative and executive func-

tions and would be much larger than the lower nodes, having 100 members. Shalom envisages that the total pyramid of 'nested councils' would have 25–50 citizens in each council or node, while Pivato's preference is for a minimum of seven and a maximum of ten citizens in each. These size restrictions are intended to facilitate interpersonal deliberation (whether face-to-face or online) but large size would minimize the number of tiers. The mathematics of this system is that seven tiers (with the first or primary tier comprising the nodes at the base) could serve a nation of 100 million citizens, if all nodes comprised 10 citizens or representatives (except that at the top, which would have 100 members) even if there were no age or other restrictions on eligibility to participate. Similarly, nine such tiers could represent ten billion people. If only one person in six were interested in participating in the primary tier, then eight tiers might govern the current population of the planet in this way.

Pyramidal democracy offers face-to-face or online deliberative participation to all citizens at the primary level and for many citizens at higher levels. Each representative is accountable to the node she represents, which can replace her at any time by electing another. Pivato specifies that node membership would be voluntary, with citizens choosing to enter a particular node according to the types of issues in which they are interested, whereas Shalom envisages geographical proximity as the determinant, to enable face-to-face deliberation. Node members would be free to choose whether to accept a new member, to expel a current member and to replace their representative in the tier above them. The operation of nodes on the basis of ideological affinity or interest in particular types of issues would be facilitated by deliberation conducted live online and by email, blogs or other types of 'virtual forum'. Representatives in the upper tiers will have to handle many and varied issues so their work would be full time, requiring commensurate payment. These people will be very competent as their ascent through each tier will be based on personal assessments of their dedication and ability by fellow members of the nodes they have worked in. Pivato points out that this makes pyramidal democracy meri-

tocratic, as well as being deliberative and accountable to all citizens via the chain of communication in which representatives report back to the nodes they represent. He also points out the possibility that 'cascades' of representative replacements or defections could propagate up the pyramid, causing it to become unstable or collapse, but he shows that this could be prevented by constitutional provisions of mandatory waiting periods for replacing representatives, for allowing new ones to start voting, for allowing them to defect, for allowing defectors to start voting in new nodes and for nodes that have less than the minimum number of members to regain their minimum size.

Shalom's design, which he calls ParPolity, uses the geographical basis of the membership of nodes to provide a pyramid that covers local and provincial affairs in its lower tiers and national or wider affairs in its upper levels. He recommends a 'High Council Court' that would prevent majority decisions unjustifiably harming minorities. This would be formed by randomly selecting 41 citizens for staggered two year terms. A system of Lesser Council Courts for each tier above the primary level would be needed to judge whether an issue should be decided at a higher level or not. As Pivato's concept is for nodes to form around types of issue, his version may require separate pyramids for local, state (provincial), national and global issues. Attending more than one of these pyramids might make the citizen's task too onerous or unfocused so they may choose to specialize in just one level of government. Coordination of policies between these levels and pyramids may cause problems. With Shalom's version, citizens interested in the broader policy of higher level tiers may find it difficult to start deliberating such national or global policy in primary level nodes as these could be focused on local issues. While Shalom's system appears confusing for citizens, Pivato's may also overload them with the problems of coordinating the policy work of different pyramids.

Pyramidal democracy needs a clearer formulation and the following assessment is primarily an attempt to evaluate Pivato's version. The ratings given below for the goods of pyramidal democracy are therefore especially questionable.

INSTITUTIONAL GOODS. Pyramidal democracy will lack *efficiency* (3) by demanding much time from citizens, but this problem may be alleviated to some extent by this system eliminating the expense of the formal institutions of electoral democracy, together with the work of party members (such as supporting electoral campaigns) and advisors for politicians. *Efficiency* may be assisted by the large numbers of enquiring and deliberating citizens increasing the demand for information that is relevant and accurate. This may convert professional lobbying from spin and trading favours to providing reliable information for node members and the general public.

Pivato's system may have a deficit of transferability to democracies if its long chains of responsibility impair *transparency* (2) for citizens at the bottoms of pyramids. These chains may be further complicated by the need to coordinate policy between several pyramids that focus on different spatial scales of jurisdiction, from local to national and global, and also on different temporal levels of policy, from operational to strategic. Low *feasibility of introduction* (1) is another transferability problem because the introduction of pyramidal democracy appears to require a very strong demand across the community that would generate the political will to introduce it as an official system that could replace the current legislature of elected representatives. Pivato suggests that this popular demand may be developed by implementing the pyramidal system in an incremental, experimental manner that should educate citizens about its potential and prevent failure of governance at large scales by uncovering flaws before the pyramid is applied to regional or national government. He sees the political will for pyramidal democracy as starting in 'micropolities' such as student groups, private clubs and professional associations. However, such groups show no sign of wanting the complexity of the chains of representation of multi-tiered pyramids. Perhaps the narrow focus of their interests makes this not only unnecessary, but an encumbrance.

Another transferability problem is that their long chains of responsibility may prevent pyramids from considering enough policy problems in a given period to enable them to be com-

petent on *strategic issues* (1). This could be a major flaw, for as pointed out above, many issues are interrelated and should therefore be deliberated in a coordinated manner, such as simultaneously, or in a specific sequence and also with feedback that helps citizens to update their thinking as their opinions on related issues are developed. In order to deliberate strategic issues, nodes may have to follow an agenda that applies to a whole pyramid and possibly across more than one pyramid. This would enable upper-tier nodes to introduce topics to all lower tiers when upper-level deliberations reveal needs for the grassroots to consider questions they have overlooked, such as citizens having to pay more taxes or change other expectations in order to enable the implementation of new policy that may be identified and favoured by an upper tier or by one pyramid. This problem of the transferability of a pyramidal system to *strategic issues* is discussed further in the next section (§6.5.2.4), which analyses a proposal by the Nicolas Berggruen Institute on Governance. Although the relatively simple three-tiered pyramid that was developed for participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil, works well, it is a tool for operational rather than strategic policy, being applied to annual budgets.

Pyramidal democracy is potentially transferable to *large-scale* (5) national, multinational (and potentially global) liberal democratic *political systems* (4). However, it seems questionable whether communication through long chains of delegation and between pyramids can produce good accountability, and this is registered above in the low transparency rating.

Political equality goods. Pyramidal democracy would give citizens more opportunity to *communicate their views* (3) to other citizens across the polity than electoral democratic systems. This is due to the possibility of communication within nodes, between tiers and then across tiers (between the nodes in a tier) as representatives report views up to the next one and then back down to nodes in lower tiers for deliberation. These effects would be supported by nodes in upper tiers analysing and publicizing policy problems, because these groups would

be professionally remunerated and would have the time and facilities to do this. However, communication between pyramids might confuse citizens with too much information.

Citizens have restricted opportunity to *vote on policy* (3), as voting for all citizens is limited to their participation in either a primary level node or a higher tier node as a representative. Representatives can only vote in the node in which they represent a lower tier node: they cannot vote in the node they represent. The long chains of responsibility may create difficulties for *popular control of the agenda* (3). Voluntary membership of nodes, together with the obligation to attend meetings, may prevent *full inclusion* (3) of all socioeconomic and other groups, despite the freedom of each node to form around interests that its members have in common. Experience with participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre indicates that inclusion will not be achieved in each pyramid, as nodes that deliberate strategic or high level jurisdiction issues will tend to be dominated by politically active middle-class citizens (G. Smith 2009, 69–70).

Governmental goods. Membership of nodes may provide opportunities for all citizens to gain *enlightened understanding* (3) that are limited by the small size of these groups. Polarization is likely when nodes form around common interests. This may happen in the lower tiers and produce standoffs in upper tiers so their members vote rather than deliberate. Pivato (2009, 19) anticipates that such clashes of views would counter polarization as representatives report back to their nodes in subordinate tiers, but this reciprocating process may be too time-consuming and indirect for much educational effect and could discourage participation. Nodes at the lower levels may be too short-lived or changeable in their membership to be able to make well-considered judgements and to be consistent in their decisions. This could make it difficult for higher-tier members to represent lower tiers. The potential for very large numbers of participants assists *enlightened understanding* because it makes the manipulation of public opinion by special interests potentially very expensive and increases the probability that such corruption will

be exposed to public censure by the many citizens that are trying to contribute constructively as members of nodes.

The meritocratic function of pyramidal democracy may produce *political prevalence of enlightened understanding* (4). The likely problem of lack of transferability to *strategic issues* may limit the utility of this meritocracy by limiting its enlightenment, but this is registered by the low rating given to transferability to *strategic issues*.

6.5.2.4 Comparing the four designs and observations on five more

The ratings that have been suggested above for anticipated provisions of goods, together with those suggested for the People's Forum in Table 6.1, are compared in Table 6.2. As indicated in §6.2.4, these ratings and also the evaluative framework into which they are entered are not intended to be the last word, but are presented for consideration, which may elicit alteration or endorsement of the ratings, or allocation of different weights to each one, or alteration of the framework itself. One rating that might need closer attention is the institutional good of transferability to *political system*. For simplicity, the system considered here for this comparison is 'liberal democracy', which ignores the different political, social, economic and cultural characteristics of each type of liberal democracy. If the comparison between institutional designs was to be made for their suitability for, let us say, Australia, then the characteristics of that liberal democracy should be considered in choosing the rating for transferability to political system for each design. Another point to note here is that Table 6.2 gives two sets of total scores — a complete one and another that has the ratings for *feasibility of introduction* omitted in order to compare the potentials of the four designs without the complication of also considering whether they could actually be introduced into the political system that is being considered.

The People's Forum ranks here as the most promising of these designs, with a total score of 44 that also includes the highest rating for *feasibility of introduction* (3). Another feature of this

Types of goods	Anticipated provisions of goods* (0 = no provision, 5 = very effective provision)			
	Popular branch *Added to electoral democracy* *Compulsory random sample*	**People's House** *Added to electoral democracy* *Voluntary random sample*	**Pyramidal democracy** *Replacing electoral democracy* *Self-selection open to all citizens*	**People's Forum**** *Added to electoral democracy* *Self-selection open to all citizens*
Institutional				
Efficiency of institution	3	3	3	4
Transferability of institution				
To political system (lib. dem.)	*4*	*4*	*4*	*4*
To type of issue (strategic)	*1*	*2*	*1*	*5*
To scale of polity (large)	*4*	*4*	*5*	*5*
Transparency	*2*	*3*	*2*	*4*
Feasibility of introduction	*1*	*2*	*1*	*3*
Polical Equality				
Communication	1	3	3	4
Voting	0	0	3	3
Agenda control	2	2	3	4
Full inclusion	4	4	3	2
Governmental				
Enlightened understanding	1	2	3	2
Political prevalence of en. un.	2	2	4	4
Total w/o feasibility of int.	**24**	**29**	**34**	**41**
Total goods	**25**	**31**	**35**	**44**

Table 6.2. A comparison of goods anticipated from four institutional designs. * The 'goods' in this table are the capacities of institutions to facilitate large-scale government on strategic issues in liberal democratic political systems. Differences in the importance of types of goods are not identified (they are not weighted). The capacity of each institutional design to produce each good is subjectively assessed on a scale of 0-5 in the descriptions of these designs in this chapter (§6.3 and §6.5.2).
** For the ratings of goods anticipated from the People's Forum, see Table 6.1

assessment is that the designs based on self-selected participation (pyramidal democracy and the People's Forum), which are thereby open to participation by all citizens, have the highest total scores. The other two designs have restricted participation because they employ random samples, which tend to produce lower capabilities in political equality and governmental goods.

We now consider five more designs that might be comparable with the four dealt with above because they also have a scale of application that might facilitate the development of strategic policy for liberal democratic governments. These systems are: sortition, Intelligent Governance, the National Public Policy Conferences of Brazil, the Council of Citizens and the 'Cincinnati' system. Sortition is the appointment of political representatives by random selection from the populace (instead of by election, as discussed in, for example, Burnheim 1985 and Burnheim 2016). This system could allow constructive face-to-face deliberation by representatives because the absence of electoral pressures would free them for frank exchanges of views and information. However, this potential for deliberation at the top may be distorted by special interests being able to manipulate representatives because of their limited numbers, a problem that would also occur with the random sampling of the Popular Branch and the People's House. Furthermore, as intensive deliberation would largely be confined to representatives in these random sample systems, they may not generate much enlightened understanding in citizens at large. As sortition systems would replace electorally representative systems of government, their establishment would be stymied by a lack of political will for this in elected representatives. Sortition therefore has a low *feasibility of introduction* that makes it a currently impractical prospect and partly for this reason it is omitted from Table 6.2. If the ratings total for goods, excluding *feasibility of introduction,* that is assessed for sortition indicates it should be trialled as a full-scale political system, then this may require another innovation with higher *feasibility of introduction* to be implemented first, in order to establish a new type of elected government that is more capable of considering whether it should replace itself

with randomly selected representatives. The selection of this preliminary innovation might utilize the comparative framework employed in Table 6.2.

Intelligent Governance (IG) has been proposed by Nicolas Berggruen and Nathan Gardels (2013). This ingenious but complex proposal is not added to the comparison of four designs in Table 6.2 because it is primarily based on pyramidal democracy and thus appears likely to generate goods largely as assessed for that system in §6.5.2.3. In the example of IG given by Berggruen and Gardels, the peak of the pyramid would be a lower house of 100 representatives that is likely to be relatively free of the problems that are generated or exacerbated by party allegiance, such as antagonism, dogmatism, deception and governmental deadlock. An executive, or head of government, is elected by the lower house and he or she nominates a four-member collective head of state — the Quadrumvirate — for confirmation by the lower house. The executive, the Quadrumvirate and the lower house jointly appoint forty distinguished or otherwise well-qualified members of an upper house of fifty, the other ten being selected from the citizenry by sortition in order to counterbalance the expertise of the appointed forty with the views of the general public. These various organs of government interact with several veto and supermajority rules. For example, the Quadrumvirate could call mandatory-voting referendums in which a 60% supermajority would bind the government to implement the result.

IG is intended to produce a strong element of meritocracy as it is structured to make citizens more accountable to the common good, representatives more accountable to citizens and to facilitate deliberation by these principals and agents. However, the complexity of the system may obstruct their accountability and deliberation. For example, public deliberation is expected to be encouraged by the proportional representation employed at the base of the pyramid, in which local districts of 2,000 constituents each use STV (the single transferable vote) to elect ten delegates to form a council that represents them. This should enable minority interests that are as small as a tenth of the electorate

to have a representative explaining their views in most of the ten member councils at the first or local level. However, these minority views are liable to be overlooked as representation proceeds up the pyramid, so that the proportional representation achieved at the base may be lost at the apex. In Berggruen and Gardels' example of a government for a nation of eighty million people, local councils elect one of their ten members to represent them in a twenty-member council at the regional level, which in turn elects one of its members to represent it in a twenty-member council at the provincial level, where one hundred provinces each elect a member to a hundred-member lower house of the parliament/legislature. At each stage of this pyramidal representation, minority views will tend to be supplanted by mainstream attitudes. At the local level, one or two members of a local council may be quite unable to convert the other nine or eight members to minority views that pose radical, or subtle, or complex challenges to existing assumptions and world views. For example they would find it extremely difficult to promulgate (within their local council) the anti-growth or steady-state economy propositions discussed in Chapter 5, or the suggestions in Chapter 4 of providing employment by sharing it rather than by growth (§4.2.1) and of limiting national population to an optimal carrying capacity (§4.2.3). To introduce such strategic issues they would need an expert grasp of the arguments for and against their view, superb communication skills, an understanding of — and empathy for — conservative psychology and also (probably) the support of a social environment in which such paradigm change was being constructively discussed in the media. 'Expert grasp of the arguments' is likely to be lacking in advocates, whether they are progressive or conservative, as people often do not analyse their case effectively. They are usually motivated by emotions and then rationalize their cause with 'evidence' selected by confirmation bias (e.g. Haidt 2012; Kahneman 2011).

Strategic challenges to existing assumptions and habits of thinking are therefore unlikely to gain the understanding and support of local councils. If a few local councils in a region are

won over by such challenges and send a few motivated and articulate delegates to explain their unconventional views at their regional council they will face similar difficulties there, which may be even less surmountable as that council has twice as many members as a local council. In the improbable event that one or two regional councils send delegates with paradigm-changing views to their provincial council, they will strike the same problem there. The odds therefore seem to be heavily against the provinces sending delegates representing such views all the way to the lower house. The national parliament may therefore work in ignorance of important minority views and thereby help to conceal them from the community at large. This could be a crucial problem as important calls for change are usually initiated by very small minorities, and if societies are to rapidly adapt and progress they need political systems that quickly and effectively expose such strategic ideas to public scrutiny. As the anthropologist Margaret Mead is reputed to have observed: 'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.' The political system should facilitate rather than obstruct that process, which means it should proportionally represent the various streams of political thought at the most visible and prominent levels, which are provincial and national legislatures. Rather than utilizing pyramidal democracy, such representation might be better pursued by electing members of parliament or congress from multimember electorates via proportional representation such as STV. Sortition might also do this if it selects a legislature that is large enough to include significant numbers of representatives with minority views.

It was noted above in §6.5.2.3 that the election by council members of one of their number to represent them at a council in the next level of a pyramid should produce the meritocratic effect of selecting representatives for high levels that are competent and public-minded. In addition, Berggruen and Gardels (2013, 111) explain that the 'reason for this indirect approach to electing a parliament/legislature through a pyramid structure is to remove the distance between the representative and rep-

resented at each level.' However, as just discussed, pyramidal representation may increase this distance — if it is thought of as 'policy distance' — because representation at all levels above the base in an IG pyramid is not proportional. Thus, instead of removing policy distance between represented and representative, this distance may increase up the pyramid, which will obstruct the development of *strategic* policy by neglecting potentially important innovations in policy.

Notwithstanding this potential for weakness, IG appears to be making some progress. It has raised considerable interest and preliminary moves are being made towards erecting some elements of its structure. Berggruen may be overcoming the low rating of 1 suggested in §6.5.2.3 for the *feasibility of introduction* of pyramidal systems with his financial resources, his ability to involve influential politicians, entrepreneurs and academics, and a judicious selection of three very prominently dysfunctional governance systems for the development and trial of IG. These three cases are the State of California, the European Union and the global group of twenty leading economies, the G20. Those cases are being tackled by committees that select institutional reforms from the IG template and then try to implement them. Starting with such prominent dysfunctions appears to be a good strategy for establishing IG, as it should give it the best chance of being operationalized and of demonstrating its capabilities to a global audience. If IG succeeds with these cases it may gain a reputation that invites its application to other failing forms of governance.

IG has a wider objective than PF as it aims to reform government structure at all levels, from base to apex. PF focuses only on the base — the opinions of citizens — and should therefore be able to help IG to function. At that level, the strategic focus of PF should provide a capacity to review policy paradigms. One possible example of this is that PF might be needed to generate the popular support within a polity that is required to establish IG in the first place. Another effect of these differing foci is that the IG objective of reforming all levels makes it more complex than PF. Citizens may therefore find PF easier to understand and em-

brace. Its more limited focus also positions PF to produce a simpler form of government than that specified by the IG template. This simplicity may prove crucial in making democracy work well, for it should maximize the transparency of incentives and lines of responsibility, which in turn should strengthen the accountability of representatives to citizens and of citizens to their common good. A hypothetical example of the potential for PF to produce simplicity, clarity and strength of operation is that its implementation in bicameral democracies might produce a review or guidance function that makes the upper house or senate superfluous and enables it to be abolished because PF is doing its job — and more. If that structural change was combined with election to the lower house by proportional representation from multimember electorates the result would be a unicameral parliamentary government with strong public participation, more deliberation by citizens and representatives, effective representation and accountability and a significant element of meritocracy. For this scenario it is notable that political scientist Arend Lijphart (2012, 279, 297) has found that parliamentary governments based on proportional representation produce 'consensus democracy', which provides significantly higher quality democracy than non-consensual types. To assess 'quality' Lijphart used the democracy index of the *Economist* Intelligence Unit and the Worldwide Governance Indicators. He observed that consensus democracy is promoted by coordinated or 'corporatist' interest group systems that utilize strong peak organisations and aim at compromise and concertation. It is arguable that, as PF would facilitate such coordination, compromise and concertation by sustaining public debate on crucial strategic issues, it should make democratic governments more consensual, even if they do not have proportional representation. PF may thereby act as a 'peak organisation' that improves government.

In addition to Brazil's participatory budgeting (see §6.5.2.3) that country also has another pyramidal process working successfully on national issues — the National Public Policy Conference (Pogrebinschi and Samuels 2014; Pogrebinschi 2012). The first of these was held in 1941, on public health, but only

in recent years have they become frequent, with 83 being held over the period 1992–2010 on a variety of subjects. The pyramidal structure of these conferences enables citizens and public officials to deliberate issues together and to deliver their policy recommendations to the national government. Although nonbinding, these recommendations have been found to make significant contributions to legislation and government policy. Each conference begins at the municipal level, with meetings in hundreds or thousands of cities simultaneously across the country, which are open to any citizen and develop ideas on policy for one issue. Representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs) and government agencies also participate. Each municipal conference selects a delegate to its state conference and these appoint delegates to the national conference. The rules typically require that a majority of voting delegates to both the state and national conferences come from CSOs. The largest NPPC was the 14th, on health in 2011, which had 600,000 participants. Between 2003 and 2011, about 7 million people took part in at least one of these events, making them by far the largest experiment with such practices in the world. The formal summoning of NPPCs is by presidential or ministerial decree, but the initiative usually comes from a collaboration of government officials and key CSO representatives. The NPPC system appears to be a considerable improvement in democratic government, but it has a narrow policy focus (on just one issue or type of issue at a time) that leaves much space for the People's Forum to work alongside it by dealing with the entire spectrum of strategic issues in a coordinated manner.

The chair of Common Good in New York, Philip K. Howard (2014, 168–70, 182–83), has proposed that nine people of 'high distinction' should serve five year renewable terms as a US 'Council of Citizens'. This would issue reports on the long-term implications of current policy and its members would be chosen 'by and from a Nominating Council composed of two nominees by each governor of a state.' The Council of Citizens would 'have no mandatory duties other than to nominate independent commissions to advise Congress on the rewriting of laws. Con-

gress shall provide funding adequate to support staff and shall provide an honorarium to each member of the council in an amount equal to the salary of a member of Congress.' Howard anticipates that the 'absence of any political ambition or obligation' by these councillors should give them credibility and that this would be heightened when most of them 'come together behind a cogent point of view'. Two problems with this proposal are: first, that getting the Council up and running depends on the existing political establishment wanting to do this; and second, that as it is not designed to foster public deliberation it may do little to help politicians adopt more enlightened views.

The 'Cincinnati' system has been proposed by two Australians, palaeontologist / environmental scientist Tim Flannery and entrepreneur/philanthropist Catriona Wallace (2015). They suggest that politics would address issues more honestly if political parties (which are organised around candidates seeking votes and funds for campaigning) were replaced by web-based chat rooms that help citizens debate issues and recognize those amongst them (called 'Cincinnati') who are worthy of election to parliament. Flannery and Wallace cite Podemos in Spain and DemocracyOS in Argentina as examples of such open-source, platform-first (rather than party-first) approaches to politics. The Cincinnati system does not depend on support from current political establishments, but it may require too much work from chat room participants and thereby fail to sustain engagement by enough citizens. This may mean not only that its *feasibility of introduction* is virtually zero but that its ability to keep operating is doubtful. Furthermore, as the agendas of the chat rooms are not organised by some publicly accountable entity, their work may be largely wasted by addressing superficialities instead of systematically tackling *strategic* aspects of public policy.

6.6 Perspectives on the promise of the People's Forum

The promising result for the People's Forum in Table 6.2 (p. 312) may (or may not) be exaggerated because its functions are more

closely inspected than the functions of the other three systems. From this or other perspectives, the reader might prefer to allocate different ratings with less optimistic views of the Forum and/or more optimistic views of the other contenders. However, an argument against such preferences is the possibility that the Forum performs well in Table 6.2 because of its two strategies for improving democratic government (those of helping mass public opinion to develop and of inviting the public to give political influence to that section of mass opinion that is most likely to be well-developed). Pyramidal democracy would also tend to execute these two strategies and ranks second here with a score of 35, whereas the designs of the lower-ranking Popular Branch and People's House are not strongly focused on those objectives, mainly because they employ random samples and thereby have less potential for public participation.

The second of the Forum's two strategies is very significant because, as discussed in §2.2.3, §2.2.4, §4.1 (8) and also later in Chapter 8, public disengagement and the tenacity of world views makes the first strategy (the development of mass public opinion) very slow to have much effect. Diana Mutz describes some of the disengagement as being caused by people wanting to avoid risking their relationships. This means that it

> is questionable whether conversation alone is the best route to exposing people to oppositional political views … Deliberative theorists … have not gone so far as to suggest in concrete terms how people might interact with one another in mixed company, and yet simultaneously pursue active lives as political citizens … Clearly not all citizens feel they can speak their minds freely without repercussions for their public or private lives. And yet the goal of reducing risks, both individual and collective, is an extremely valuable one that has yet to be incorporated into political theory or practical politics. (Mutz 2006, 144, 149, 151)

The design of both the People's Forum and pyramidal democracy address this challenge of specifying 'in concrete terms' how citizens might minimize collective risks by conducting more

active political lives that minimize individual risks. Both designs attend to this by providing sites of political influence that should build the 'diverse networks' advocated by Mutz (2006, 150): 'Only when … [we have] the ability to build and maintain diverse networks, and to evaluate and promote ideas through them — will the metaphor of a marketplace of political ideas ring true for American political culture.' In a similar vein, two scholars of nonprofit organization, Mark Moore and Jean Hartley (2008, 19), state that 'the most important problem facing the public is discovering itself and identifying its own true interests. We argue that this challenge will only be solved by more practice with, and innovation in, the processes of democratic deliberation itself.' These views are consistent with those of Ian Marsh. In discussing a perceived decline of democratic governance in Australia, he recommends that renewal requires a

> richer or more elaborated public conversation about policy frameworks. In turn, this requires an institutional structure capable of mediating the strategic or agenda entry phase of the issue cycle … Further, this phase must be located in the mainstream of the political drama … [and not be] automatically subordinate to the will of the executive. (Marsh 2005, 38)

> A serious impact on the quality of political deliberation requires institutional change. But this needs to occur in the power structures that frame its core dynamics, not in an irrelevant periphery. (Marsh 2007, 336)

Of the four institutions assessed in Table 6.2, the People's Forum and pyramidal democracy are arguably the most strongly located 'in the mainstream of the political drama' and 'in the power structures that frame its core dynamics'. This is due to the openness of their designs, which are structured to work directly with mass public opinion.

There is considerable evidence that citizens in liberal democracies may quickly appreciate the Forum's potential when they see it in operation. Their strong distrust of politicians and in-

creasing disengagement from parties and ideologies, together with their keen interest in politics at the level of particular issues, should lead them to welcome the Forum as a way to come together to exchange views, to deliberate these and then issue directions to their governments. The advent of, and public support for, online political organizations such as Getup!, MoveOn, Change.org, Avaaz and Wikileaks demonstrate desires for such capabilities. The People's Forum would help voters to think about issues, to follow the public arguments on these and to give specific directions to politicians without the time-consuming and sometimes stressful work of face-to-face discussion and deliberation, which includes attending political meetings and working for political parties. As citizens are increasingly accustomed to high responsiveness by the market to their individual demands, they may also be attracted by the Forum's potential to generate more responsiveness from government. Although the Forum cannot produce social choices that are decisive for every voter (that is the nature of social choice), it would make those choices much more specific than those made by voting for political parties and representatives. The Forum would also produce social choices that are much better deliberated and coordinated than those from conventional referendums.

7
DESIGN DETAILS OF THE PEOPLE'S FORUM

Chapter 6 broadly described the People's Forum and then compared its likely political value with that of three other proposed institutions by assessing potential yields of institutional, political equality and governmental goods. As that assessment assumed the Forum would work, another assessment is given here to indicate how likely that is. This involves looking more closely at: (a) the functions by which the Forum is intended to execute its strategies for achieving its mission; and (b) the structure that is intended to produce those functions. So this inspection covers more functions than the five specified in §6.3, and they are listed below in §7.1. The elements of structure, together with the ways in which they are expected to produce those functions, are set out in §7.2.

This more detailed description of function and structure necessarily repeats much of that in Chapter 6, and in discussing the structure required to produce each of the functions specified below, it repeats information about structure that is relevant to more than one function.

7.1 Twelve functions of the People's Forum

The five major functions of the Forum specified in §6.3 are replaced here with twelve functions. These cover the five major functions and introduce others. The ways in which the twelve

functions would arguably perform the five major ones are indicated in the list below by the notation MF1, MF2 and so on, where the numbers give the order of appearance of a major function (MF) in the previous chapter; that is, 1 for 'public deliberation of issues'; 2 'deliberating what is to be deliberated'; 3 'examining basics'; 4 'an element of meritocracy'; and 5 'economizing citizen effort'. In addition, those functions that are intended to assist the Forum's first strategy (developing mass public opinion) are indicated by 'So' (Strategy for opinion) and those that should contribute to its meritocratic second strategy (producing political influence for citizens' opinions that are likely to be relatively well developed) are indicated by 'Sm' (Strategy for meritocracy). The twelve functions are as follows.

1. The Forum presents a public opinion poll that is structured to provide incentives for citizens to debate and deliberate (MF1, MF2) fundamental (strategic), long-running issues (MF3) (described as an 'opinion development poll' in §6.1) (So).
2. The Forum's poll is open and easily accessible to the whole electorate, so that the deliberation it fosters may be widespread (MF1, MF2, MF5) and all electors, including politically alienated or marginalized groups, find it easy to vote (So).
3. The poll assists its voters to indicate the specific responses they want their government to make to the issues it covers (MF1, MF2) (So).
4. The poll indicates when its voters have reached a stable set of views on an issue after extensive public discussion and voting (MF1) (So).
5. The poll develops political influence for the public opinion it registers (MF4) (Sm).
6. This political influence is developed as or after, but not before, the expressed opinion develops into a stable public judgment (MF4) (Sm).
7. The Forum reserves its political influence on the issues it deals with for those who have thought about these issues (MF4) (Sm).

8. The Forum invites the public to review its opinion on an issue, as expressed in Forum polls, before any political influence of these polls causes that opinion to shape policy or law (MF1, MF4) (So, Sm).
9. The Forum minimizes the ability of powerful narrow interests to distort the development of public opinion and voting in its polls (MF1, MF2, MF4) (So, Sm).
10. The Forum develops the political will for difficult political decisions to be executed (MF4) (Sm).
11. The Forum is structured to enable citizens to initiate and run it without government assistance and funding, if these are difficult to obtain.
12. The Forum develops the confidence of the people in the People's Forum, so that they and their representatives will maintain and use it. This includes a capacity for the public to set or supervise the agenda (MF2, MF4, MF5) (So, Sm).

7.2 Elements of the design of the People's Forum and why they should produce its twelve functions

7.2.1 Twenty-two elements of the design

The People's Forum is intended to produce its twelve functions largely through the influence of the following 22 elements (designated E1 to E22) of its design. These elements are given more description later in sections §7.2.2 through to §7.2.13, where their contributions to producing the twelve functions are discussed.

E1 A reference document to facilitate deliberation and voting by the public (the 'ballot paper', which also serves as an agenda for public discussion of issues).
E2 Agenda contributions from citizens.
E3 Voluntary voting — which provides self-selection, not random selection.
E4 Regular repetition of the poll — probably annually — posing substantially the same questions each time.

E5 Demonstrating trends in the development of the opinions of the citizens who participate.
E6 Feedback: Relaying voters' opinions back to the public to stimulate public debate and deliberation and future participation in the poll.
E7 Accessibility: All electors eligible; voting by phone and internet; personal identification available for voting on impulse; a week for voting; media coverage before / during / after voting.
E8 Focus: The voluntary nature of the poll extends to the voter having the freedom to focus on only those issues and only those questions that he or she wants to.
E9 Dealing with long-running, fundamental (strategic) issues
E10 Wide-ranging menu of issues.
E11 Investigating connections between issues.
E12 Issues and questions that search for solutions to causes rather than treatments of symptoms.
E13 Questions on voters' attitudes to questions (i.e. their preferences for policy), on mechanics of policy, justifications for preferences and implementation of policy.
E14 The 'solidarity exchange': Eliciting willingness to pay for solutions.
E15 Competition between rival People's Forum polls, to satisfy the public.
E16 Report cards: Ratings for politicians and parties, mainly on how closely the actions of each reflect the trends of the People's Forum poll.
E17 Advisory influence: Poll results are not binding on the legislature.
E18 Executive review: Opportunity for the public to reverse voting trends before these trends change the law or government policy.
E19 Defence against manipulation (of public opinion and voting) by special interests.
E20 Incentives for participation by the public in democratic government — including motivations for voting in the People's Forum and for deliberating the questions it poses.

E21 Ability to privately finance the People's Forum, especially for its introduction to the electorate.
E22 Voting security.

The ways in which these design elements are expected to produce the twelve functions of the People's Forum are now explained, for each function in turn.

7.2.2 Function 1

The Forum presents a public opinion poll that is structured to provide incentives for citizens to debate and deliberate fundamental (strategic), long-running issues.

E1 A REFERENCE DOCUMENT TO FACILITATE DELIBERATION AND VOTING — THE BALLOT PAPER. The ballot paper would not only enable citizens to vote, but it would provide a standing agenda, in hardcopy and on website, of key questions on important issues that would help citizens to relate these issues, discuss them and think them through. This agenda would be compiled by the managers of the poll, with input from the public as discussed below in §7.2.13 (E3 and E2). For each issue, a concise description would provide information as impartially as possible, including the major pros and cons. Questions are then posed, each with a range of answers for the voter's choice. The ballot paper may note sources of information on the issues it polls and the internet version may give active links to relevant references. Some of this type of issue dissection has been done for many years for small groups that deliberate face-to-face, for example, in the US by the Kettering Foundation's National Issues Forums and the Paul J. Aicher Foundation's Everyday Democracy. In Australia, Issues in Society (Healey 2005) has produced more than 250 small books, each dealing with one public issue. These organisations concentrate on presenting information for discussion, but the People's Forum would usually restrict itself to very little of this in order to focus on posing the most significant questions, some of which would invite respondents to explicitly state or re-examine the value system they use in making their choices.

The ballot paper would give instructions on how to vote by phone and internet and how to have input into the management of the poll. New editions of the ballot paper may be published annually and, if necessary, a few issues or questions may be dropped, replaced or added each time. The intention is to have an annual vote on each question for many years, to encourage extended public debate and informal deliberation on each one. This continuity should help citizens to gather relevant information and carefully consider those issues that interest them. The ballot paper would try (as explained in §7.2.13 E3 below) to present menus of issues, questions and answers that are relevant, comprehensive and competent.

As a mechanism to facilitate deliberative participation in democratic government, the ballot paper conforms to Dryzek's (2000, 162) stipulation that 'authenticity of deliberation requires that communication must induce reflection upon preferences in non-coercive fashion.' The ballot paper invites and assists this form of participation. It might be expected that the Forum's process of individuals voting in a secret ballot would allow the expression of narrow self-interest, but experience with Citizen Assemblies and deliberative opinion polls indicates that the secret vote does not prevent public-spirited judgements (G. Smith 2009, 97–98). Those two types of panel have participants considering public goods with face-to-face meetings that are informed by experts and carefully moderated, but the People's Forum should achieve a public goods focus via its ballot paper questions and by allowing several years for these to be publicly addressed by technical experts, interest groups and concerned citizens. Moreover, as noted in §6.3.4, the popular assumption that people vote selfishly (SIVH, the self-interested voter hypothesis) has been discredited (Caplan 2008, 198).

Dalton (2004, 146, 151) observes that in the past several decades, expanding concerns of citizens have raised so many new issues that

> in a multidimensional policy space a government can satisfy most of the people some of the time, or some people most of the time,

> but not most of the people most of the time … [There is] strong evidence that this factor contributes to the public's growing frustration with their government … It is not so much that governments produce less, but that citizens expect more.

The People's Forum ballot paper is intended to assist citizens to take up much of the extra work that they now expect from government. It would be a response to the 'lack of institutions and processes that can aggregate and balance divergent interests into coherent policy programmes that the participants can accept' (Dalton 2004, 205).

The treatment of issues by the ballot paper will require much expert knowledge and would therefore become costly as it is extended and made more sophisticated. For the introductory phase of a People's Forum, the number of issues listed may be restricted to perhaps fifty or so of the most urgent ones, but as the Forum continued to operate, its agenda would be expanded (see §7.2.13 E10 below). This would increase not only the appeal of the poll to a wider range of citizens, but the ability of the ballot paper to draw the attention of voters to important relationships between issues that they should consider before finalizing their vote.

E3 Voluntary voting. It may seem superfluous to specify voluntary voting as a design element, because the usual assumption is that voting is voluntary. This specification is made partly to focus on the importance for this poll of self-selective sampling rather than random sampling, and also to help distinguish this system from other voting events such as in Australia where referendums may be held together with elections as a compulsory vote.

As discussed below (mainly in §7.2.4, §7.2.6 and §7.2.13), egoistic and solidary predispositions will drive interest groups, activists and others to want their points of view on public goods to do well in the poll results. Voluntary voting gives citizens more incentive to compete with each other for this goal, because it puts them in the position of not only wanting to persuade oth-

ers to vote their way, but also wanting to persuade them to vote. Such tension or competition should help to raise the profile of the poll, thus provoking the community into more debate on the issues it presents, which should motivate people to educate each other and also themselves as they express, revise and develop their arguments.

E4 Repetition. The People's Forum poll is to be held at regular, preset, well-publicised intervals, say, once a year, asking the same questions each time. One vote by a respondent may comprise answers to any questions on any number of the issues presented on the ballot paper. The annual repetition of questions on each issue run in the poll would allow years for debate, which should assist public opinion to develop constructively. Debate may be stimulated as people become aware that they have time to convince others of their views and thus to influence future poll results. The repetition of the poll would invite the proportion of the electorate that is voting on any issue to increase as people see the event recur and become tempted to debate and vote.

Political scientists Matthew Mendelsohn and Andrew Parkin (2001, 20) argue that repetitive referendums could produce a 'public brokerage' that fosters real deliberation, instead of argument intended to produce a victory by avoiding full consideration of the issue. In reviewing constitutional referendums, Chambers (2001, 250–51) also advocates treating referendums as 'rolling drafts rather than as final accords', which makes them 'part of an ongoing process of consultation rather than a once-and-for-all ratification'. She anticipates this would not only produce significant deliberation, but also more legitimacy for the ultimate outcome. She cautiously supports this with observations of the voting behaviour of jurors.

> Studies that compare juries that have unanimity as a rule versus juries that have majority rules show significant differences in the internal dynamic of deliberation. Indeed, some have argued that where there is a simple majority rule, jurors do not really deliberate

> in the sense of formulating arguments that could persuade interlocutors … Once a referendum is called or even knowing the conversation will end in a referendum diminishes the sense that what one has to say counts for something. Both majorities and minorities lose an important incentive to be reasonable … it creates the incentive to find arguments that will sway only the needed number of voters.
>
> Knowing the rules of the end game exercises a huge influence on how participants approach the process. This fact has been overlooked by much of the literature on deliberative democracy. (Chambers 2001, 241)

The fostering of deliberation by repetition should help chronic issues to be tackled and ameliorated. One of these is the alienation of citizens from civic engagement. Although those individuals may not be stimulated by the repetition of polling to join in as voters, others who do vote may be able to provoke constructive policy action on alienation and its effects, through their engagement with the Forum. Such 'de facto representation of the shy and disinterested by the articulate and engaged' (Brown 2006, 211–12) is common in direct-democratic assemblies such as New England town hall meetings, and might also be expected in the People's Forum because of its repetition and other features designed to foster deliberation. The importance of alienation is emphasized by sociologist and political scientist Martin Gilens (2005, 778), who finds that in American democracy

> actual policy outcomes strongly reflect the preferences of the most affluent but bear virtually no relationship to the preferences of poor or middle-income Americans. The vast discrepancy … stands in stark contrast to the ideal of political equality that Americans hold dear … representational biases of this magnitude call into question the very democratic character of our society.

But even without repetition, it is noted by political scientists Arthur Lupia and John Matsusaka (2004) that referenda stimulate citizens to increase their political knowledge, to donate campaign contributions to interest groups and to vote. These re-

sponses occur even among the most poorly informed segments of the electorate.

E6 Feedback. Each annual poll is to be spread over a week, with television and other media coverage of the progress of the voting on the most topical issues each evening. This should provoke reactions from the public to the trends in polling, sharpening interest in the poll and its issues and encouraging more to vote before that poll closes. Such promotion of the People's Forum should encourage debate among citizens through current channels, such as the electronic and print media, books, schools, universities and talk between friends, thereby helping public opinion on the Forum's questions to develop between polls. A discussion with the manager of a Tasmanian television station on the feasibility of week-long media coverage of People's Forum polling has indicated that this may be readily undertaken by the media as a part of their coverage of news and current affairs.

E7 Accessibility. The extent to which the People's Forum helps to develop mass public opinion will depend to some extent on the number of people who are attracted to participate. Voting by telephone and internet would therefore be employed to make participation as quick and convenient as possible. A central computer would receive all voting calls, which would be made by keying code numbers for answers on phones or by selecting answers offered on the poll website. Other elements aiding accessibility are noted in §7.2.3 below. In the recent past, the 'digital divide' would have tended to exclude the poor and the elderly, but they will now find that voting via telephone or internet is hardly more complex than paying their utility bills in these ways.

E8 Focus. As their time and interests are limited, citizens must be able to focus on a restricted number of issues. The voter may deal with only those issues and vote only on those questions that he or she wishes to. Focus is also assisted by E9, as noted below.

E9 Long-running fundamental (strategic) issues. As the questions are to be repeated over many years to facilitate deliberation and to register trends in opinion, the issues that the poll treats must be long-running. This indicates, together with the focus described above and the need to make the limited personal input of an annual vote as politically significant as possible, that the issues dealt with are of strategic importance, which means they should be both long-running and of fundamental importance. As discussed above in §6.3.5, this focus would facilitate effective public participation.

In studying sixteen deliberative organizations, Ryfe (2002, 369) observes they

> have learned that conversations about values ought to be organized differently than conversations about actions. For instance, disagreements between pro- and anti-abortion activists are not likely to be reduced by the distillation of more policy information or the convening of a debate … [When values are not shared,] conversations break down very quickly.

The Forum's focus on fundamentals may enable this problem to be addressed by helping people to recognize where they share values (see §6.3.3). This may enable differences in values to be seen as less significant or more understandable.

The strategic focus might be objected to as unnecessary because state and national democratic governments are thought of as already dealing with 'strategic' issues because they focus on the long term by making decisions that are intended to persist far into the future. However, this does not mean that these governments actually attend to strategy. They may fail to do this in two ways: by not addressing issues that are of fundamental importance to society; and when they do address them, they may only address their superficial aspects, such as alleviating their symptoms. The People's Forum therefore aims to assist society to deal with strategic issues by including them in its ballot paper, by describing their fundamental nature and by posing questions on those aspects. A current Australian example of the need for

this approach is the continuing and unresolved political furore over the last decade or so on how to deal with refugees from places such as Afghanistan, Iran and Sri Lanka who sail from Indonesia for Australia on small boats. As a party to the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, Australia accepts genuine refugees and this, in combination with its reputation as a stable, prosperous and open society, makes it an attractive destination for people in troubled (or even just crowded) countries. Yet Australians appear to respond to the influx of 'boat people' with concern about being overrun by hordes of refugees and pseudo-refugees from around the world, presumably as this might change the Australian culture and lifestyle, increase ethnic and religious tensions, lower wages and exacerbate pressure on natural resources. While such concerns are largely strategic, the public dispute over 'boat people' tends to be short-term, as it focuses on such aspects as: the horror of hundreds drowning as leaky boats sink; the misery of the 'boat people' detained in camps while their refugee status is assessed; trying to deter 'boat people' from sailing for Australia by detaining those who arrive; and the unfairness of receiving those who can afford to journey to Indonesia and then pay for passage on an 'illegal entry vessel' while hundreds of thousands of refugees are too poor to travel. Meanwhile, important strategic aspects are ignored, although these are necessary for constructive public policy on immigration. One of these gaps is that Australia has essentially no policies for preventing or mitigating global warming, or for coping with its consequences — one of which is that millions more refugees may be fleeing coastal inundation, monsoon failure, resultant warfare and so on. A second yawning gap in Australian strategic policy is that being a party to the UN convention on refugees is incompatible with trying to stop 'boat people' by deterring them with the prospect of prolonged incarceration. Both these gaps might begin to be closed by recognizing the need for two major planks of strategic policy. The first is that, after three national population inquiries since 1975 (see §4.2.1), Australia still lacks a policy on the size of population that it prefers. The second plank is that Australia's respon-

sibility to the rest of the world in terms of its carrying capacity has never been addressed. This requires Australia to consider and decide what it wants its carrying capacity to be (the first plank above) and then to negotiate with the UN about whether this is acceptable to other nations. A UN agreement on this may have implications for the UN Convention on Refugees and/or for Australia being a party to that Convention. Such negotiation or agreement may encourage other countries to be more conscious of their responsibilities to control the size of their populations in the interests of the sustainable quality of life for their citizens. They may then select their own desirable carrying capacities and start to work towards achieving them while respecting those of other countries. This subject of carrying capacity and the focus on its strategic content is illustrated in §7.3 below, with a suggestion as to how it might be treated in a PF ballot paper. That illustration splits the subject into several fundamental issues that are briefly described and then analysed with several questions for the respondent to consider and answer.

E10 WIDE-RANGING MENU OF ISSUES. The People's Forum ballot paper would present a wide spectrum of issues (see §7.2.13 E10 below) and embrace controversy, in order to raise all options and stimulate voter participation, debate and mutual education. Dryzek (2006, 47–48) has called for this type of approach, arguing 'for a discursive democracy that can handle deep differences … [to] seek robust and passionate exchanges across identities.' He recommends that these exchanges be moderated by 'partially decoupling the deliberation and decision aspects of democracy, locating deliberation … in the public sphere at a distance from any contest for sovereign authority' (2006, 47). Such decoupling is to be achieved by the non-binding status of Forum results (see E17 in §7.2.7 and §7.2.13). Mutz (2006, 80–84) observes that dogmatism / non-dogmatism is a stable personality trait and exposure to oppositional views creates tolerance in non-dogmatists and intolerance in dogmatists. Most learning from exposure to crosscutting information will thus be done by non-dogmatists. Intolerant responses should be minimized by

making information available with minimal confrontation, such as by presenting references and web links that citizens may use if they wish and by ensuring that this presentation displays different conclusions, if these are held by experts in that field.

E11 Investigating interconnections. Many issues are strongly related to other issues. For example, the issue of matching supply and demand in energy in a way that minimizes depletion of natural resources is usually seen by democracies as being the narrow issue of whether to supply more energy in ways such as solar or wind power that are less destructive of these resources than using fossil or nuclear fuels or converting rivers, valleys and natural lakes into hydro-electric reservoirs. However, matching supply and demand in energy has another component, the social choice of the size of the demand to be supplied, as discussed in Chapter 5. Dealing with an issue by ignoring its connections with others may allow both it and the others to get worse.

Connections between issues are to be identified in the ballot paper by references in an issue's description or in its questions, to other issues or questions on the ballot. These references would invite the voter to consider those other issues and questions before finalizing their vote on the question before them. This should reduce the problem noted in 1954 by opinion polling experts Herbert Hyman and Paul Sheatsley (cited in Bennett 2006, 115): 'People often express approval of two ideas which are quite incompatible with one another and they frequently uphold a general principle while denying its specific application'.

E12 Search for solutions. The ballot questions must focus on causes and systemic solutions rather than on the amelioration of symptoms of problems. To fail to do this will make the poll superficial and invite public criticism and boycott, but this task will be complicated for some issues as there may currently be no universally accepted definition of the problem. This complication is one of the reasons why the poll managers must be skilled in the analysis of issues, as noted previously in §6.1.4.

E13 Questions on attitude, mechanics, justification, implementation and willingness to pay. Several 'attitude' questions on an issue would usually be the first posed on that topic in the ballot paper. These would ask voters for their attitudes on key aspects of the issue, which may then be explored by 'justification' questions that might search for common ground underlying the differing attitudes of voters. Justification questions would inquire into the reasons for answers given to attitude questions and may prompt the voter to re-examine her world view or ideology (see §4.1 (*8*) and Chapter 8, for comment on the stubbornness of world views). To make this inquiry more thorough, secondary justification questions might be posed on primary justification questions, but this could make the ballot paper too complicated. It may be possible to achieve such in-depth investigation by changing justification questions in subsequent polls. Justification questions should help the debates that precede a vote, as they would allow analysed feedback to the public on the reasons for attitudes and ideologies that were expressed in the previous poll, and this may show why opinions diverge in the community, allowing subsequent public debate to focus on the reasons for this. Such analysis might also correlate voters' differing attitudes on an issue with whether they gave answers to justification questions. This may help the public to further deliberate these issues by indicating which attitudes seem dogmatic and which appear to be more firmly based on evidence and reason. Other types of questions that might be posed on an issue are: 'mechanics' questions, which ask the voter to state (and thus think about) how a particular policy (such as one they favour) would work; 'implementation' questions, which ask what specific action the government should take; and 'willingness to pay' questions, which ask citizens what they should do about the issue, as discussed under E14 in §7.2.4 below.

The importance of mechanics questions is seen from elegant studies showing that when people are forced to explain how their favoured policies would work, they downgrade their estimates of their understanding of these and moderate their opinions (Greene 2014, 297). Control versions of these experiments

show that when people only had to give reasons for their opinions on policy (i.e. only to answer justification questions), those opinions remained intact — no doubt because confirmation bias and rationalization had not been challenged. Mechanics questions may therefore cultivate more rational attitudes and reduce polarization. As moral psychologist Joshua Greene (2014, 297–98) observes:

> Simply forcing people to justify their opinions with explicit reasons does very little to make people more reasonable, and may even do the opposite. But forcing people to confront their ignorance of essential facts does make people more moderate. As these researchers note, their findings suggest an alternative approach to public debate: Instead of simply asking politicians and pundits *why* they favour the policies they favour, first ask them to explain how their favoured (and disfavoured) policies are supposed to work [underlining added].

Greene's recommendation is supported by Slovic's observation on people's world views, as given above in §4.1 (under *8 Externalizability*).

> The truly disconcerting thing about this work is that it shows how difficult it is to change people's views and behaviours with factual information … People spin the information to keep their worldview intact. (cited in Bennett 2008, 4, 5)

People do this automatically with the 'affect heuristic', in which they judge or decide by consulting their emotions instead of by inspecting the relevant information and logic. In doing this they substitute an easy question for a hard one: The easy one being 'what do you like?' and the hard one 'what are the relevant facts and what do they indicate?' (Kahneman 2011, 97, 103, 139). As the psychologist and Nobel Laureate in economics Daniel Kahneman (2011, 217) observes: 'people can maintain an unshakeable faith in any proposition, no matter how absurd, when they are sustained by a community of like-minded believers.' In the

following example from law and psychology scholar Dan Kahan (*Economist* 2015c), what people like is determined by their primal social need to belong to a group. He observes that on the issue of climate change, their beliefs

> have become determined by feelings of identification with cultural and political groups. When people are asked for their views on climate change … they translate this into a broader question: whose side are you on? The issue has become associated with left-wing urbanites, causing conservatives to dig in against it.

People's reliance on affect heuristics indicates that the Forum's ballot paper would encourage voters to think more clearly if it asked questions that show them when they are using those heuristics and invite them to eliminate that substitution by specifying the information and logic behind their attitude or preference on the question. Justification and mechanics questions may be able to do this if they have wide-ranging menus of answers with sufficient specificity and if, as noted above, the mechanics questions precede those on justification. From a broader perspective, Chambers (2001, 251) has emphasized the importance of a wide answer menu for each question by noting that it 'encourages substantive discussion on issues.'

Other ways by which the People's Forum may minimize polarization are discussed in §6.5.1. To sum up, then, the major design elements with that purpose are E11 (investigating connections between issues), E12 (searching for solutions to causes — rather than to symptoms), E13 (mechanics and justification questions) and, as described below in §7.2.4, E14 (the solidarity exchange). In addition to helping ameliorate polarization, the Forum's descriptions of issues and its menus of questions and answers should be designed to avoid biased intuitive responses such as those discussed by Kahneman (2011), for example, duration neglect, adaptation neglect, focusing illusions, attending to salience (e.g. vividness of description and frequency formats vs. probability formats), narrow framing (such as the 'inside view' vs. the 'outside view' and WYSIATI — what you see is all there

is) and other framing effects, such as the contexts of questions, preference reversals and the specification of consequences as losses or as gains (loss aversion trumps desire for gain).

This discussion of the types of questions (and their contexts) that would help People's Forums to function well may seem to make the voter's task too complex, but this is not necessarily the case. Much public deliberation may be achieved merely by the Forum's annual repetition of a few crucial questions on each of the strategic issues it treats. The extent to which this is enhanced by the range and sophistication of the questions on each issue will be a trade-off between the complexity of the ballot paper and its convenience for voters. No doubt that trade-off would become an art form in which the Forum's managers develop considerable skill as they practice it.

7.2.3 Function 2

Being open and easily accessible to the whole electorate so that the deliberation fostered by the poll is widespread and all electors, including politically alienated groups, find it easy to vote.

Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002, 239) have observed: 'While people are not eager to provide input into political decisions, they want to know that they could have input into political decisions if they ever wanted to do so. In fact they are passionate about this.' Moreover, they want their participation to 'be welcome and meaningful'. This indicates that the Forum's poll must be very easy to access and give some political influence to the views of its voters. Easy access is provided by several elements of its design, such as E7, E8, E9 and E22. The last of these concerns, voting security, is discussed below in §7.2.13.

E7 describes accessibility as being provided by several features of the poll: all electors being eligible to vote; voting to be done by phone or internet; the availability of personal identification for voting on impulse (discussed above in §6.1.3); a week for voting so that it is hard for electors to overlook the opportunity; and media coverage before, during and after voting. E8 is the ability of voters to choose, according to their interests,

from a wide variety of issues on the ballot paper, and E9 is the strategic power given to voters by the ballot paper's focus on long-running fundamental issues.

7.2.4 Function 3

Assisting citizens to indicate the specific responses they want their government to make to the issues covered.

E13 Questions on preferences for action (i.e. on implementation of policy). Each issue should, if appropriate, have a question asking respondents what they want their government to do about it.

E14 The solidarity exchange: Eliciting willingness to pay for solutions. Perhaps the most crucial responses by governments on many issues, and often the most difficult for elected governments to make, are those requiring them to ask citizens to make costly contributions, perhaps with money or with changes in lifestyle or attitudes, if they are to deal effectively with those issues. The People's Forum could assist here by inviting citizens to declare the contribution they would be prepared to make in order to have their society achieve specific objectives. Those concerning the willingness of citizens to pay financially for government action are collectively referred to here as 'solidarity exchange' questions, for this function of the poll bears some resemblance to that of a stock exchange.

The stock exchange is a market for individual choice in which entities choose to purchase and sell rights to profits (which are private goods) and thereby invest in the production of other private goods. The solidarity exchange (SoX) is similar in that it would be a market for financial investment in goods, but in this case these are public goods. This market would operate through questions in the People's Forum poll where citizens may pledge to pay, or request to cease to pay, for specific public goods — if most other citizens make similar contributions. Over a sequence of polling events, these pledges and requests may develop into strong trends that become seen as instructions to politicians to

purchase or liquidate public goods, as discussed in §7.2.6 and §7.2.11 below. The solidarity exchange would thereby address the crucial problem that many thousands or millions of citizens must be able to negotiate easily with each other on how much they will pay for important public goods that cannot be provided unless each makes a financial contribution. Action on global warming poses this type of problem, for whether the concern of people around the world creates an effective response depends on highly developed capacities for collective action, both within nations and between nations. Before describing the proposed structure of the solidarity exchange, circumstances affecting collective action are now outlined as a basis for understanding why this 'exchange' might work. These same circumstances also affect the functioning of the People's Forum as a whole.

Circumstances affecting the possibility of democratic collective action. Evolutionary psychology indicates that the fundamental preference of humans for group life has given them a social environment that over several million years has selected the genetically determined predisposition of 'wary cooperator' (Hibbing and Alford 2004). This means that we are generally 'willing to pay our fair share only assuming others do the same and evaders face swift and certain consequences' (Alford and Hibbing 2004, 711). Kevin Smith (2006, 1015, 1013) observes that 'what drives the behavior of wary co-operators is 'sucker aversion' … It is not just what they get from decisions, but whether they perceive the process of decision-making as fair that leads people to view the decisions as legitimate.' In democracies, confusion from ambiguous delegation about who directs the polity may help prevent politicians' directions being seen by all citizens as fair. This would evoke sucker aversion in the form of reluctance to pay for public goods.

Confusion about directorship is a crucial confusion in communication that prevents collective action. As public communication scholars Andrew Flanagin, Cynthia Stohl and Bruce Bimber (Flanagin et al. 2006, 32) observe: 'collective action is communicative, insofar as it entails efforts by people to cross

boundaries by expressing or acting on individual (i.e. private) interest in a way that is observable to others (i.e. public).' They note that 'formal organization is central to locating and contacting potential participants in collective action, motivating them and coordinating their actions' (Bimber et al. 2005, 365). However, this organization often fails in democracies and this is at least partly due to the ambiguity of their delegation. The People's Forum is designed to rectify this by clarifying the roles of electors and their delegate/trustees. This should facilitate communication between electors and also between them and their political representatives, so that reciprocity, openness and trust are fostered, to assist negotiation of the norms, rules and sanctions for collective action. The solidarity exchange would perform the same role, but with a specific focus within the People's Forum. It would assist citizens to act as directors of the polity by helping them to decide and state what public goods they want, by inviting them to decide and state whether they are prepared to pay for them.

Political scientist Robert Putnam (1993) has described such assistance by institutions as producing social learning, a 'learning by doing' that can produce social capital. This type of capital comprises attitudes and behaviours such as reciprocity, openness and trust, which help societies to function productively. Putnam identifies 'networks of civic engagement' as an essential form of social capital. 'The denser such networks in a community, the more likely that its citizens will be able to cooperate for mutual benefit' (Putnam 1993, 173). His conclusions from studying institutional reform in modern Italy are that, although preexisting social capital conditions the effectiveness of new institutions, these innovations may also change social capital and political practice through social learning: 'Formal change induced informal change and became self-sustaining' (Putnam 1993, 184). A polity's networks of engagement may be expanded by the establishment of a People's Forum, and the solidarity exchange could be a crucial part of this.

Before the structure of the solidarity exchange is outlined, two specific feelings that it is designed to help develop and communicate are described: commitment and solidarity.

Objectives for the solidarity exchange: the development of commitment and solidarity. If a liberal democracy is to take strong action on an issue that will require a significant cost to be borne by most citizens, then they must have what social psychologists call a strong 'commitment' to taking that action and considerable 'solidarity' with fellow citizens in such commitment (Fetchenhauer et al. 2006). For the solidarity exchange, these two factors might be defined as follows.

1. Commitment: A citizen's commitment to a collective action is her feeling that the action is worth her paying her share of its cost. The measure of commitment might be the individual's willingness to pay (WTP) for the action, in terms of the percentage of its per capita cost that she offers (via the SoX) to pay. This WTP may be in terms of extra income tax or higher cost of living (COL).
2. Solidarity: The solidarity of a community on an action is the feeling of each of its citizens that the others will support her commitment to it. The SoX measure of solidarity on an action could be the ratio of the number of SoX votes to pay something for that action, to the total number of SoX votes (those to pay something plus those to pay nothing). This measure ignores those who do not vote in the People's Forum's SoX (which may be a large majority of citizens), but nevertheless it may be considered a fair indication if the government will not act on it until it has asked all citizens (as discussed below under 'How the SoX would operate') whether they accept that ratio as being a part of an instruction from them to government. The other part of that instruction is citizens' 'average commitment', the mean of all commitments made via the SoX, whether they are positive or zero. This second part of the instruction would also be tested by government

asking all citizens whether it should regard that average commitment as representative.

Commitment and solidarity may be developed in a community if they are demonstrated by citizens to each other in a repetitive manner that allows them to respond by joining or leaving the demonstration or by revising their commitment up or down. By facilitating such repetition, the SoX part of the PF poll may help citizens build a common resolution to act on difficult issues.

How the SoX would operate. As noted above, average commitment is intended to eventually be interpreted as the commitment of the whole community even though it expresses the views of just those who vote in the SoX part of the PF poll. Only a minority of electors, let us say, perhaps five to twenty per cent, may bother to regularly vote in a People's Forum poll — and much less on any particular issue that it treats in its SoX. However, after several well-publicized annual votes beyond the stage where the voting trend (see §7.2.5 below) for a particular SoX question has levelled, the average commitment being registered for that question may be taken by the government as acceptable to those who do not bother to cast a ballot, for the poll is voluntary and open to every elector to take part. An average commitment that is sufficient to pay for the implementation of a policy *if paid by all citizens (subject to capacity to pay according to personal income)* may be tested to see if it is to be accepted as an instruction by the people, by the government declaring an intention to implement it unless the next PF poll shows a reduction of this WTP. This intention would heighten the incentive of electors to vote in the PF's SoX, because it may soon influence the taxes or prices they pay and whether effective action is taken on that issue by the government.

An indication of the strength of the resolve of the community to pay to fix an issue could be given by multiplying average commitment with solidarity, to produce a 'solidarity index'. As solidarity may be anywhere from 1 (every SoX voter wants to pay something) to 0 (no SoX voter wants to pay), then when it

is multiplied by average commitment (the mean fraction of per capita cost offered to be paid by each SoX voter) to produce the solidarity index, that index will be a figure somewhere between 1 and 0. A solidarity index for a proposed action that is close to 1, say 0.7 or 0.8, would indicate a strong desire by SoX voting citizens to pay for their government to execute that action. Solidarity indices could be publicised by government to warn the general public that it is being pressured by the People's Forum to either act or refrain from acting, so that citizens who have been disengaged from this process are encouraged to join in and vote to strengthen or overturn such pressures. If the hitherto disengaged do not join in, the government may assume that they are happy with the existing pressures and expect government to act accordingly.

The operation of the SoX may be considered to comprise three stages. Two lie within the People's Forum process, the first of these being the questions in the poll that ask voters to express their WTP for the implementation of particular policies, together with the responses of PF voters. These questions would state the approximate costs to each citizen of implementing a range of policies on an issue (if all taxpayers paid an income-proportional contribution) and invite each voter to pledge some commitment to the one they prefer. The hard copy ballot paper would include a table entitled 'CHECK YOUR OFFER!' where voters should enter each pledge that they make to pay more, either in tax or in cost of living. This is to help them add up their SoX pledges so they can see their total commitment to pay, before they lodge their vote. That addition would be done automatically by the website ballot paper, which would display it to prompt voters to check for over-commitment on SoX questions before they submit their vote.

The second stage of the SoX is the post-poll analysis, publication and public discussion of the answers to the WTP questions. The analysis would summarize the answers in terms of average commitments, solidarities and solidarity indices. Its publication would invite citizens to reconsider what they really want to pay for. This analysis, publication and discussion would occur be-

tween the annual polls leading up to the situation where the political pressure of SoX voting trends is about to make politicians take appropriate action.

The third stage lies outside the People's Forum and it is the response by politicians to solidarity indices. Those indices that show citizens sustaining demands that they pay for specific policies to be executed will request or command politicians to organize this, by increasing taxes and/or cutting back other government programs and/or introducing appropriate policies that raise prices (such as a tax on carbon emissions). To help citizens ensure that they make pledges they can afford, the SoX would present a comprehensive menu of policy costs covering, in very broad terms, programs currently implemented by government as well as the additional costs of the public goods canvassed by the People's Forum. These costs (including those of existing programs) would be expressed as percentages of either the citizen's annual income before tax, or COL. If voters want to pay less than they currently do, they register this by voting for reductions in government expenditure on existing programs and voting zero WTP on SoX questions. Negative commitments on WTP questions would not be recognized by the SoX but may be interpreted as zero WTP. This system should enable electors to vote for funding transfers from existing programs to new ones presented by SoX questions.

7.2.5 Function 4

Indicating when the people have reached a stable set of views on an issue after extensive public discussion and voting.

E4 REPETITION. Repetition of the vote by the People's Forum would allow the plotting of trends in the opinions it registers, as noted above at the end of §6.1.2. The issues on which these trends show no change over the last few voting events can be considered to be those on which the public has made up its mind after the process has given it considerable opportunity to evolve and vote for different views. At this point, either a degree of consensus has been reached or the people have in some sense

agreed to differ, so there may be an acceptance that the majority could have its way. This could be tested as described below in §7.2.9, and if this leads to political implementation of the views expressed in the PF poll on that issue, then it may be taken out of the poll.

7.2.6 Function 5

Developing a strong political influence for the public opinion expressed in People's Forum polls.

E4 REPETITION. The repetition of the People's Forum vote is to be a regular event that is very public and gives sustained exposure to the opinion it reflects. After a year or two the public profile of the poll should start to focus widespread attention on the issues it covers, not only in the weeks before the poll, but throughout the year. Public awareness that these particular issues are voted on year after year should make them and the specific questions posed by the poll, ongoing subjects of attention by the media, schools, universities, interest groups, legislators, political candidates and the public at large. As people see the event recurring, more may be stimulated to argue, discuss, read, think and vote. The resultant public profile of the poll and the numbers voting in it will do much to give it political influence.

E5 TRENDS. As noted above under §7.2.5, repetition of the vote allows the poll to show trends in the development of opinion. The managers of the People's Forum would publicize these trends before each poll, during those events and in the publication of their results. Trends that run against existing policies or laws, or urge new ones, should apply a degree of public pressure on politicians to make the changes these trends advocate, as discussed below under 'E3 Voluntary voting'. Such pressure may excite more voter participation, which may then generate more political influence, more discussion of the issues and greater public wisdom. Note that a People's Forum majority vote is likely to be a small minority of the electorate. 'E3 Voluntary voting' below gives reasons to anticipate that the views of ma-

jorities within this small minority may develop public status and political power that far exceeds their weight as a proportion of the whole electorate.

The suggestion in §7.2.5 that People's Forum trends will develop collective agreements to act receives some support from a comparison with juries.

> Some juries are described as 'evidence driven' while others are 'verdict driven'. In the verdict driven juries many votes tend to be taken while in evidence driven juries discussion is less focused on closure, and more on the spirit of airing all the facts, while holding off a decision. Evidence driven juries try not to discuss conclusions. In both cases, of course, a vote is taken at the end of the deliberative process. What is interesting is that in interviews and in polling after jury duty, participants in evidence driven juries had a stronger sense of satisfaction with the process, the verdict, and the reasonableness of their fellow jurors … the process was perceived as more legitimate and they had a stronger sense of efficacy, that is, that they as individuals had made an important contribution to the process and that they were actually listened to. (Chambers 2001, 248)

Conventional referendums are similar to verdict driven juries in that they produce one vote, the verdict. People's Forums are more like evidence driven juries as they have a regular sequence of votes that are not verdicts but merely registrations of the progress of a public discussion or debate. On this basis, we might expect the Forum to develop more legitimacy and efficacy than current forms of referenda.

E6 Feedback. Stringing the voting period out over a week as described under E6 in §7.2.2 should accentuate the public profile of the Forum and thus enhance its political influence. The annual repetition of People's Forum polls would do this as well and also enable the people to see what they as a society think, and to some extent why they think that way (see E13 in §7.2.2). This invites them to argue and discuss again before voting next year and so on, continuing such feedback until it becomes obvious to

all that a majority view has developed that is stable in the face of, and as a result of, all the argument and information that can be mustered. As noted in §7.2.5, this should generate agreement by the majority and minorities on any issue that they differ and that they all accept that the majority can have its way.

E3 Voluntary voting.

Power to those who are interested enough to vote. It has been argued (see §6.3.4) that the management of public affairs should follow the views of those who are interested in the issues. This provides a basis for the People's Forum to acquire public status and political influence, as its voluntary, self-selective voting should ensure that it registers only the views of those who are interested in the issues it treats. Their interests will have stimulated many of these voters to develop their knowledge and opinions on the issues they specialize in. But as noted in §6.3.4, voter interest in issues also means that People's Forum voters will include dogmatists as well as questioning thinkers. Both types should be drawn into exchanges of views by the polling process, and the questions it poses would be designed to use this interaction to try to develop more reasoning and negotiation, as discussed above under §7.2.2 (e.g. E11, E12, E13). These effects should lead the public to recognize that People's Forum poll results reflect more considered judgement than conventional opinion polls, so that the public learns to grant more status to the Forum than to opinion polls despite (and even because of) the fact that the Forum represents the views of only a fraction of the population. Sustained exposure to Forum polls may therefore encourage citizens in general to demand strong responses by politicians to Forum results, even if only a low proportion of the public votes in these polls. Although the mass public has very low levels of political information, with only perhaps ten per cent of the population having much political sophistication (see §2.2.3), citizens try to compensate for their ignorance by using heuristics for political judgments (e.g. Lupia 1994, Zaller 1992). This suggests that the People's Forum might perform as a heuristic that helps to guide citizens' votes at elections, espe-

cially if PF managers and political commentators publicly compare PF trends with candidates' policies. Some of this should be done with 'report cards', as discussed in E16 below. Such heuristics may replace those currently provided by political parties, especially as citizens have now become political consumers who shop around, frustrated by the sameness of parties that try to appeal to the mainstream voter (*Economist* 2015a, 21).

High status and influence for this poll would also be supported by a public awareness that its voluntary voting allows any elector to participate. After the introduction of a People's Forum poll it should soon become common knowledge that if bystanders become alarmed at the way that concerned opinion is evolving and expressed through this process, they can decide it is time that they became concerned and voted in the next poll, or even in the current one if it is still open.

Leading edge . Because the voluntary vote of the People's Forum will reflect the views of those who are interested in the issues, it is likely to indicate what the views of the majority of the whole population will be on those issues in the future, if and when most citizens take an interest in them. Such growth of interest in issues may be accelerated by the publicity generated by the People's Forum. Politicians will be sensitive to any such 'leading edge' indication by this poll because many of them want to be seen to be providing 'leadership' (leadership is discussed in §2.2, §2.2.1, §2.2.2, §2.2.4, §2.2.8 and §2.7).

E16 REPORT CARDS: PEOPLE'S FORUM RATINGS FOR POLITICIANS. The managers of the People's Forum would publish 'report cards' similar to those proposed by the Director of Democratic Audit, Stuart Weir (2004), to help citizens monitor the performance and attitudes of political candidates and members of the executive and the legislature. A prominent section of each card would be the degree to which the subject's views conform to People's Forum voting trends. As indicated above (under E3), those trends are likely to show the most informed and considered views of the community on the issues it deals with, and will thus

indicate to politicians the views they should espouse in order to represent the people in the most responsible way. If electors develop an appreciation of this, the report card would become a highly regarded guide for their vote at the next election, giving the poll more political clout. In addition to helping establish the Forum as a heuristic, such report cards should also promote community-wide deliberation by helping to focus attention on the Forum's questions.

7.2.7 Function 6

Developing political influence as or after, but not before, opinion develops into a stable public judgment.

E17 Advisory influence. People's Forum results would not be binding on legislatures, merely advisory. They would exert the pressure of concerned public opinion for new laws and policies reflecting the trends in concerned opinion that have been established by successive polls.

E3 Voluntary voting. Voluntary voting means that People's Forum results will reflect the views of only a part of the electorate. This may make politicians in the few countries such as Australia, where the whole electorate is compelled to elect representatives, slow to alter their current laws and policies in order to follow People's Forum results. In countries where voting for representatives is voluntary, the Forum may exert political influence more quickly because those who are concerned enough to vote in its polls may also be those who vote in elections.

E5 Trends. Politicians would be likely to wait for trends in the People's Forum to establish, or to establish and then level off to a flat line, rather than react immediately to a poll result only to become known for outdated views after a few more polls. They will want to wait to see if there is any reversal of trends, as discussed in §7.2.9 below.

7.2.8 Function 7

Reserving political influence on issues dealt with by the Forum for those who have thought about these issues (the meritocracy principle).

E3 VOLUNTARY VOTING. In §7.2.6 above it is indicated that political influence is likely to be generated for the opinion registered by People's Forum polls. As the voting that expresses this opinion is voluntary, it will tend not to register the opinions of those who are disengaged and give little thought to the issues that the Forum treats. The People's Forum will therefore tend to give political influence to those who have thought about those issues. These people are likely to include dogmatic types as well as citizens with more carefully considered opinions, but the involvement of dogmatists may stimulate them to think more constructively as discussed in §7.2.6 (E3 'Power to those who are interested enough to vote').

7.2.9 Function 8

Inviting the public to review its opinion on an issue, as expressed in People's Forum polls, before the political influence of these polls causes that opinion to be expressed as policy or law.

E18 EXECUTIVE REVIEW. As a People's Forum is run, electors who have not voted in its polls may become worried that politicians will introduce new policies or laws to reflect the Forum's polling trends. This prospect may also cause previous voters to change their minds. Politicians will therefore warn the electorate of their intention to act if the trends are not reversed at the next poll. With an eye to future votes, they will want electors to approve their actions.

7.2.10 Function 9

Minimizing the ability of powerful narrow interests to distort the development of the opinions of the public and their voting in People's Forum polls.

Wealthy interests may seek to manipulate public opinion in many ways, such as by funding biased media programs and movies, by dictating editorial policy via ownership of media, by advertising, by supporting selected scholars, activist individuals and groups, by deterring activists through strategic litigations against public participation (SLAPPS), by funding political electoral campaigns, by lobbying and so on. Such activities compromise democratic integrity by corrupting the one person-one vote principle, in effect delivering multiple votes to those with money who choose to use it in such ways. Graham Smith (2001, 88) considers this danger to be

> a criticism of the existing practice of initiative and referendum, not of their potential … we need to spend more time investigating possible 'imaginative safeguards' to ensure that information is balanced and that the influence of money and media interests does not grow … However, even with … [the existing] imbalance of resources, greens have had success [with initiatives and referenda on environmental issues].

Lupia and Matsusaka (2004, 478) support this view by finding that the evidence does not endorse the 'idea that the initiative allows special interests to subvert the policy process to the detriment of the public'. Nevertheless, the more influence that the People's Forum develops, the more attractive a target it will become for control by parties with narrow interests. However, as explained under E4 below, the transparency of the People's Forum process should mean that as its influence increases, undemocratic attempts to manipulate it are more likely to be counterproductive for the manipulators.

E4 LONG-RUNNING REPETITION OF ISSUES AND QUESTIONS. The long-running nature of the Forum's process should make manipulation expensive and also endanger the public image of manipulators.

Exhaustion of wealthy manipulators through long-running repetitive polling. The People's Forum process would take several, perhaps many years to facilitate and demonstrate the development of public opinion on a question. More time may elapse before such trends are translated into political action, as indicated by §7.2.7 and §7.2.9. Such time spans would make it very expensive to fund a propaganda campaign to sway the views of citizens and their responses to the poll.

Exposure of manipulators to public censure through long-running repetitive polling. The passage of time as these polls deal with each issue would also make any attempt to buy votes on it risky for the manipulator, because the public, media and politicians will have plenty of opportunity to recognize what is going on. When a manipulator's effort is focused on a question running in a People's Forum poll, the publicity surrounding that effort is likely to make it obvious to citizens. The more money the manipulator spends, the more blatantly undemocratic their activity will appear to citizens, especially those concerned with the issue. As the latter are also those who are likely to vote in the poll, big spending by manipulators risks damaging both their reputation and their cause. Such situations are also likely to encourage citizens to become more discerning about whether the information they receive is misleading and also to spur them to vote in PF and contribute to the public discourse on the questions it poses.

Similar risks arise for manipulators whose power to distort the poll arises not so much from wealth as from an ability to organize and control electors who comprise a significant proportion of the community being polled by PF. Such potential organizers may be large corporations with many employees or shareholders, unions with many members, or government agencies with many employees. The managers of such groups could attempt to influence the vote on People's Forum questions in which they had an interest by encouraging or instructing their shareholders or members or employees to vote in the poll with the responses the managers want. Such behaviour is likely to be-

come public knowledge because of (a) anticipation by many citizens that any entity with this organisational ability and vested interests in a question on the ballot will be tempted to do it; (b) suspicions and protests of citizens with opposing views; (c) poll results on that question which appear surprisingly weighted towards these vested interests; and (d) the possibility of evidence being found, for example, by whistle-blower disclosure of unfair organization of voters by narrow interests. The annual repetition of the voting event allows time for these factors to provoke alarm and for citizens to respond with public criticism and by voting in protest against causes promoted by undemocratic manipulation.

Suspicion or confirmation of this type of activity should spark public debate about whether it is excessively self-interested and thus against the public interest. Such debate could be assisted if the People's Forum added another question to those dealing with an issue that evokes an undemocratically manipulated vote. This could ask voters whether they considered that responses to the questions on this issue were being unduly influenced by narrow interests acting against the public interest. Any controversy over such a question would focus more public attention on the issue in the ballot that is stimulating it, drawing in electors who are not necessarily interested in that issue but want to vote on the problem of manipulation of democracy. The managers of the People's Forum should continue to run the questions generating this 'manipulation' debate until it has been cleared up. If the dispute over manipulation drags on without showing signs of resolution, all the questions at stake may have to be deleted from the ballot. If the controversy is resolved, the question on undemocratic manipulation would be dropped, leaving the questions on the issue itself to be run through more polls until they had developed stable votes indicating that public deliberations on them had run their course.

The outcome of extended public debate and voting on whether votes organized by vested interests are *excessively* self-interested may depend on whether the government has procedures in place to compensate those who would suffer loss because of

new laws and policies. This is crucial for democracy, because providing public goods at unjust cost to individuals and minorities is likely to damage the image of the public interest and the legitimacy of the relevant government.

E19 Defence against manipulation of opinion and voting. If manipulation by powerful self-interested entities is not stopped by financial exhaustion, nor by exposure to ethical judgment by citizens, the credibility of the People's Forum may suffer as the one-person one-vote fairness of its voting becomes suspect. How much damage such suspicion does to the reputation of the Forum may depend on whether the questions on its ballot that are subject to this manipulation can be identified, so that they are protected as suggested above, or abandoned as being likely to generate undemocratically distorted results. A backup procedure for preventing such damage to the Forum is that it could run questions specifically on the issue of powerful narrow interests manipulating the opinions and voting of the public. This would be done by placing that issue on the ballot paper without waiting for signs of manipulation and reacting to them as recommended above under E4.

One target for such inquisition that is given little attention above is the media. The political power of the media differs from that of narrow interests that are either wealthy or can directly organize and control large numbers of voters in that it comes from incessant communication to the public. As free and diverse media are essential for informed and well-developed public opinion, free-to-air television and radio sponsored by the state and thereby independent of commercial imperatives are vital parts of the operating environment for the People's Forum. The Forum's managers should have their ballot paper suggest laws or policies designed to prevent manipulation of public opinion by all types of powerful narrow interests, not least the media. As indicated above, such suggestion must be done at the inception of a Forum's polls, not only for their protection but for the protection of democracy itself. One possibility here is for the Forum to question whether it should be illegal for commercial

interests to make public statements on, or to advertise views on, or to pay others to state views on, any issue in which they have a pecuniary interest. Such law should help prevent commercial interests using their financial muscle to exert unfair and misleading influence on public opinion and legislators — as we have seen from the tobacco industry on lung cancer and from the fossil fuel industry on climate change.

If a People's Forum in the USA ran such questions on restricting the activities of vested interests it would, to some extent, be reviewing the 2010 finding by the US Supreme Court in *Citizens United v Federal Election Commission,* which held that the First Amendment of the US Constitution prohibits the government not only from restricting political expenditures by nonprofit organizations, but also those by for-profit organizations, labour unions and other organizations. That determination concerned expenditures on campaigning for candidates and parties within 30 days of a primary election and within 60 days of a general election, but the action for the People's Forum suggested here is concerned with public discussion and campaigning on issues rather than on candidates and parties, and it would be about a continual prohibition of public argument by vested interests rather than about such prohibition only in the month or two before elections. The idea here is to follow two principles stated in §2.1: (1) that the sole purpose of government is to choose and implement an optimal provision of public goods; and (2) public goods are often in mortal competition with private goods. Citizens with vested interests in private goods are very likely to be biased towards these and often have financial muscle they can use to persuade others to accept their bias. In the interests of productively deliberative democracy, they should be restrained from such activity so that all citizens are free to debate, discuss and decide the issue without distortion by powerful private interests.

7.2.11 Function 10

Developing the political will for difficult political decisions to be executed.

E20 Incentives for public participation. The People's Forum should increase the political will to both recognize issues and act on them, for it would help citizens participate more directly in the policy formation process. It would enable them to more actively determine what issues are seen as important and what they, through their government, will do about them. Widespread distrust of politicians, as discussed above in Chapter 1, in §2.2.1, §2.3.2 and in §3.2, should motivate many citizens to take the opportunity offered by the Forum, to issue public instructions to them. Although these directives would be nonbinding in a direct sense, citizens will be motivated to issue them (by voting in PF) for both expressive satisfaction and to take advantage of the possibility that they may eventually become binding, as discussed above in §7.2.6.

E4 Repetition of the poll. The ongoing operation of the People's Forum would allow it to monitor — and apply pressure for — the implementation of the policy changes that it effects. Lupia and Matsusaka (2004, 476) observe that currently, difficulty with such implementation arises because

> the same governmental actors who once blocked the policies from proceeding through traditional legislative channels may be in a position to influence, or even determine, the extent of their post-election implementation and enforcement … Organizations that pass initiatives … often disband soon after the election … Compared with professional legislatures, such entities are in a relatively bad position to oversee those charged with implementing their edicts.

7.2.12 Function 11

Offering a capacity for citizens to initiate and run the poll without government assistance and funding, if these are difficult to obtain.

As is discussed later in §9.3, the Forum is not amenable to starting up as a small, inexpensive, very local project and then expanding it. This is because a large operation that covers a province, state or nation is needed to create the strong politi-

cal impact required to stimulate public interest and deliberation on the issues that PF would focus on. Publics of large size usually have much more power to determine their long-term future than small ones, so it would only be People's Forums run at large scales that offer the prospect of strategic influence to those eligible to participate in them. As the People's Forum is designed to develop strategic policy, running it at a small local scale risks making it appear irrelevant and impotent. This requirement of large scale for the People's Forum makes it difficult for citizens to initiate and test it. However, as noted under E3 / E17 below and discussed above in §6.2.3, this is basically a financial problem that is probably easier to solve than that of raising the political will to have government introduce and run the system.

E3 Voluntary voting, E17 Advisory influence. As voluntary, advisory voting does not compel voting and the implementation of results, it allows the People's Forum to be run by a private organisation if government will not run it as a service to the public. Voluntary, self-selecting voting also facilitates its operation on a large scale.

E7 Accessibility. Polling by telephone and the internet makes voting highly accessible to citizens. It also facilitates fast tallying by computer and minimizes cost. As noted under E7 in §7.2.2, the virtually extinct 'digital divide' should not restrict accessibility.

E21 Funding. Possible sources of finance for this system are discussed above in §6.4. The economy of operation noted above under E7 support the feasibility of raising funds for a demonstration poll covering a substantial region such as a province, state or even a nation. This may have to initially use low or negligible voting security as discussed under E22 in §7.2.13 below, and be restricted to online ballot presentation and voting, without backup with hard-copy ballot papers.

7.2.13 Function 12

The Forum develops the confidence of the people in the People's Forum as a political institution, so that they and their representatives will maintain it and use it. This includes a capacity for the public to set or supervise the agenda.

The People's Forum should be attractive to many citizens, for there is growing interest in new democratic processes. As Warren observes,

> people in the developed democracies have become *disaffected* from their political institutions. They are now less likely to trust their governments and more likely to judge them incompetent, untrustworthy, and even corrupt. While the causes and meanings of these trends have been subject to considerable study and debate, it seems that disaffection reflects not apathy but increasingly critical evaluations of government … increasing disaffection from formal political institutions seems to be paralleled by increasing attention toward other ways and means of getting collective things done … The most dramatic developments over the past couple of decades include the rise in power of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in the international arena and the dramatic increase in associations devoted to problems of collective action that replace, displace, or work in concert with state powers. (2002b, 681–82, emphasis in original)

The same concerns of citizens are also noted by Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2001) as being a major cause of Americans' dislike of government. However, instead of referring to it as disaffection with 'institutions', they refer to it as a 'procedural' problem.

> [W]e do believe that the research contained here, on balance, favors procedural rather than policy explanations for Americans' dissatisfaction with government … Moreover, public negativity is unlikely to be corrected by attempts to facilitate public involvement in the political process. Rather, the best strategy for improving public attitudes toward government is to enact reforms that would make it

> difficult or impossible for decision makers to feather their own nests by virtue of the decisions they render. (2001, 250)

As the People's Forum offers transparency and also sensitivity to public reaction, its deployment as a part of the policy-making apparatus should allow citizens to make it more difficult 'for decision makers to feather their own nests by virtue of the decisions they render.' If citizens cannot do this, for example by insisting on better laws against such corruption, by voting against politicians with excessively narrow policies and by directing strategic policy, then who will? Although the Forum appears to contravene Hibbing and Theiss-Morse's advice to avoid relying on public involvement in politics, that contravention is more apparent than real, as much involvement via the Forum is 'at arm's length', being merely an annual vote that is made in private without face-to-face political discussion or disputation. In addition, those who actively participate in the Forum by voting on or arguing about its questions may be only a very small part of the population, while the results of that vote may provide heuristic guidance for the rest, who might promote those results by voting for political candidates who support them.

E3 Voluntary voting. If the People's Forum is to succeed, its selection of issues, questions and menus of answers must be seen by the community to be relevant, comprehensive and competent. If citizens see or suspect shortcomings, they are unlikely to participate. Voluntary voting therefore confers an easily exercised power of boycott on citizens, and this will oblige poll managers to invite suggestions from them on the selection of issues, questions and menus of answers, as discussed in E2 below. This invitation would be a prominent, permanent feature of the ballot paper.

E2 Agenda contributions from citizens. In response to requests from citizens for issues and questions on the ballot paper to be altered or deleted, or for new ones to be added, the managers would publish a list of the requests they have received

since the previous poll. This would note whether each request has been acceded to and if not, why not. The reasons given for refusing requests, together with any ensuing public controversy, should contribute to the deliberation of issues by the public. Such capacity for the public to have a continuing influence on the agenda conforms to the recommendation by Chambers (2001, 251) that questions should be chosen and framed as an iterative, nonbinding process that makes referendums 'part of an ongoing process of consultation rather than a once-and-for-all ratification.'

As discussed below under E10, the agenda may be of indeterminate length, so any agenda suggestions could be accepted by the Forum to produce what might be called a 'wikiagenda', after the manner of compilation of Wikipedia. However, this is unlikely to produce a high-quality ballot paper without strong control by the managers of the Forum, including their insertion of many issues and questions and editing to eliminate any duplication and overlap in issues, together with questions that may cause confusion. Their judgement would be needed to ensure that the issues placed on the ballot are long-running and preferably of high public significance either on their own or because of their relationships to other issues on the ballot. The managers must also ensure that the most crucial questions are posed (see e.g. §7.2.2 E11, E12, E13), including questions aimed at systemic solutions rather than solely at the treatment of symptoms. They would also make sure that references are given in issue descriptions and questions, to other issues or questions in the paper that are related to them. The description of each issue also requires editorial supervision to minimize bias and to make sure that crucial aspects are covered. For such reasons, the published agenda must be the responsibility of the managers, but the voluntary voting of the Forum ultimately transfers this responsibility to the public, for they will see what the managers present and may pass judgement on this by voting in the poll, or by boycotting it, or by publicly voicing their approval or disapproval of the management of the Forum.

An alternative to relying on the poll managers to write the agenda might be a government regulation that requires the Forum to run issues and questions that are requested by the public through a minimum number of signatures on a petition, as is done with citizen-initiated referenda. This is not recommended, as it should not be necessary, it requires the government to assist the Forum, and it would be time-consuming and expensive for citizens. The cost of collecting signatures to place one measure on a citizen-initiated referendum in California has now risen to over US$1 million (Lupia and Matsusaka 2004).

As the Forum's ballot paper would require voters to give their personal response to pre-prepared questions, it restricts their creativity in devising solutions to policy problems by comparison with deliberative processes, such as consensus conferences and citizen juries, in which the whole group discusses an issue and devises a joint response (G. Smith 2009, 100). However, this constraint should be countered by a prominent invitation at the head of the ballot paper for citizens to make suggestions for its revision. One effect of this might be that new questions are introduced to the ballot, implying solutions different from those suggested by its previous questions.

E10 Wide-ranging menu. An extensive ballot paper that covers the widest range of important long-running issues would maximize the number of citizens who could find within it issues of concern to them and who may therefore engage with the poll. The size of this menu should not be intimidating to citizens because, as with using dictionaries, telephone directories and the internet, people will see that size is helpful rather than a problem, for it means they are more likely to find that the ballot includes issues on which they want to have a say.

An extensive ballot paper will not make large demands on the time of citizens, for they can only vote once a year in a PF poll, and when they do, they would only vote on those issues in which they are interested. They will be assisted to find these in several ways: by grouping related topics under headings (such as International Relations, Population, Natural Resources and

the Environment, The Economy, and Ethics or Value Systems); by showing headings and specific topics in a table of contents; by listing issues in an index; and by providing a search engine in the web-based ballot paper. The act of voting should only take an hour or two at home, and probably less when the voter becomes familiar with the ballot paper and more expert with the set of issues that he or she wants to vote on.

Another demand on the time of citizens is noted by Beetham (1999, 8): 'It takes time to grasp and discuss the complex issues involved in public decision-making, and there is only so much time that people will agree to devote to it.' The People's Forum provides economy of time by not requiring citizens to attend deliberation events, either in person or online. However, as PF would provide an easy, quick and a potentially slightly influential way for each citizen to express political views, it may encourage them to spend more of their free time reading about, observing, discussing and thinking about issues. As part of this activity, they may join deliberative groups such as study circles.

The length of the ballot paper will be determined by how much editorial and associated work the Forum's management team can handle, and this includes responding to requests from citizens and groups for changes to the menus of issues, questions and answers. As the years of polling pass, the staff of a Forum should be able to extend the length of its ballot paper.

E15 COMPETITION. Competition between two different People's Forums may assist with creative approaches to the menus of issues, questions and answers that are presented to citizens, and this would maximize their choices of issues and questions and their interest in this system. However, as indicated above in this section under E3, E2 and E10, public scrutiny and good management should make this unnecessary.

E20 INCENTIVES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION. People may be motivated to use the People's Forum (by voting in its polls and by arguing to get others to vote in support of their ideas) through both egoistic and solidary interests. Egoism will incline them to

try to get their preferences to dominate the results in order to take advantage of any political influence that is developed by the Forum. The solidary, or cooperative and altruistic motivation (e.g. Alford and Hibbing 2004; Fehr and Fischbacher 2003; Orbell et al. 2004), would be to raise the profile of important public issues in order to promote public discourse that both develops and helps to execute wiser public policy. As the Forum would give each citizen the prospect of having slightly more power to express and implement their opinions (at a very low personal cost in effort and time, as noted in E10 above) it should stimulate some citizens to further develop their opinions on public affairs, and in turn this may increase the demand for accurate information. An additional incentive for these egoistic and solidary responses is, as noted in §7.2.11 E20, that widespread distrust of politicians and conventional political processes should drive some citizens to take the opportunity offered by the Forum to attempt to publicly and regularly issue instructions to them. In order to enhance the public credibility and thus the force of their instructions, some citizens may become motivated to learn more about the issues they vote on.

Bennett (2006) emphasizes the importance of cognitive ability, motivation and opportunity in determining the level of political information possessed by citizens. This makes good organization and communication essential, because organization produces both motivation (Bimber et al. 2005) and opportunity, while communication motivates by developing both trust and incentives of purposive, expressive and solidary types. The introduction of PF into a democracy should significantly strengthen its organization and communication. Bennett (2006) considers nothing can be done about deficits in cognitive ability, but the People's Forum's meritocratic function (§7.2.6 and §7.2.8) aims to circumvent much of this problem by allowing many people with these deficits to be bypassed, by facilitating the political influence of those who are thinking about public issues. The Forum's design assumes that many of those engaged citizens will have high cognitive ability.

E22 VOTING SECURITY. Some degree of voting security is essential if citizens are to have confidence in the Forum as an institution that assists governments to function. Security is provided by several conditions: That only those people who are eligible to vote do so; that they each have only one vote per polling event (one vote may comprise answers to any number of questions on any number of the issues on the ballot); that their privacy is protected; that their votes are tallied without corruption; and possibly other facilities, such as a voter being able to revise her vote before the final tally and being able to discover if her vote was omitted or miscounted and then to be able to correct this (Schneier 1996, 125). A security system should permit easy access for voting and preferably the freedom for the poll to operate without interference by government. Ease of access ideally includes the opportunity for electors to vote on impulse, without prior registration, as discussed in §6.1.3. In Australia, impulse voting with some security requires the electoral roll to be used as votes are cast, in order to check whether each voter is eligible and to ensure that they only vote once. High security will not cater for voting on impulse as it requires the voter to first contact the Forum's central tabulating facility (CTF) to register and be allocated an identification number. The voter may then vote, quoting that number and attaching a personally selected two-part code. When the CTF publishes her vote with the first part of the code she may confirm it by attaching the second part and returning it to the CTF (Schneier 1996, 129). This procedure allows errors in tabulation to be corrected by the voter and also permits her to alter her vote, but its complexity may discourage engagement if it were used by the People's Forum. As this poll is not an election but only registers non-decisive opinions, a simpler lower-security approach should be adequate.

To enable impulse voting in countries where citizens do not have a personal identification number (PIN) that locates them on an electoral roll, the People's Forum security system must personally deliver a PIN to every eligible voter before the poll, or the ballot paper must instruct the voter how to devise his or her own PIN, so that the tally computer can use it to locate the

voter's name on the roll. The latter type of PIN might be name and date of birth, converted by the voter into a number code if this is needed for telephone voting. Both types of PIN require the cooperation of the government for the use of its electoral roll, and this may not be forthcoming. If a government chose to assist in this way it could either (a) license the polling company to use the electronic form of the roll to identify eligible voters in order to check the validity of incoming electronic votes, or (b) authorize its (government) electoral department to be contracted by the People's Forum to validate incoming electronic votes and then transmit them to the Forum's CTF for tallying, classified as either fraudulent or valid. In Australia, use of the electoral roll by either option (a) or (b) requires the government to approve the Forum as one of the few organisations that is permitted to utilize the electoral roll, and this may not be possible until a demonstration People's Forum poll is carried out to raise public and political awareness of its potential.

Where a demonstration of the People's Forum does not have the support of the government, it must be cheap enough for the necessary funds to be raised by citizens, and it must proceed without checking each voter's eligibility against the electoral roll. These conditions present two options for the demonstration, both of which would use a web-based ballot paper. The first is to essentially dispense with voting security and perhaps merely require that voters give their name and address before being permitted to vote. This insecure way of demonstrating the People's Forum may be sufficient to gain public comprehension and support. Public confidence in the validity of the results of the initial demonstration polls may be much less important than citizens using the system or seeing it operate, to get a feel for its potential. The second option gives a slight degree of voting security and has citizens either registering before the poll or using a credit card to identify themselves if they choose to vote on impulse. To register, a citizen would ask (by phone, website or email) PF to allocate them a PIN and send it to their postal or email address. In the case of postal delivery, registration may have to close a few days before the close of the poll to allow the

PIN to arrive in time for a vote to be cast. Citizens who do not register before the poll may vote on impulse during the week that it is open by prefacing their telephone or internet vote with a credit card payment of a nominal fee, say 1c, to the People's Forum. Successful payment by the bank to the Forum would inform it that the name used was authentic, or at least linked to the credit card number used. Neither that name nor that card number could be used to vote again without the managers of the Forum seeing it recur, in which case they would block those votes and perhaps the initial one as well, to tally them as fraudulent for a subsequent analysis of which views were falsely represented by multiple votes. With this procedure, impulse voters would pay about 21c to vote (20c for the credit card transaction and 1c for the vote), which is hardly a disincentive. A demonstration of the People's Forum by either the insecure or the slightly secure option may produce pressure from the public for its government to assist future operation of this system, by public funding and also by allowing voting security to be implemented by making the electoral roll available in either of the two ways (a) and (b) suggested above.

The Washington-based International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) provides very useful information on voting systems, including the internet-based voting that is now used in a number of countries, including Norway, Estonia, France, Netherlands, Spain–Barcelona, US–West Virginia, Australia–New South Wales, Canada–Markham and Switzerland–Geneva. Each country, province or city selects a system that suits their situation and priorities. However, as IFES is focused on state-run systems, it does not address the independent polling that may be needed to establish the People's Forum, as discussed above. An exception to that qualification is the Estonian digital identity card, which has been operating successfully for a decade in many applications including voting, and which is open to 'non-resident 'satellite Estonians', thereby creating a global, government-standard digital identity' (*Economist* 2014b). This may not be convenient enough, as applicants pay a fee of around

US$40 to 70 and must provide biometric data and suitable documentation.

E17 Advisory influence. If the People's Forum is to earn the confidence of the public, it must not incite violent conflict between citizens as they probe controversial and strongly held beliefs. In considering such possibilities, Dryzek (2006, 47) argues for 'partially decoupling the deliberation and decision aspects of democracy' (as discussed above in §7.2.2 E10). The People's Forum does this by producing choices that are not binding on government but which would invite the mass public to make them so.

7.3 Comments on design element E1 — the ballot paper

As the transferability of the People's Forum to liberal democracies will depend on the receptions that their publics give to the ballot paper, a few additional comments on its design and potential impact are offered.

A Forum covering a limited jurisdiction such as a state or province would not restrict itself to issues managed at this level, but would also cover issues of a broader scope, from national to global. This is partly to encourage residents to develop preferences for their state in recognition of the wider context in which it operates. It also enables state residents to send messages to their national government and perhaps on occasion to the rest of the world, as well as to their state government. A Forum that is run at a high level of jurisdiction, say nationally in a federation of states, would use ballot papers that may differ from state to state in their treatments of state issues but which posed identical questions in each state for issues of national and wider concern, as noted in §6.1.4. The ballot paper should include subjects that are not normally considered to be issues of public policy, such as the way citizens think, the values they hold and whether they make choices with self-assurance or defensiveness. Such inquiry into the culture would be a vital part of the deliberation

that the People's Forum would try to stimulate among citizens, for their culture influences the opinions they hold and therefore the policies of their democratic government.

An example of the possible treatment of a subject, or a class of issues, by the ballot paper is now given, to help the reader imagine how it would try to foster public deliberation on strategic issues. This illustration uses the subject of population size and shows a possible treatment of this by a ballot paper for the state of Tasmania in a national People's Forum for Australia. The strategic importance of this subject was discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, and this long-term focus is addressed by the first three issues selected below in this subject (coded PO1, PO2 and PO3). This contrasts with practice in Australia, where population size tends to be treated with a short- to medium-term emphasis, stressing the impact of migration on unemployment, congestion of cities, adequacy of infrastructure, aging of the population and the desire of the business lobby for labour and greater domestic demand.

The menus of issues and questions given here for this subject are offered merely as examples and it is, of course, possible that wide consultation may produce a different selection that addresses the public choice of population size more effectively. Questions and answer menus are identified here by codes such as Q1, which means question 1 for an issue (such as issue PO1 in the subject of 'size of population', which is given the identification code PO). A1 is the answer menu for question Q1, A2 the answer menu for Q2 and so on. The bracketed descriptions following Q and sometimes A, such as 'state', 'national', 'attitude', 'justification', 'implementation' or 'willingness to pay' (see §7.2.2 E13) may not be displayed on operational ballot papers. The menus of answers have a code number to the right of each answer that the voter may select as part of their vote.

A POSSIBLE TREATMENT OF ONE CLASS OF STRATEGIC ISSUES BY A PEOPLE'S FORUM BALLOT PAPER FOR THE STATE OF TASMANIA

PO POPULATION SIZE

PO1: HOW MANY OF US DO WE WANT?

What future population size do you think our governments should aim at, for the next century or more, in both Australia and the state of Tasmania? Before you commit yourself, you may like to examine and explain your thinking by considering and answering the questions in PO2 and PO3.

Something you may be concerned with here is the question of whether Tasmanians and Australians have the right to choose the size of their populations. Should these decisions be made by these residents or should they be made by the global community instead (if this were possible, say, through the UN or a future world governing body) or should they not be made at all? You can vote on G04 if you want to express your wishes on the desirability and structure of a world government [issue G04 in the subject of Government (GO) is not included in this sample of a ballot paper].

Q1 (NATIONAL, ATTITUDE)
What size of population do you think we should aim for in Australia?

A1

Zero	0
<10 million	1
15 million	2
23 million (approximately the current size)	3
25 million	4
30 million	5
40 million	6
>40 million	7

We shouldn't aim for any particular size of population. We should be open to the ebb and flow of migration across the planet and to whatever birth rate we happen to have. 8
We should adhere to any population targets for Australia which may be determined by the world community, for example, under the auspices of the United Nations. 9

Q2 (STATE, ATTITUDE)
For this question, just ignore the problems of changing or controlling the size of Tasmania's population — if we wanted to — and state the size you prefer it to be.

A2
Zero 10
<300,000 11
400,000 12
500,000 (approximately the current size) 13
600,000 14
800,000 15
1,000,000 16
2,000,000 17
>2,000,000 18
We shouldn't aim for any particular size of population within Tasmania but be open to ebb and flow of people over the whole nation. 19

Q3 (STATE, ATTITUDE)
If your answer to Q2 expresses a preference for restricting the size of Tasmania's population, either currently or after some further growth in the future, do you want Tasmania to secede from Australia if that is necessary to achieve this restriction? This may be needed if federal policy on population size does not restrict the size of the nation's population — so that the state can implement its own population policy, including controlling migration into the state from both the mainland states and from overseas.

A3

No, Tasmania should not secede.	20
Not sure.	21
Yes, Tasmania should secede if this is necessary to restrict its population size.	22

PO2: ARE THE BENEFITS OF POPULATION GROWTH WORTH ITS COSTS?

Over the last decade, Australia's population grew at around 1.2% per year. This is the fastest of the developed countries, which average 0.3% per year and is the same as the current average for the world. In 2007, Australia's population grew at 1.6%, more than half of which (56%) was produced by net migration and the rest (44%) by natural increase (Weaver and Weaver 2008). A larger population gives benefits such as more people enjoying the Australian lifestyle, greater ethnic diversity, more cultural development and cultural facilities, bigger domestic markets and more intellectual and other human resources for our industrial development and our defence forces.

On the other hand, growth of population incurs economic costs. It requires expenditure on expansion of infrastructure such as housing, hospitals, schools, roads, factories, power stations, oil wells, mines and farms in order to maintain the national level of per capita affluence for more and more people. The cost (in terms of human effort, which is largely measured by financial expenditure) of the population growth-driven part of our expansion of infrastructure and skills has been estimated in Australia at 9.6% of GDP (for a 1.4% growth in population per year) and in the USA at 12.5% of GDP (for a 1% growth in population per year) (Cocks 2012; O'Sullivan 2012; Thurow 1986). This means that if we decided not to expand our population, we could take approximately an extra month holiday each year without being financially poorer for it, or if we prefer, spend that 10% of our GDP on developing a carbon-neutral economy, or boosting foreign aid, or giving more help to disadvantaged Australians, or protecting more of our environment, or contributing

to the development of a global administration as described in G04 [not included in this sample of a ballot paper] and so on.

There is another type of cost incurred by growth of population, and this cannot be measured in monetary terms. As the population expands it makes natural resources more scarce. The nation's limited stock of these is shared between more and more Australians. Those that are non-renewable deplete more quickly as more citizens consume them. Renewables may not be diminished, but more Australians means smaller shares for each to enjoy. Depending on the particular renewable resource, smaller shares can result in them being less enjoyable (crowding effects) or in being overused and destroyed, despite their potential for renewable use. So a growing population diminishes the per capita availability of natural resources. This not only raises the prices of those that are marketed, but also erodes the quality of those that are free (such as biodiversity, wilderness and stocks for fishing and hunting) while making it more feasible to have people pay to use them. Some of the natural resources affected in such ways are overseas, such as oil reserves and native forests of the tropics and North America. Australians are among the world's heaviest per capita consumers of natural resources, including a per capita contribution to global greenhouse gas (GHG) emission that is around ninth out of 185 countries (a ranking that includes emissions from changes in land use).

Q1 (NATIONAL; ATTITUDE AND JUSTIFICATION)
In view of the possible costs to both financial and natural resources, of increasing the size of Australia's population, do you think this population growth should be slowed or stopped to allow these resources to be used for other purposes?

A1 (ATTITUDE)

I think our population growth rate should be increased.	23
I think our population growth rate should be maintained.	24
Population growth in Australia should be slowed.	25
Population growth in Australia should be halted.	26
Population growth in Australia should be reversed.	27

A1 (JUSTIFICATION)
I think that population growth incurs financial costs. 28
I do not think that population growth incurs financial costs. 29
I think that population growth makes natural resources more scarce. 30
I do not think that population growth makes natural resources more scarce. 31

PO3: QUALITY OF LIFE, GLOBAL EQUALITY AND OUR CHOICE OF POPULATION SIZE

Since the early years of colonization, Australians have enjoyed a lifestyle largely based on a high per capita availability of natural resources. This may be regarded as unfair when compared with the situation of people in more heavily populated countries. The word 'lifestyle' is used here to refer to affluence (or per capita income), plus quality of life. The latter comprises all those public goods that help to make life pleasant, such as a healthy and interesting environment, a supportive and stimulating culture and high standards of social justice and social welfare.

Q1 (NATIONAL; ATTITUDE)
Do you want Australia to maintain (or to achieve and then maintain) standards of per capita affluence and quality of life that are higher than those in many other countries, because of an advantage for Australians of a relative per capita abundance of natural resources? Or do you think Australians should eliminate any such privilege in order to share our natural resources more equitably with other people around the world, perhaps by inviting more of them to migrate here?

A1
Select one of the following four options:

We should try to remain more affluent than the world average (also see Q3 below). 32

We should try to remain more affluent than the world average — provided that this affluence is not produced by exploiting other nations (also see Q3 below). 33
We should only be as affluent as the world average. 34
We should be less affluent than the world average. 35

Select one of the following three options:

We should try to retain a relatively high quality of life (also see Q3 below). 36
We should have just an average (in a global sense) quality of life. 37
We should have a quality of life below the world average. 38

Q2 (NATIONAL; ATTITUDE, JUSTIFICATION)
Do you think that an important ingredient of both affluence and/or high quality of life is a low pressure of population on natural resources, in other words, a high per capita abundance of land, sea, air and the natural resources (including native wildlife and vegetation) that go with them?

A2
Yes, for affluence. 39
Yes, for quality of life. 40
No, for affluence. 41
No, for quality of life. 42

Q3 (NATIONAL; ATTITUDE)
Do you think that if we are to maintain living conditions that are better than those in many other countries, we will have to maintain immigration controls to restrict the inflow of immigrants wanting to enjoy these favourable conditions?

A3
We must restrict immigration to maintain relative affluence. 43
We must restrict immigration to maintain relative quality of life. 44

We do not have to restrict immigration to maintain relative affluence. 45
We do not have to restrict immigration to maintain relative quality of life. 46

PO4: WHO DO WE WANT TO JOIN US?

Q1 (NATIONAL; ATTITUDE)
If Australia is to continue to accept immigrants, on what basis should they be selected?

A1
Select one or more of these answers
No selection criteria. First come, first accepted. 47
Acceptable races and cultures only. 48
Their value to Australia's economy — accept the wealthy, those with skills in short supply, young, healthy, English language proficiency … 49
People seeking to avoid economic difficulties. 50
Refugees from acute difficulties, such as persecution, disaster or war. 51
Family reunion. 52
Minimize the numbers taken now, to maintain a maximum capacity for Australia to take refugees in the longer term, for example, if global warming inundates places or causes famine by disrupting the Asian monsoon. 53

End of issue treatment example

8
LIKELY REACTIONS TO THE FORUM

If a People's Forum was to be run at an operational scale, it may well be treated with disdain by many conservatives as it could seem to them to be biased towards liberals. This is because the Forum would be questioning the status quo to see if change might improve things. Although many conservatives may be uneasy about this, few liberals will react in that way, because the two groups have been found to be consistently distinguished by the personality trait of 'openness to change' (Haidt 2012, 279; Jost 2009; Jost et al. 2003a; Mooney 2012, 96). Science journalist Jim Giles (2008, 29) summarizes the research as showing that people with high scores in openness to change are almost twice as likely to be liberals as conservatives. Openness to change includes willingness to accept new ideas and new experiences, tolerance for ambiguity and lack of closure, regarding change as an opportunity rather than a problem, and thinking about the world as it might be. Liberals are therefore likely to welcome the Forum as a tool for developing and implementing progressive policies, while conservatives may be offended by its questions and results and therefore repudiate the institution itself. Another difference between liberals and conservatives is that the latter are more sensitive to perceptions of threat (e.g Haidt 2012, 279; Jost et al. 2003a) and thus tend to have greater needs for power and security. This is related to resistance to change (Jost 2009, 134), and both dispositions may be aggravated by the Forum's ballot paper because, in order to indicate why an issue could be

important and worth public examination, the paper's description of it is likely to include evidence of need for change, such as surveying the risks involved in ignoring the issue. It might be thought that discussing risks will arouse the interest of threat-sensitive conservatives, but some of them could overreact by denying any risk at all and rejecting any forum that discusses it. This may feel entirely sensible to them as it also expresses their aversion to change. Even if some risks or opportunities are crucial for the future wellbeing of society, their coverage by the Forum's selection and descriptions of issues and by its questions may look like bias to someone who is particularly averse to change and threat.

Public dispute is therefore expected to arise over perceptions of liberal bias in People's Forums. Although this may inhibit the political influence of Forums by tending to discredit them, it may also promote this influence, as any such dispute will focus attention on the Forum and the specific questions it poses that provoke the dispute. This should encourage citizens to think more about the Forum and its questions and to participate by debating and voting. The people who run People's Forums must therefore manage controversies over bias by trying to minimize and resolve them while also channelling them to contribute energy towards the execution of the Forum's two strategies.

As some of the perception of bias in the Forum will arise from genetically determined predispositions, it is likely to persist. Political scientists John Alford, Caroline Funk and John Hibbing (2005) have shown from studies of the political attitudes of monozygotic (identical) and dizygotic (fraternal) twins that for the conservative–liberal spectrum of attitudes, genotype (or 'nature') accounts for about 40% of the variance between individuals. Political genetics is now a developing field, and at the time of writing had identified twelve genes with variants that might incline people towards liberalism or conservatism. Perhaps the most definite of these prospects is from the gene DRD4, which is involved in regulating levels of the neurotransmitter dopamine and has a variant (7R) that is associated with novelty-seeking behaviour (Hatemi and McDermott 2012). DRD4–7R is there-

fore considered to facilitate openness to change. In 2010, James Fowler and associates (Settle 2010) found that people with this variant who also had a large network of friends in adolescence tended to be liberal rather than conservative. Although there are no genes specifically for liberalism or conservatism, this study was the first to show that a specific gene-environment interaction helps people develop an affinity with one or the other side of politics.

8.1 A closer look at the differing reactions of liberals and conservatives

Paul Slovic was quoted in §4.1(8) as observing that people 'do their best to hold onto their worldviews' and that they do so because it helps them maintain their personal identities and social networks. However, as observed above, some world views such as the conservative resistance to change and the liberal outlook of openness to change are facilitated by genotype, and this further explains why people 'do their best to hold onto' them. We should therefore not expect rapid political change from attempts to facilitate public deliberation. Any such change will be slow, requiring discourse over many years, and most of it may take place in young people as they build and modify their political preferences — partly by observing the discourse and by participating in it.

The difference between conservative and liberal world views has been summarized by psychologist John Jost (2009) as comprising two core preferences: stability versus change and hierarchy versus equality, both of which are partially motivated by differing needs to manage uncertainty and threat. The first of these is conservatives' preference for the status quo and liberals' openness to change, as discussed above. The second is that conservatives tolerate and support inequality (possibly as it is seen to be the natural order of things, the status quo) whereas liberals want change that reduces inequality. As noted in §4.2.3, the passive and sometimes active support that conservatives give to inequality is a major obstacle to controlling economic growth,

as it prevents radical sharing of employment. One of the results of this is a crucial block to collective action for halting global warming and other damage to our natural capital.

From Jost and others (e.g. Jost et al. 2003a,b; Jost 2009; Giles 2008; Graham and Estes 2012) we can list the main conservative-liberal polarities of preferences or tolerances as follows (conservative first, liberal last) in which the core tensions noted by Jost and his colleagues are printed bold:

1. **stability and convention versus openness to change and novelty seeking;**
2. order, organization and certainty versus tolerance of ambiguity;
3. **hierarchy versus equality**;
4. cognitive closure versus inclination for integrative complexity (viewing issues from multiple perspectives and merging those views into nuanced positions) (Mooney 2012, 69–70);
5. conscientiousness versus rebellion and creativity;
6. lower control of impulses versus higher control of impulses (Graham and Estes 2012, 42);
7. **fear of threat (including salience of personal mortality and threats to the stability of the social system) versus a relative tolerance of threat.**

In addition to these conservative–liberal polarities, there are others in moral values and they will be inspected later, with a suggestion as to how they might be explained by these seven polarities.

Much of the potential for this list of seven polarities shows up in the comprehensive system of human motivational values proposed by psychologist Shalom Schwartz (2007). His system demonstrates tensions between values within the individual (rather than between different individuals) and is depicted in Figure 8.1 by opposing segments in a circular arrangement of the values experienced by each person. Schwartz developed this scheme by hypothesizing from evolutionary psychology that

> values represent, in the form of conscious goals, three universal requirements of human existence to which all individuals and societies must be responsive: needs of individuals as biological organisms, requisites of coordinated social interaction, and survival and welfare needs of groups. (Schwartz 1992, 4)

To test this conjecture, Schwartz took 210 samples from 67 countries on 54 to 57 items of abstract value that should help to satisfy those 'three universal requirements of human existence', such as creativity, wealth and honesty (Schwartz 2007). The people in each sample rated each value item for its importance as guiding principles in their lives and the relations between items were represented by proximity in two dimensions. Those proximities placed the value items within segments of a circle as shown in Figure 8.1, where each segment is a motivationally distinct type of value, as listed and defined in Table 8.1. The circular configuration indicates that each individual, irrespective of nationality and culture, experiences the same *congruities* and *tensions* between types of value. Congruities are shown by proximities of value types around the circumference and tensions by opposing locations of value types across the circle. Schwartz further summarizes these ten types of value into four broad types, which are shown outside the circle adjacent to the two or three types of value that they encompass. As indicated by their opposing locations, these broad types produce two tensions within the individual:

1. openness to change (stimulation, self-direction) versus conservation (tradition, conformity and security) and
2. self-enhancement (power, achievement and hedonism) versus self-transcendence (universalism and benevolence).

Different individuals have different resolutions of the tensions between types of value, at both the detailed level (10 types) and the broad level (4 types). At the broad level, this means that each individual has, in the openness to change–conservation dimension, some motivation for openness to change and

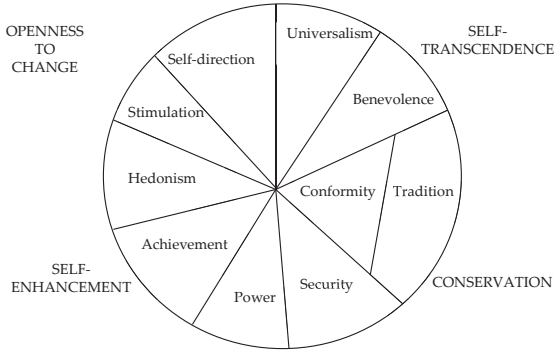

Fig. 8.1. Theoretical model of relations among ten motivational types of value (from Schwartz 2007).

STIMULATION	Excitement, novelty and challenge in life
SELF-DIRECTION	Independent thought and action: choosing, creating, exploring
UNIVERSALISM	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature.
BENEVOLENCE	Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact.
TRADITION	Respect for, commitment to and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide for the self.
CONFORMITY	Restraint of actions, inclinations and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms.
SECURITY	Safety, harmony and stability of society, of relationships and of self.
POWER	Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources.
ACHIEVEMENT	Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards.
HEDONISM	Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself.

Table 8.1. Definitions of motivational types of values in terms of their core goal (from Schwartz 2007, 174).

some for conservation. Those with more openness to change than conservation are likely to be politically liberal and those with stronger conservation values, conservative. Likewise, in the self-enhancement–self-transcendence dimension, each per-

son strikes their own balance between these two broad values, and some will be more self-enhancing and others more self-transcending. In line with his initial approach, Schwartz sums up his analysis with an evolutionary explanation of the two broad dimensions of motivational tension. He conjectures that the conflict within the individual of self-enhancement versus self-transcendence was selected because *Homo sapiens* evolved as a social animal and this demanded that individuals attend to the interests of both self and group. The intra-personal tension of openness to change against conservation is seen as being selected by the struggle for survival in a sometimes hostile environment, as this would require abilities to adapt and to maintain stability. Furthermore, natural selection is likely to have produced the ability of each person to strike different balances between self-enhancement and self-transcendence and between openness to change and conservation depending on their circumstances (see also Jost 2009, 139). Tim Jackson has described some of the implications of this with slightly different terminology: altruism for self-transcendence, selfishness for self-enhancement, novelty seeking for openness to change and tradition for conservation.

> The important point here is that each society strikes the balance between altruism and selfishness (and also between novelty and tradition) in different places. And where this balance is struck depends crucially on social structure. When technologies, infrastructures, institutions and social norms reward self-enhancement and novelty, then selfish sensation-seeking behaviours prevail over more considered, altruistic ones. Where social structures favour altruism and tradition, self-transcending behaviours are rewarded and selfish behaviour may even be penalized. (Jackson 2009, 163)

Another analysis of motivational values has been developed by social psychologists Jonathan Haidt and Craig Joseph (Haidt 2012). As with Schwartz's approach, they base their theory of 'moral foundations' on evolutionary psychology. From the major adaptive challenges that confronted our evolving social

ancestors, Haidt and Joseph conjectured that natural selection should have shaped our minds to value at least six 'virtues'. These 'moral intuitions' or 'moral foundations' are postulated to be generated by cognitive modules that were shaped by our evolution, and the six identified by Haidt and Joseph are concerns for: care/harm, fairness/cheating, loyalty/betrayal, authority/subversion, sanctity/degradation and liberty/oppression. The sanctity/degradation foundation covers such concerns as cleanliness, temperance, chastity and piety, with violations of those concerns typically arousing disgust. Together with several colleagues, Haidt has surveyed more than 130,000 people, with the clear result that self-identified liberals are motivated mainly by just three of these intuitive concerns — care/harm, fairness/cheating and liberty/oppression — whereas self-identified conservatives are well motivated by all of them (Haidt 2012, 181–84). Haidt's (2012, 279, 312) explanation of this striking difference is that, as noted above, people have different genotypes that give them different resolutions of the seven polarities listed in the opening part of this section, and these predispose (but do not predestine) some people to be less concerned with loyalty/betrayal, authority/subversion and sanctity/degradation. As life experiences cause people to react to events with these differing responses, they settle into those different attitudes, while identifying with those of similar disposition to form groups such as conservatives, authoritarians, libertarians and liberals. The social identities of the members of these groups then direct their confirmation bias, strengthening their divergent world views.

But as Jost (2012, 526) observes:

> From a scientific perspective, his theory raises more questions than it answers. Why do some individuals feel that it is morally good (or necessary) to obey authority, favour the ingroup, and maintain purity, whereas others are sceptical? Why do some think it is morally acceptable to judge or mistreat others (such as gay or lesbian couples or, only a generation ago, interracial couples) because they dislike or feel disgusted by them, whereas others do not? Why do we 'care about violence towards many more classes of victims to-

> day than our grandparents did in their time'? Haidt dismisses the possibility that this aspect of liberalism, which prizes universal over parochial considerations (the justice principle of impartiality), is in fact a tremendous cultural achievement — a shared victory over the limitations of our more primitive ancestral legacy.

Perhaps Jost's questions are answered by a more thorough application of the first mechanism in Haidt's explanation of conservative and liberal moral foundations, which is the effect of their genetic differences in 'motivational values' (Schwartz 2007) or 'motivated social cognition' (Jost et al. 2003a,b). We now devote some space to investigating this possibility because it could mean that those motivational values or motivated cognitions can construct more thoughtful morals than the intuitions that Haidt calls moral foundations. As Jost observes, thoughtful morals provide a better basis for public policy than indiscriminate acceptance of our intuitions.

Conservative–liberal differences in motivational values are approximately sketched by the seven polarities listed in the opening part of this section. What Haidt missed or perhaps ignored to avoid offending conservatives was that those polarities indicate that liberals tend to be better equipped than conservatives to teach themselves new emotional reactions when these are more appropriate in the modern world than Haidt's (2012, xiv, xv etc.) six instinctive moral foundations. This conjecture may provoke three questions: (1) how are liberals better equipped to recognize when new emotional reactions should replace instinctive ones; (2) how can people replace instinctive reactions with others; and (3) how are liberals better equipped to do this than conservatives? The answer to the first question is that liberals are more likely than conservatives to recognize needs for new emotional responses because liberals are more open to change, more inclined to exercise integrative complexity, to rebel against convention, to be creative, and to tolerate ambiguity, uncertainty and threat. The answer to the second question is that psychologists and psychiatrists have been aware for many years that people can largely determine their emo-

tional responses to stimuli by what they choose to think about them (e.g. Haidt 2012, 71; Seligman 1992; Seligman 1994). So, within limits, anyone can teach themselves new likes and dislikes, approvals and disapprovals, by regarding the stimuli that evoke emotional responses in more positive or negative ways. Perhaps this is a matter of deliberate association, a self-administered form of Pavlovian conditioning. The answer to the third question is the same as that to the first: liberals are more likely to be willing and able to teach themselves new emotional reactions because they tend to be more open to change and more thoughtful and tolerant.

From these observations then, we form our first element of hypothesis: Liberals are more likely than conservatives to review and overrule their intuitions when experience, self-examination or criticism from others indicates that they are unhelpful. To be blunt, this is a capacity for maturation. But on the other hand, conservatives have not only the youthful virtues of drive and commitment to their group and its goals, but also rather mature regards for stability, order, persistence and conscientiousness (Mooney 2012, 268). As Haidt (2012, 294–95) emphasizes, we need both the conservative and liberal approaches, often in alternating balance. He quotes John Stuart Mill: 'A party of order or stability, and a party of progress or reform, are both necessary elements of a healthy state of political life.' Haidt also notes Bertrand Russell claimed that 'social cohesion is a necessity and mankind has never yet succeeded in enforcing cohesion by merely rational arguments.' The need for cohesion is strongly appreciated at an instinctual level by conservatives, but may be neglected in the individualistic and reasoning approach of liberals that may put instinct on hold in order to consider other perspectives. Achieving a productive balance between conservative and liberal inputs may not be as difficult as it appears because, as the work of Schwartz and others indicates, most individuals have some of both dispositions and the balance that each person strikes between the two is in some cases influenced by their circumstances. And obviously, those circumstances include the ways in which people are treated by those with different points

of view. The People's Forum may be effective in this situation because its verdicts are nonbinding and thus, while of concern to those who differ, initially do not pose an urgent threat to them. Those verdicts would remain open to alteration for some years, until it becomes clear to all those who are interested in them: (a) that a firm majority decision has been reached, (b) why that choice was made, and (c) that the time has come to implement it.

This hypothesizing of why liberals have much narrower 'moral foundations' than conservatives suggests that liberals are more inclined and more able to mentally step outside their instinctive moral responses to objectively inspect them for appropriateness in the situation that aroused them. They will also be better equipped to conduct the same type of dispassionate inspection of other people, including those who are members of other groups, such as religions or nations. In all these situations, such inspections will often indicate that loyalty to a group, obedience to an authority figure and scrupulous sanctity (avoidance of contaminants, dirt, alcohol, other races and so on) can, in real life, be unnecessary and sometimes dangerous, whereas care, fairness and liberty will appear to be more directly and reliably useful. In making those value judgements of what is unnecessary, dangerous and useful, the criterion of value that is likely to be used is the utilitarian one, of what creates pleasure and avoids pain. Just why liberals would select that criterion despite their instinctive concern for at least care/harm, fairness/cheating and liberty/oppression (and to some extent for the other three of Haidt's moral foundations as well) is that, in observing the fallibility of moral instincts in others and in themselves, they will try to make sense of them by looking for something in them that might explain their feeling that all of them seem to have some value, even if only vaguely and perhaps not often. Fairly obviously, those foundations all have some capacity to produce pleasure and minimize pain. For example, obedience to authority generally pays off in terms of the pleasure of a stable life that is free of official persecution. If people assess the worth of their moral foundations by looking at how likely they are to produce

pleasure and minimize pain, for both themselves and others, then they are likely to rate care, fairness and liberty as the most direct and reliable sources of positive value. Some liberals will go further and look at these three values as also being rather superficial, in that they are merely instrumental in producing pleasure and avoiding pain.

Our hypothesis that many liberals are likely to actively select their 'moral foundations' by critically reviewing and overruling or retraining their ethical intuitions while many conservatives continue to view all of them as self-evident truths appears to be supported by the observation and theory of moral development that was initiated by psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg in the 1960s. His work indicates that as children grow up, some of them develop the ability to review and control their moral intuitions. Kohlberg identified the earliest part of the development of moral reasoning as the very superficial 'pre-conventional' phase of early childhood, such that if an adult punished a young child for an act, then the child would feel or 'know' that the act was wrong. Psychologist Elliot Turiel subsequently modified this description with the observation that, in all the cultures that he examined, children as young as five recognize, at some level, moral rules such as *harm is wrong*. In elementary school, children enter the 'conventional' phase of recognizing and respecting authority and social rules, even as they learn to manoeuvre within and around these constraints. After puberty, just as children develop the capacity for abstract thought,

> Kohlberg found that *some* children begin to think for themselves about the nature of authority, the meaning of justice, and the reasons behind rules and laws. In the two 'post-conventional' stages, adolescents still value honesty and respect rules and laws, but now they sometimes justify dishonesty or law-breaking in pursuit of still higher goods, particularly justice. (Haidt 2012, 8, emphasis added)

Kohlberg's finding that only some children achieve the later stages of development is crucial (which is also emphasized by Hetherington and Weiler 2009, 198). It echoes the hypothesis

advanced here that some people (presumably mostly those who become liberals) are better equipped than others (presumably mostly those who become conservatives) to move into the post-conventional phase. This developmental progression of the individual appears to be mirrored in a similar progression of societies. As Haidt (2012, 110) points out, societies that have become educated, industrialized, rich and democratic (generally western societies, hence earning the acronym WEIRD) have developed — partly in the Enlightenment — a set of moral foundations that is more liberal than those of most other societies, emphasizing concerns about harming, cheating and oppressing individuals. Both developmental progressions — in individuals and in societies — are suggested here to be processes of learning to replace inappropriate intuitions with more appropriate responses. The relevance of this hypothesis for the People's Forum is that it indicates that this institution might assist such learning and development. But to do it, the Forum must be managed not only to assist learning but also to assist those who are repelled by such change to adjust to it and to find a place within it where their motivations are appreciated, which is likely to be in leadership and in encouraging group solidarity. Conservatives may therefore make their greatest contribution in conventional electoral politics and the 'leadership' or executive function it provides (see §2.2 and §2.2.1 discussions of leadership), while liberals mainly use the Forum to develop the citizen directorship (see §2.2.2) that guides the so called 'leaders'.

Before concluding this consideration of differences in the dispositions of conservatives and liberals, we should note that those differences may produce very different attitudes to government, such as the Republican–Democrat split in the United States (see §3.2). As discussed in §2.2.3.1 and §2.2.3.2, and also indirectly in §4.1, it is often much easier to recognize and appreciate private goods than public goods. This suggests that liberals' inclination towards integrative complexity, tolerance of ambiguity, interest in novelty and so on leads them, as a general rule, to perceive the value of a wider range of public goods than conservatives will. And so, as it is primarily government that

provides and maintains these goods, liberals (generally Democrats in the US) may therefore tend to be more appreciative of government than conservatives (mostly Republicans in the US).

This brief and partly conjectural excursion into psychology and moral philosophy suggests that although genotype and tradition present considerable obstacles to productive public deliberation via the People's Forum, nevertheless this design has potential to make a crucial contribution to public policy. Although conservatives will suspect liberal bias in the Forum, they should not be viscerally alarmed that it threatens the social order because its establishment would not require the alteration or removal of existing institutions of government. They may therefore adapt to its presence by contributing to the debates it facilitates and by becoming accustomed to new ideas on public policy. But they will need more time than liberals; especially if the Forum facilitates deliberation on significant changes to the social order such as replacing electoral representation with sortition. Much of the deliberative response to the Forum should occur with generational change. As young people become politically aware, they may form their views with more openness than their elders. Another part of the potential of the Forum is that, if it is well managed, it may become widely used as a political heuristic that is recognized and widely accepted as presenting well-considered trends in its polling results. All these effects may be slow to develop, so the political potential of the People's Forum could take many years to be fully demonstrated.

8.2 The applicability of the People's Forum to the polarized politics of the USA

Marc Hetherington and Jonathan Weiler (2009) have shown that in the USA a political sorting has occurred in the last few decades by which the Republican Party now much more clearly represents conservatives and the Democratic Party unambiguously represents liberals. US citizens are not differing markedly more with each other on issues, but politicians are more clearly representing one side or the other (Hetherington 2009). In the

American system, with its many checks and balances, this sharp dichotomy among politicians is producing political gridlock and, as a consequence, a zeitgeist of antagonism. Americans now feel strongly polarized as their politics undergoes 'conflict extension, in which multiple and seemingly cross-cutting dimensions all divide Republicans from Democrats, rather than one issue cleavage completely displacing another' (Hetherington and Weiler 2009, 203). Is this partisanship a problem that the People's Forum could help to transform into constructive discourse?

Hetherington and Weiler (2009, 40) note that scholars have generally considered conservatives to be distinguished from liberals by one or more of three traits: (1) a desire to protect the status quo against change; (2) a preference for free markets and small government; and (3) a desire for order, that is, an intolerance of confusion, ambiguity and difference. Hetherington and Weiler find that polarization in the US has proceeded mostly according to the last trait. Those with a high need for social order have been increasingly voting, campaigning and standing for the Republican Party, and those who try to understand or tolerate confusion, ambiguity and difference have been turning increasingly to the Democrats. Noting that the need for order characterizes authoritarianism (2009, 3–4), they describe the polarization of American politics as 'the increasingly central role that authoritarianism has come to play in structuring party competition, mass preferences and the relevant issue agenda of the past forty years' (2009, 203).

Authoritarianism should not be confused with conservatism as it is only one possible part of it (the third part listed above) and can, in certain situations and in those who feel it strongly, overrule the other components of conservatism to produce a zeal for changing the status quo that is the antithesis of conservatism. When authoritarians perceive that existing norms, institutions and authorities are maintaining the social fabric, they will be conservative and

> tend to favour orthodox, venerable understandings of right and wrong. But under the right circumstances, they will support radical changes in the existing social fabric if they can be persuaded that those changes are necessary to maintain order and quell threats to the social fabric. (Hetherington and Weiler 2009, 39)

Hetherington and Weiler (2009, 203) also observe, beginning

> in the late 1960s, our political system began a transformation that, in fits and starts but inexorably, produced a picture in increasingly sharp resolution — one in which the division between people's fundamental outlooks became refracted onto a landscape of increasingly irreconcilable political differences.

Resolving or accommodating these differences appears to call for new processes or institutions. A new system of government with many fewer checks and balances (that is, with fewer supermajoritarian devices, as discussed in §2.2.6) such as a parliamentary system, could help by allowing majorities to rule with less opportunity for minorities to undemocratically frustrate them. This would produce more order in the political system, which should appeal to authoritarians. If this reform is taken further with proportional representation, then the ruling group will be more likely to consider the interests of other groups, in order to avoid provoking them into forming coalitions that can overrule the rulers. Another approach, and one that is probably needed to enable such reformation of government, is to establish an institution — such as the People's Forum — that is designed to facilitate public deliberation on strategic issues, as those include constitutional reform. A Forum would also improve the order of the system by removing much of its ambiguity of delegation, as it explicitly and publicly allocates directorship to the people. In addition to helping the people consider how they should reform their government, the Forum could also help them inquire into 'the division between people's fundamental outlooks', which should help them understand why they differ and see more clearly where they might come together in order to move

ahead. In doing this, the Forum should assist by transferring the emphasis of political debate from political personality and party rivalries to the substance of issues. Such a shift may be transformative, for people's beliefs are currently heavily influenced by their identification with cultural and political groups (as noted in §7.2.2 E13 for the issue of climate change).

8.3 General prospects for the Forum

As the introduction of a People's Forum into a community would slightly alter its social structure by adding to it an institution that facilitates debate, discussion and thought about public affairs, it may shift the balance, or resolution, of such conflicts towards openness to change and self-transcendence. Although this means that People's Forums are likely to encounter opposition from conservatives (much of which may persist, due to its genetic component) these opponents will feel some obligation to engage with it, at least to appear willing to publicly explain and defend their points of view and to be seen as contributing to the democratic process. However, some conservatives may prefer to leave the ambiguous business of discussion and negotiation to others: to those who are more comfortable with uncertainty, who are motivated by seeing opportunities for change and who are stimulated by complex problems that demand integrative capability. As suggested by Chris Mooney (2012, 267–68), some conservatives may therefore prefer to ignore a process such as the Forum, viewing it as a frustrating gabfest. But if Forum participants actually achieve a strong and stable — perhaps even a strengthening — majority view on what should be done about a particular issue in the face of counter-argument and the dissemination of new information over many years, then conservatives may be drawn in by the prospect of closure. Closure will be even more imminent if politicians declare that they will enact the next poll result on that issue, unless it is overturned by a reversal of the voting trend (as proposed in §7.2.9). Over several years of sustained public discussion and polling, conservatives may also become accustomed to the prospect of the changes in the status

quo that majorities in the PF poll are consistently advocating as necessary. If closure is broadly recognized by the public and their political agents, conservatives may then be among those calling for united collective action to enact the change. They may be keen to see that everyone contributes according to their means and that they all stay the course, because although they resist change and accept inequality, they are intolerant of ambiguity and have strong desires for hierarchy, conformity, loyalty to their group, fairness (as proportionality) and closure.

The slow but potentially deep process of public argument and deliberation that the People's Forum is intended to facilitate may help liberals and conservatives to better understand their differences. It may help liberals show conservatives new possibilities and help conservatives show liberals when the time for solidarity and decisive collective action has arrived. In support of this optimism it is anticipated that authoritarians would welcome the Forum. They are usually a small proportion of the public, being just one type of conservative, but in addition to them, non-authoritarians tend to react to increasing perceptions of threat by becoming authoritarian themselves. As political psychologist Karen Stenner (2005, 269) observes, authoritarianism is 'fuelled by the impulse to enhance unity and conformity and manifested under conditions … that threaten that oneness and sameness'. She concludes that

> authoritarians are never more tolerant than when reassured and pacified by an autocratic culture, and never more intolerant than when forced to endure a vibrant democracy.
>
> We have long known that the 'anti-democratic personality' is bad for democracy. The harder lesson to learn is that democracy is bad for the anti-democrat. (Stenner 2005, 334)

Stenner observes this in democracies as we know them today. But if they are made more systematic while remaining no less vibrant, via new, transparent institutions such as the People's Forum, then authoritarians may be reassured by such strengthening of the order of the democratic process. One way that the

Forum would do this is by minimizing ambiguity in delegation by making the people more clearly the directors of their government. As discussed in §2.3.4 and §2.3.5, this element of order would then create more order by reducing the distractions of excessive competition between politicians. Another strengthening of order by the Forum would come from its reduction of excessive compromise in democratic government. As noted in §2.4, this might be done by the Forum's meritocratic effect of prioritizing engaged opinion over disengaged opinion, while assisting both categories of opinion to develop. Order would also be strengthened by the Forum always giving prior notice of any changes to the provision of public goods (see §7.2.9). It would do this by publicizing the trends it registers in the development of engaged opinion and also by those trends provoking politicians to challenge citizens to reverse them before they are expressed as social choices, through new laws and policies.

9
SUPPORTING DEVICES, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TRIALLING THE PEOPLE'S FORUM

The mission of the People's Forum is described in §6.1 as being to improve the performance of liberal democracies by enhancing the quality of their public policy and also the legitimacy, or public acceptance, of that policy. These objectives are to be achieved by the Forum using two strategies: accelerating the development of mass public opinion and producing political influence for that part of this opinion which is likely to be the best developed. To implement these strategies, the People's Forum is designed to work with existing democratic institutions and activities, such as the legislature and the executive, free media, the lobbying and campaigning of interest groups and the random sample polling of public opinion. In §9.1 below, we consider whether, in doing these things, the Forum might be supported by democratic innovations that have been either proposed or used. The possibility of those devices being supported by the Forum is also considered.

In §9.2 a preliminary list is presented of ways for monitoring the effectiveness of the People's Forum as it operates. Some of these performance indicators would use democratic institutions and innovations such as opinion polling, democracy audits and the Deliberative Poll®. If, during the introductory phase of the operation of a Forum, performance indicators show that

it has some potential to achieve its mission, the public may be encouraged to have more confidence in it, which might help it work more effectively and increase the probability that it would become established as a political institution. Because of the possibility of such interactions, some devices listed here as having a potential to support the People's Forum also have potential as performance indicators.

9.1 Devices that may synergize with the People's Forum

The two strategies of the People's Forum will tend to reinforce each other because some of the development of mass public opinion it achieves will be registered in its results, which may help these registrations of relatively sophisticated views to develop political influence. That tendency would be strengthened by the other mechanisms discussed in §7.2.6, and the resultant rising public status of the Forum could help it to further develop mass public opinion. Much of this development would occur among those voting in the Forum as many of them will be taking interest in and discussing or debating its questions as part of their engagement in it. But the wider public will witness some of this activity and may learn from it as well as being encouraged by it to vote in PF polls. Such development of opinion would be driven by the Forum offering two types of incentive for citizens to argue and discuss issues with each other. One type is egoistic: the incentive of wanting to shape the Forum's voting trends in order to confer the political influence of those trends — whether potential or real — onto one's own views. The other type is solidary or prosocial: a desire of citizens to assist the development of the opinions of their society as registered by the People's Forum, because this may influence public policy and could thereby increase public welfare.

The Forum's provision of egoistic and solidary incentives for public discourse should encourage citizens to form and assist groups that campaign on the issues it treats and also groups that intensively deliberate these issues. Intensive deliberation groups

may be composed of citizens randomly selected from the electorate or the population, or self-selected (by volunteering to participate), or randomly selected from volunteers. Examples of deliberation groups that are randomly selected from the population are citizens' juries, planning cells, citizens' assemblies, Deliberative Polls® and online deliberative polls. Some of the self-selected groups are the 21st Century Town Meetings run by America*Speaks,* National Issues Forums and the study circles run by Everyday Democracy. The third type of structure, random selection from volunteers, is employed by consensus conferences. As all these forums are designed for intensive deliberation, their size is usually limited to a tiny fraction of society, in order to allow personal intra-group communication. They may be considered to execute both of the polity-wide strategies of the People's Forum to some miniscule degree, however slight, and thereby to have potential to assist it, and vice versa. For the first PF strategy — the facilitation of the development of mass public opinion — intensive deliberation forums will have little effect, as they are primarily restricted to working on the opinions of their members. However, their representativeness, especially that of strict random sample forums, gives them a potential to persuade non-participating citizens to support their verdicts, because some nonparticipants may realize that these verdicts are likely to be what they would think, if they had the opportunity to deliberate effectively (Fishkin 1997, 162; Brown 2006, 211). Such confidence by citizens in a representative process has been well developed for law court juries and, as political scientist John Ferejohn (2008, 202) observes, has also been demonstrated for the British Columbia Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform: 'the CA process itself acquired a trustworthy reputation and this gave reason for voters to support its recommendation'. Whenever such public trust is achieved by a deliberative forum it should gain political influence and thus begin to execute the second strategy of the People's Forum — developing political influence for that part of mass opinion that is likely to be the best developed.

If intensive deliberation forums operate in a society that has a People's Forum and consider some of the issues that the Forum treats, they are likely to produce conclusions consistent with the Forum's voting trends on those issues and which forecast, with some reliability, what the ultimate conclusions of the People's Forum would be, after it had run those questions for several, or perhaps many, years. Because intensive deliberation forums are likely to have such predictive capacity, their managers might call on all citizens to support their results by voting in alignment with these in the Forum's polls and by calling on politicians to implement the policies being advocated by the Forum's polling trends. Many commentators on public affairs might endorse such calls. In this manner, the People's Forum and intensive deliberation forums should draw attention to each other, making both more effective in facilitating the development of public opinion and also in developing political influence for the relatively developed opinion that they express. This symbiosis may produce a synergy in which the combined effect is greater than that of adding the effects of the People's Forum operating on its own in a society to the effects the intensive deliberation forums would deliver if they were run there without the People's Forum.

In this manner, the People's Forum might work with other deliberative institutions to produce a polity-wide deliberative system. As advocated by several political theorists in *Deliberative Systems: Deliberative Democracy at the Large Scale* (Parkinson and Mansbridge 2012), these systems would provide a division of labour in democratic government that may have parts that are weak in deliberation but which contribute strongly to the deliberative outcome of the whole. For example protest demonstrations, partisan rhetoric and possibly even partisan media may create inclusion and energize participation, thereby stimulating the development of public opinion and policy.

Some of the most promising types of intensive deliberation panels for synergism with the People's Forum are now briefly described.

CITIZENS' JURIES. The citizens' jury comprises a small number of citizens (12–24) who are selected by stratified random sampling and paid a small honorarium by a sponsoring body, such as a public authority. It is run by an independent organisation that provides a facilitator. The jury hears evidence, questions witnesses, deliberates over 3–4 days and produces a report that the sponsoring authority is expected to respond to. Citizens' juries have been run in the United States by the Jefferson Centre and in the UK by several organizations, including the Institute for Public Policy Research. Oregon's Citizen Initiative Review Commission operates in a similar way, as it randomly selects juries to deliberate citizens' initiative propositions. These groups produce 'Citizens' Statements' that are included with each initiative ballot paper, to summarize the key points of the proposition as decided by the voters' peers.

Political scientists Vivien Lowndes, Lawrence Pratchett and Gerry Stoker (2001, 448) report that 'not only are people prepared to join 'juries', but the public at large is willing to trust their decision-making — even over that of elected representatives.'

PLANNING CELLS. Planning cells are the German equivalent of citizens' juries, being randomly selected groups of around twenty-five citizens who advise government authorities. They are rather more formal in the way information is provided and also in their organization, as they rotate participants between small cells of five to make sure they all interact (Smith 2005).

CONSENSUS CONFERENCES. These are small deliberating groups similar to citizens' juries, but their members are largely self-selected, being chosen by socio-demographic criteria from a pool of volunteers who have responded to advertisements with written applications. They have been run by the Danish Board of Technology since the 1980s. Each conference is preceded by a series of preconference meetings where the members learn about the issue and frame questions. The panel's recommendations have no binding authority on government, but have some-

times had a direct impact on the legislative process (G. Smith 2005).

THE DELIBERATIVE POLL®. This system was devised by James Fishkin and uses a random sample of 250–500 citizens, which is large enough to make stratification unnecessary. The group begins its work with each member completing an opinion poll on the issue to be deliberated, and then 2–3 days are spent hearing evidence from specialists and deliberating in small groups. The work is concluded with a repetition of the same opinion poll of the members, and this is compared with the pre-deliberation poll. These comparisons give clear evidence of participants changing their views during the process, having reflected on evidence presented and on the views of other participants (G. Smith 2005). However, some scholars (e.g. Shapiro 2005; Gleason 2012) question whether these changes are always improvements in the quality of the opinions of the participants, because the Deliberative Poll® may constrain their thought with its 'heavily rule-bound' structure (Ryfe 2002, 365). One aspect of this is the almost inevitably biased framing of issues and priming of participants by the few experts who are selected to brief them; another is the improbability that any of those few experts will think laterally enough to recognize counterintuitive but crucial concepts, such as the pervasive democratic dysfunction discussed in Chapter 5 as the 'scarcity multiplier'.

The Deliberative Poll® has also been conducted online. In this format, deliberation is by a random sample of around 500 citizens and runs for two hours per week for four weeks. The change in opinion that is achieved by this version appears to be less pronounced than with face-to-face deliberative polling (G. Smith 2005).

DELIBERATION DAY. Deliberation Day was devised in 1999 by James Fishkin and Bruce Ackerman to try to expand the sample of the Deliberative Poll®, potentially to the whole nation. This would be a one-day public holiday held ten days before major national elections to enable registered voters to deliberate

pivotal issues in small groups of 15 that come together during that day, in plenary sessions of 500. Attendees would be paid US$150 for their day's work of citizenship. This idea has been widely discussed, but many are sceptical, such as political scientist Philippe Schmitter.

> The deliberation day — I don't think that's a very sensible idea. I think what makes more sense is to have much broader kinds of mechanisms of deliberation. We talk about smart voting for example which allows you to look at the voting record of deputies and also the proposed preferences of different candidates, take the test yourself and find out which candidate is closest to your preferences for example. To me that's much more feasible and exciting to the individual. (cited in POWERInquiry 2004, 6)

Nine years previously, political scientist Adolf Gundersen noted that

> whereas Fishkin stresses representative, group processes, or deliberative forums, I stress universal, undifferentiated ones. (The difference here is really one of emphasis: the two kinds of process are not mutually exclusive. It is just that the latter kind has been too often overlooked). (Gundersen 1995, 247, brackets in original)

AMERICA*SPEAKS* 21ST CENTURY TOWN MEETINGS. These meetings are conducted for one day with between 500 to 5,000 citizens who are self-selected, as they have volunteered in response to advertisements. Some outreach may be used to ensure a reasonable level of participation from relatively disengaged citizens. The meeting employs small group dialogue involving 10–12 demographically diverse citizens and an independent facilitator. These groups are connected by computer, voting keypads and large closed-circuit television screens. Experts present balanced information and give advice as needed. A clear link to decision-makers such as public authorities is established at the outset and their representatives attend the proceedings, but the results are not binding on these authorities (G. Smith 2005).

World Wide Views. This system has been devised by the Danish Board of Technology and its partners, in order to extend representative deliberation across the planet. It includes design elements from the Deliberative Poll®, America*Speaks* and the consensus conference. In each country, citizens are selected as randomly as is feasible and given an invitation to join a WWV group. From those who accept, a group of 100 is chosen on the basis of representing the demography of their country in age, gender, occupation, education and other respects. Some countries may have several groups meeting on different sites, and all groups from around the world pool their findings via a web tool. The initial application was for World Wide Views on Global Warming, delivering its findings two and a half months before the December 2009 UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen (WWV 2009; WWV 2010). On 26 September 2009, approximately 4,000 people gathered in 38 countries to consider what should happen in Copenhagen. The outcome was significantly more progressive than the findings of conventional polls. Ninety per cent of the representative participants believed there was an urgent need for Copenhagen to produce a new agreement; eighty-eight per cent wanted this to halt global warming to within 2 degrees Celsius of preindustrial levels; and seventy-four per cent favoured increasing the prices of fossil fuels in developed countries (Herbick and Isham 2010).

National Issues Forums and Study Circles. These are locally sponsored, various-sized public forums of self-selected participants. National Issues Forums are coordinated across the US by the Kettering Foundation. Every year its NIF Institute focuses on several major issues by publishing issue books, each of which describes three or four approaches to one issue (never just two polar opposites) as a framework for deliberations. Discussions are led by trained moderators. The Foundation regularly collates the findings of the forums and its reports are published and presented to elected officials to give them an insight into the considered views of concerned members of the public. Study circles are similar to National Issues Forums and are organized

by the Paul J. Aicher Foundation's Everyday Democracy at East Hartford, CT (G. Smith 2005).

TELEVOTE. This name has been applied to two types of forum that culminate in a vote by telephone. One type uses self-selected participants and the other a random sample. Participants are presented with questions, information, pro and con arguments and invited to deliberate on these by themselves and with friends or acquaintances for a few weeks before voting. The self-selecting version was invented in California in the early 1970s by social psychologist Vincent Campbell, who used newspaper advertisements to invite people to take part. In 1978, political scientists Ted Becker and Christa Daryl Slaton altered it by using random selection to have a representative sample of the public deliberate and vote on the Hawaii State Constitutional Convention. Their system has been subsequently used on eleven other occasions in Hawaii, New Zealand and California (Slaton 2001).

E-DEMOCRACY. E-Democracy started as the Minnesota Politics and Issues Forum in 1994, running internet-based forums for discussing state, national and global political issues. More than fifty of these forums have operated across the US, UK and New Zealand. Participation is self-selected, and a manager lightly moderates the discussion in each forum, ensuring that users follow the rules of engagement. On occasions, the press has covered the online debates of the Minnesota Politics and Issues Forum, which indicates that it may have an agenda-setting influence. Participants have reported that their involvement increases their political interest and knowledge as well as their understanding and respect for the views of other citizens (G. Smith 2005).

CIVIC COMMONS IN CYBERSPACE. The Civic Commons in Cyberspace (CCC) was proposed by the UK Institute for Public Policy Research in order to extend the Minnesota E-Democracy model from a forum facilitating the development of public opinion to one that empowers this opinion and develops it more compre-

hensively. CCC was designed by Jay Blumler and Stephen Coleman (who are quoted in §2.3.3), and they specified that it be run by a new publicly funded agency and should promote, facilitate and summarize online deliberations, with authorities expected to react formally to whatever emerges from these public discussions. CCC would create a central access point for citizens to deliberate on public issues at all levels of government, and would provide a one-stop shop for politicians to find out about these discussions. It 'would have a particular interest in exploring new ways of consulting intelligently with the broadest possible range of citizens' (Blumler and Coleman 2001, 16). It may therefore see needs to coordinate citizens' deliberations by staging public events such as polls, so that all who are interested know when to engage and can do so in a way that produces a collective choice for a polity. An operating CCC could therefore have a strong interest in the People's Forum. Although bearing some resemblance to the Forum, CCC has a more complex function as it would engage in 'promoting, publicising, regulating, moderating, summarizing, and evaluating the broadest and most inclusive range of online deliberation' (Blumler and Coleman 2001, 17). In contrast, the Forum would not have its staff actively regulating, moderating and evaluating deliberations. It would rely on citizens to do the evaluating with their annual vote, and its regulating and moderating of deliberations would be limited to the guidance it offered via the composition of its ballot paper. This guidance would comprise the selection of issues, their descriptions, the selection of questions and the indications given to voters of relationships between issues. The only regulation by the Forum of public argument and deliberation would be alterations of the ballot paper (such as in response to public criticisms) and this would include updating the range of issues it presents.

A CCC could not function without the active support of a government willing to (a) provide it with public funding, (b) allow an independent body to run it as it saw fit and (c) formally respond to the results of citizens' deliberations. The broad reach of CCC means that it might have been added to the comparison

of four reforms for democratic government that is presented in §6.5.2, but this was not done because its reach appears to be limited in two ways: It is restricted to online forums and it lacks a poll that converts polity-wide opinion into a collective choice at a point in time. It therefore seems that PF has more potential to directly improve government function, but, as noted above, CCC might be very useful in assisting PF. In respect of CCC's online function, Blumler and Coleman (2001, 13) note that the 'digital divide' should not be a problem as the internet makes

> it easier for individuals to find and follow what concerns them personally, and by lowering the costs of obtaining information, the influence of social status on political involvement may be reduced. Citizens and groups with few resources can undertake acts of communication and monitoring that previously were the domain mainly of resource-rich organisations and individuals. (Blumler and Coleman 2001, 13)

CITIZENS' ASSEMBLIES. The Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform for British Columbia was a representative deliberative forum that ran from January to December in 2004. It was established by the government of BC with a commitment that it would hold a referendum on its findings. The Assembly comprised 160 randomly selected citizens with an independent chairman, and it studied the options for electoral reform in BC. It reviewed evidence given at 50 public hearings, received 1603 written submissions and deliberated before determining its recommendations by voting. Assembly members were assisted by holding meetings at weekends, with child care and payment for their work.

This process differs from other deliberative forums in that it was ongoing for a considerable time and had an official undertaking that its recommendations would be acted on. As this was to put them to a referendum, the wisdom acquired by the members of the assembly was partially discarded by having the relatively disengaged and uninformed general public make the final choice. Although the final vote within the Assembly was near unanimous at 146 to 7, the referendum result was only 57.7% in

favour of the Assembly's verdict. However, this was far higher than the same proposal would have secured if it had come from the legislature (Goodin 2008, 269). The public exposure of the Assembly's deliberations and its statistical representation of all citizens may not only have educated some of them about the issue, but also encouraged some of them to trust the Assembly's work and use its findings as a heuristic for their vote in the referendum. However, these effects were not enough for the Assembly's extremely strong choice of an STV electoral system to be approved by the statutory 60% majority of public votes.

Ontario followed BC with its own Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform, which started in September 2006 and finished in May 2007 with a recommendation of 94 members for, and 8 against, mixed member proportional representation. The final result was less impressive than that in BC, for when the Ontario choice was put to a public referendum in October 2007 it was rejected by 63 per cent of voters. A forum patterned on the citizens' assembly called the Citizens' Parliament (newDemocracy Foundation 2008) was run in Australia from October 2008 to February 2009 on 'How can Australia's political system be strengthened to serve us better?' This event did not have government sponsorship, so its recommendations were not put to a referendum. They are therefore unlikely to be pursued and executed, a destiny that is assured by a tendency for those recommendations to fail to be specific about both their ends and the means by which they are to be achieved (Dryzek 2009, 3).

Brazil's National Public Policy Conferences. This pyramidal system is outlined at the end of §6.5.2.4. As a national scale deliberative institution, each of its conferences has both citizens and public servants deliberating one issue for many months, a process that progresses from municipal meetings to state ones and finally to a national conference. Although the results are nonbinding, they have a considerable influence on government.

Conclusions on mutual support by the People's Forum and intensive deliberation forums. The use of the internet by E-

Democracy and Civic Commons in Cyberspace gives them a potentially unlimited reach across both the number of participants and the number of issues being treated that resembles the potential of the People's Forum. However, the undertakings of both of those organisations to actively manage discussions prevents them from handling many issues simultaneously, a problem that the People's Forum would avoid by facilitating deliberation without monitoring or controlling the give and take of public debate, as discussed in §7.2.2. The primary problem with CCC is that of raising the political will to get it launched and run. It was proposed early in 2001 but has not yet been tried out, presumably because it relies on a commitment by government to establish it, fund it and heed the public deliberations it reports. A way of overcoming this problem may be to use private funds to initiate the People's Forum first. If this successfully established the Forum as a political institution in a province or a nation, then the argument for establishing CCC might be easier to promote, for it could be proposed by the Forum as a mother department that funds the continuing operation of the Forum, as well as other operations. Those would include intensive deliberation forums such as deliberative polling, consensus conferences and on-line groups, which would help synergise the work of the People's Forum as discussed above. Intensive deliberation forums could also complement the work of the People's Forum by indicating how the general public would respond to issues that are too short-term for treatment by the Forum, if all citizens were to carefully deliberate them.

If the resolution of an issue being treated by the People's Forum ballot paper is especially urgent, then those who are very concerned about it may decide to accelerate the Forum process by funding a random sample intensive deliberation forum to demonstrate what the future development of public opinion is likely to be on this issue, if it became better known throughout the community. This demonstration might cultivate public confidence most effectively if it was performed by a citizens' assembly, as that would run for a substantial period (say a year) and allow submissions from the public.

Two other innovations that might be considered for operation in conjunction with the People's Forum are pyramidal democracy (see §6.5.2.3 and §6.5.2.4) and the People's House (§6.5.2.2). Pyramidal democracy would pursue the Forum's mission of improving the quality and legitimacy of public policy by inviting citizens to have confidence in the deliberations of chains of representatives that invite input from all citizens. It would do this with strategies that approximate those used by the People's Forum. The first PF strategy, developing mass public opinion on strategic policy, would be attempted (without the focus on strategic policy) by offering political participation to all citizens in the small intensive deliberation groups at the base of the pyramid. The second strategy, of giving political influence to the most developed part of mass public opinion, is to be executed by the pyramid giving this power to the small group of delegates at its apex. However, the complexity of transmission of this influence from all citizens at the base to the few at the top, together with the work involved in citizens attending meetings at the base, may mean they have less incentive to get involved than they have to engage with the People's Forum. Also, as discussed in §6.5.2.4, important strategic policy deliberated at the base may have little chance of being debated and publicised at the top if there are many levels in the pyramid. As the People's Forum and pyramidal democracy are similar in mission and strategies, they might be viewed as alternatives to each other rather than as complementary. But the ability of the Forum to treat an unlimited number of issues simultaneously and to focus on strategic policy means that the two institutions should complement each other, as suggested for NPPCs at the conclusion of §6.5.2.4. This complementarity may be that as the Forum develops policy ideas across the strategic spectrum simultaneously, it may coordinate those ideas so that pyramids can follow them to produce policies in different areas that work with, rather than against, each other.

The mission of the People's House is described in §6.5.2.2 as being to give a voice to the public, curb special interests, counter legislative gridlock and aggregate electors' preferences more

equitably. This bears some similarity to the mission of the People's Forum of improving the quality and legitimacy of public policy, but the strategy of the House is rather different. Instead of encouraging the development of the opinion of the general public and then assisting citizens to gain confidence in the section of their opinion that is most likely to be best developed, the People's House would help a very large random sample (43,500) of the public to develop its opinions and ask all citizens to have confidence in these. Such confidence would depend mainly on public awareness of the following three features: That the sample is very representative; that it deliberates carefully; and (perhaps) that it is large enough to give most citizens some prospect of being able to have meaningful contact with at least one of its members.

The strategies of the People's Forum and the People's House might be compared by viewing the Forum as aiming mostly at improving the quantity and quality of participation while the House aims mostly at improving the quality of representation. These two institutions might therefore complement each other. If they were both operating in a polity, the Forum's strategies should assist politicians to endorse the well-developed policies of the House by assisting all citizens to understand and accept those policies. At the same time, the House would help the Forum by advocating, within the legislature, specific parts of the broad spectrum of policy that the Forum would be slowly developing over successive polls.

9.2 Performance indicators for the People's Forum

If the People's Forum is tried out, it would be useful to have objective procedures that monitor how well it works. Direct procedures would assess the Forum's achievement of mission, and indirect ones would assess its execution of strategies and its provision of the institutional and political equality goods expected of an institution for assisting government (as discussed in §6.2 and applied in §6.3 and §6.5.2). As the two governmental goods described in §6.2 are to be provided by the Forum's two

strategies, the provisions of these goods are gauged by judging the execution of those strategies. Performance indicators may therefore be produced by assessing the first fourteen of the following sixteen types of performance, the last two (the provision of governmental goods) not being needed as they are covered by iii and iv.

Types of performance indicators

Achievement of mission by a People's Forum:

i. Improving the quality of public policy.
ii. Improving the legitimacy of public policy.

Execution of strategies by a People's Forum:

iii. Accelerating the development of mass public opinion, especially on strategic public policy.
iv. Producing political influence for the part of public opinion that is relatively well developed.

Provision of goods by a People's Forum

Institutional:

v. Efficiency.
vi. Transferability to political system.
vii. Transferability to strategic issues.
viii. Transferability to large-scale polities.
ix. Transparency.
x. Feasibility of introduction.

Political equality:

xi. In communication (of citizens' political views).
xii. In voting by citizens.
xiii. In agenda control by citizens.
xiv. Full inclusion of all classes of citizens.

Governmental:

xv. Enlightened understanding (especially on strategic issues, which is covered by vii above). This indicator is equivalent to iii above.

xvi. Political prevalence of enlightened understanding. This indicator is equivalent to iv above.

As the assessment of the achievement of mission directly indicates performance, it is potentially a more reliable indicator than assessing the execution of strategies. The descriptions of possible indicators that are given below focus only on those concerning mission and strategies and do not address provisions of institutional and political equality goods, as these are relative details of performance. They could be investigated as additional indicators if considered useful, and this might be done in ways similar to those suggested below for indicating achievement of mission and execution of strategies.

9.2.1 Indicators of achievement of mission (indicator types i & ii)

The following four performance indicators (PI1–PI4) might show how well an operating People's Forum improves the quality and legitimacy of public policy.

PI1. BASED ON DEMOCRACY INDICES. A few broad changes might be monitored in the quality and legitimacy of the public policy of a democracy after it has commenced using a People's Forum by observing trends in its democracy index as assessed by organisations such as the US-based Freedom House, Democratic Audit in the UK, Worldwide Governance Indicators (Kaufmann et al. 2010) and *The Economist* Intelligence Unit (*Economist* 2008c; *Economist* 2010). For example, *The Economist* Intelligence Unit's Index of Democracy monitors five categories of democratic function for each country: electoral process and pluralism; functioning of government; political participation; democratic political culture; and civil liberties. Each of these categories is analysed into several sub-categories (from eight to fourteen of these), and for each sub-category the country's performance is given a rating. Some of these sub-categories concern the legitimacy of public policy, for example, 'Public confidence in government' and 'Public confidence in political parties'

(in the category 'functioning of government'). It may be possible to use some of these democracy index components by comparing the rates of change they show in categories or sub-categories before the introduction of the People's Forum against those attained some years after its introduction.

PI2. Based on public opinion polls. Some of the assessments of sub-categories for democracy indices are derived from mass public opinion polling within the polity being assessed. Polling of this type might be done in a more detailed manner than that currently employed by democracy index researchers to ascertain citizens' perceptions of the quality and legitimacy of government policies on specific issues, both before and after a People's Forum is introduced.

PI3. Based on expert opinion. Surveys asking questions similar to those for PI2 may be posed, not to the general public, but to experts in public policy, such as academics and executives of interest groups, to give another indicator of the quality, but not legitimacy, of policy before and after the introduction of a People's Forum.

PI4. Based on intensive deliberation forums. Intensive deliberation forums that are either self-selected or random samples might assess the effect of the People's Forum on the quality of public policy. The findings of the random sample types may also indicate the *potential* for the legitimacy of the public policies being developed by a People's Forum. That potential might be realized only after extensive public debate on those policies, via the Forum.

9.2.2 Indicators of execution of the first strategy (indicator type iii)

Indications of change in the development of mass public opinion (especially on strategic issues) by an operating People's Forum should be given by the following two devices.

PI5. BASED ON POLLS OF PUBLIC OPINION. Several mass public opinion polls before and also after the advent of a People's Forum, on questions posed by it, may show whether it appeared to accelerate the rate of change of this opinion on these questions.

PI6. BASED ON EXPERT OPINION. Surveys of experts in mass public opinion (such as political scientists and the executives of interest groups) on their perceptions of the effect of a People's Forum on the development of mass public opinion on questions that it has run and of which they have good knowledge may indicate how well the Forum is executing its first strategy. This performance indicator is similar to that of PI3, but it focuses on the development of mass public opinion under the People's Forum instead of its effect on the quality of public policy.

9.2.3 Indicators of execution of the second strategy (indicator type iv)

The following indicators should show the extent to which an operating People's Forum is generating political influence for relatively well-developed public opinion, as registered by People's Forum polls.

PI7. BASED ON FORUM TURNOUT. A percentage of electors voting in the Forum that is close to zero would indicate negligible influence, but only a small percentage, say 5%, in combination with good ratings for PI8 below may indicate considerable influence for the opinion expressed in People's Forum poll results. The figure of 5% is suggested, as that should be a considerable part of the percentage of the community that is knowledgeable on political issues (which is suggested in §2.2.3 to be less than 20% for many issues). Thus, something like a turnout of 5% or more at People's Forum polls might eventually become widely accepted by the public as a politically respectable voice.

PI8. BASED ON POLLS OF PUBLIC OPINION. Mass public opinion poll ratings of approval and disapproval of the following two aspects of the Forum should indicate its political influence:

1. The People's Forum system and management.
2. People's Forum poll results and their trends.

These polls should be conducted on a regular basis, such as annually, to identify any trends in mass approval or disapproval of the system and its results.

9.3 The inadequacy of small-scale trials of the People's Forum

It would be very helpful if the effectiveness of the People's Forum could be assessed by trying it out at a small scale that costs much less than the ten million dollars or more anticipated for the operational scale, state or national trials recommended in §6.4. Any such experiment must indicate whether the People's Forum is likely to achieve its mission at the large scale of operation for which it is designed or — as an indirect indication — whether it will execute its two strategies at the large scale. As its mission is to improve the quality and legitimacy of public policy in a provincial or national or multinational jurisdiction, it would seem unlikely that a small scale trial of the Forum could reliably indicate whether it would do this — but could such a trial test the likelihood of it being able to execute its strategies? If it could, then it would also be testing the likelihood of PF executing its mission, for any execution of the strategies, especially the second one, should produce a corresponding execution of the mission.

For the Forum's first strategy — accelerating the development of mass public opinion across a large jurisdiction (especially with regard to strategic policy) — such a trial might use three randomly selected groups of the same size to represent the behaviour of the members of such a jurisdiction. Two of these groups would be selected at the beginning of a period of perhaps five years, during which one of them would be exposed to the Forum's distinctive 'deliberative' technique, which is based on offering group members an annual vote in a Forum ballot. The other group would be offered one vote at the beginning of this

period on the same ballot paper and would then have no further input into the trial. At the end of the trial period, a third group of the same size would be randomly selected from those members of the large jurisdiction who have not previously voted on that ballot paper and they would be offered one vote on it, with no opportunity to deliberate before voting. This vote would be compared with the final and contemporaneous vote of the sample group that had been participating in the annual vote over the five year period, to see if there was a significant difference. Any such difference should arise from the deliberative influence of the Forum's process on the members of the sample that was exposed to the opportunity to vote annually over the five-year period. The vote of the sample group that only voted once, at the beginning of the period, would be compared with the vote of the group that only voted once, at the end of the period, to indicate the changes in opinion that occurred over the large jurisdiction without any influence from the Forum.

Such comparison cannot, however, test the Forum's effectiveness because only part of its deliberative technique can be applied to small groups. That part of the technique has three main components: (1) the way the ballot paper is written (including menus of incisive questions, as discussed in §7.2.2) together with its very large menu of issues for potential voters to choose from; (2) a regular and spaced vote, such as an annual poll, that provides publicized periods for deliberation that culminate in feedback on attitudes (the poll result) and trends in those attitudes (successive poll results), which may assist the next period of deliberation; and (3) voluntary voting, which may promote communication about issues as citizens urge each other to vote, while it also invites only those who are interested in the issues to vote. However, a large part of the Forum's deliberative technique cannot be applied to small groups. This part is the offer to the members of a group of the possibility or probability that their vote will have political influence. Awareness of this will motivate some members to try to use this influence by voting and also by arguing with other members about the specific questions that are presented by the poll, in the course of which the members

of the group may learn more about those questions than they otherwise would have done. But awareness of the possibility of such political influence cannot arise in the members of a group that is too small to have that influence. Such lack of incentive to learn is made even more likely for small experimental groups by the types of issues that the Forum would deal with. As these are persistent, long-term problems, many of which are interrelated and of fundamental importance, they can only be influenced by large jurisdictions with political systems that can act strategically. It is therefore only members of such very large, politically potent groups that can imagine they might influence this type of policy and that could thereby be strongly motivated by the running of Forum polls to argue, deliberate and vote. As members of small groups will therefore not be as motivated by a Forum poll to think as much about the issues it presents as the members of very large groups could be, a trial of the Forum in a small group is likely to underestimate the Forum's potential to execute its first strategy of accelerating the development of public opinion on strategic issues.

To run a small-scale test of the effectiveness of the People's Forum's execution of its second strategy (producing political influence for the part of mass public opinion that is likely to be relatively well developed), one randomly selected experimental group appears necessary. If this sample accurately represents the many members of a large jurisdiction, it might be expected to simulate their behaviour. The simulation we need here is to run the People's Forum within this sample group for several years, with a sequence of polls at regular intervals of a year, or at least of several months. As the vote is voluntary, only those in this sample who are interested in any of the many issues on the ballot paper would be expected to vote, as envisaged for an operational-scale Forum. The results of these trial polls would therefore be considered to represent the views of those within the sample group that have the better-developed views on the issues presented. After several years of polls, all the members of the sample group would then be asked whether they think that the poll trends should be translated into law or government

policy. The response is likely to indicate a very strong execution of the Forum's second strategy by showing that the members of the sample readily grant political influence to the voters among them, because there is very strong support from all members for the voting trends to be enacted in law or policy. That support is likely because the voters within the sample may be virtually its entire membership, so we have the members supporting their own views. Something like this situation may well occur with such a sample because its members could feel obliged or stimulated by the attention given to them — in being randomly selected and then personally advised of the availability of a regular poll — to take an interest in the issues presented in it and also to vote in it, whereas they may be less likely to do that as citizens in a polity that offers an operational-scale Forum. This could mean that almost all the members of the sample actually vote in the polls they are offered, so there is little difference between the opinions of the whole sample and that very large majority of it that chooses to vote. If this happens, then we do not have a test of whether all the members of the sample grant political influence to a small subset of it who choose to vote, for the subset is not small, being virtually all the members. This 'test' may therefore overrate the effectiveness of the Forum in executing its second strategy. The test may also have the opposite effect because the lack of reality of the situation in which the members of a sample group are expected to take some interest in strategic policies for their group while that group has no prospect of implementing them may be too uninteresting for any of the group members to take seriously. They may therefore fail to debate these issues, fail to develop policies on them and be totally careless about granting any such policies political influence within the group because the group is far too small to be able to implement those policies.

Small-scale trials therefore seem likely to fail to simulate the performance of the People's Forum in large jurisdictions by underestimating its capacity to execute its first strategy and over, or underestimating its capacity to execute its second strategy. Even if such trials were not confusing in these ways, they would still

be somewhat deficient because they do not specifically assess the Forum's capacity to achieve its mission in large jurisdictions, which is to improve the quality of public policy (especially strategic policy) while developing public legitimacy for that policy.

9.3.1 Simulation instead of small-scale experiment

As small scale trials may be misleading, simulation by thought experiment or by computer might be regarded as sufficiently reliable for indicating whether the People's Forum is worth the expense of trialling at operational scale. To consider mental simulation first, this should focus on the likelihood that the Forum will do those things that are crucial for its success. At the broad level, there are three such capabilities: that the Forum is amenable to being established at an operational scale and that, as it operates, it executes both of its strategies. As discussed previously in §7.2.12, establishing the Forum (essentially function 11) is not fundamentally extremely difficult or impossible, so we focus on the probability of it being able to execute its strategies. To judge this, we assess its probability of performing the functions that would execute those strategies. For this purpose we refer to the twelve functions listed in §7.1 and discussed under §7.2, rather than the five more general functions discussed in §6.3 (which are covered by the twelve). To identify the functions that are crucial, we first rank the strategies in order of importance. The first strategy is to develop mass public opinion on strategic issues, and the second is to produce political influence for the opinions of that section of the public that is more likely to be sophisticated in strategic policy. As political studies show that the first strategy is extremely difficult to execute to any degree (see §2.2.3 and §2.2.4), the second strategy is arguably the most important for the successful operation of PF. We therefore focus on this and assess the likelihood of it being executed by considering two aspects of PF's functions: the *significance* of a function in executing the second strategy and the *probability* that the function will be performed by the Forum. This assessment is done by selecting the most significant functions first and then judging the probability of their execution by the Forum.

The functions needed to execute PF's second strategy are, as indicated by the notation Sm in the list of 12 in §7.1, functions 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12. Of these, 5, 7 and 9 appear to be especially significant for that execution. This makes function 12 (public confidence in PF) significant as well, because it is necessary for function 5 (political influence for PF voting trends). Functions 6 and 8 are relative details (less significant for the second strategy) and are, in any case, judged as probably achievable with the PF design (see their descriptions in §7.2.7 and §7.2.9), so they can be dropped from further consideration. Function 10 (PF producing political will for difficult decisions) depends on function 5, which emphasizes the significance of function 5. This focuses us on the *probability* of PF executing 5, 7, 9 and 12. Function 12 (public confidence in PF) will depend partly on the heuristic produced by executing function 7 (meritocratic influence), and it is suggested that the PF design should adequately execute both of them, if function 9 (freedom from corruption) is effectively implemented. So, to judge the probability of PF's success we must primarily assess the probabilities that it will perform functions 5, 7, 9 and 12. These assessments may be attempted by reading §7.2.6 (function 5), §7.2.8 (function 7), §7.2.10 (function 9) and §7.2.13 (function 12). It is suggested that those accounts indicate that a well-managed PF is likely to execute all of those four functions reasonably well. All the other functions also appear feasible, so it appears that PF should work.

As several of the twelve functions are interdependent to some degree, a computer simulation might be able to give a better idea of the probabilities of their execution by PF and thus the probability of PF executing its two strategies and achieving its mission. Such simulation might cover the operation of PF under: (a) a range of probabilities that PF will perform each function; (b) a range of strengths of those performances; and (c) different strengths of interactions between functions. Such modelling should indicate the sensitivity of PF's performance to each variable and thereby give a clearer idea — under subjectively realistic ranges of assumptions — of whether it could perform its functions and execute its strategies. This approach bears some

similarity to the game-theoretic computer simulation used for political forecasting by several firms in the US, such as Mesquita and Roundell LLC, but that method does not appear suitable for our purpose, as it is designed for 'strategic situations'. Over hundreds of such cases, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita's predictions have been assessed by the CIA at more than 90% successful (Bueno de Mesquita 2009, xix). 'Strategic situations' are not events such as elections where millions of people each have an extremely small influence, but those where relatively small numbers of people are haggling over a contentious decision. In such cases, influential players and their interactions can be identified and modelled in modes such as negotiation, coercion, bullying and cooperation (O'Connell 2012, 43). However, it may be possible to apply simulation that is not necessarily game-theoretic to predict the performances of institutional designs. In game theory, the actors and their situation and influence are identified, which allows the computer to generate their likely interactions and responses. Simulation of institutional performance may follow a parallel approach by identifying the design elements (such as those specified in Chapter 7 for PF), assessing how they would interact with human nature to produce design functions (such as those specified in Chapter 7 for PF) and then assessing how these functions would interact with human nature to produce or fail to execute the strategies or mission of the institution. The reliability of such predictions might be tested by varying the human responses within what are judged to be likely limits to see what this does to the simulation. If such sensitivity analysis predicts likely failure of the institution, it may suggest either changing specific design elements or abandoning that particular basic design.

However, in view of the urgency of the need to improve governance, together with the expense of modelling and the inherent uncertainty of its theoretical output, it seems advisable to give first priority to a trial of the People's Forum in the real world of politics across a provincial or national jurisdiction.

10
CONCLUSION

We now review our diagnosis of democratic failure and our prescription to cure it by looking at previous diagnoses by others, to see how they compare with ours and whether our prescription — the People's Forum — would address them as well.

Four decades before this book was written, political scientist Samuel P. Huntington and sociologists Joji Watanuki and Michel Crozier assessed democratic societies as 'anomic', or lacking in purpose. The assessment by Part 1 of this book is similar, with aimlessness predicted from three effects: ambiguity about who directs the polity; distraction of political agents by competitive struggles; and a compromising of the wisdom and social responsibility of some citizens with the disengagement of many others. Huntington, Watanuki and Crozier described this anomie in the following terms.

> What is in short supply in democratic societies today is thus not consensus on the rules of the game but a sense of purpose as to what one should achieve by playing the game. In the past, people have found their purposes in religion, in nationalism, and in ideology … In Europe and Japan, after World War II, economic reconstruction and development were supported as goals by virtually all major groups in society … Now, however, these purposes have lost their salience and even come under challenge … In this situation, the machinery of democracy continues to operate, but the ability of the individuals operating that machinery to make decisions tends

> to deteriorate. Without common purpose, there is no basis for common priorities, and without priorities, there are no grounds for distinguishing among competing private interests and claims … The system becomes one of anomic democracy, in which democratic politics becomes more an arena for the assertion of conflicting interests than a process for the building of common purposes. (Crozier et al. 1975, 159–61)

In Part 1 we reviewed recent examples of anomic democracy in the US and Australia, together with some indications that even the Nordic countries may be developing the malaise. Thirty-six years after the diagnosis by Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki, strategic studies scholar Hugh White (2011) offered an anecdotal observation of anomie in Japan.

> The way the current government has responded to the tsunami — especially the nuclear crisis that followed — has intensified the sense that Japan's political system today simply cannot deliver effective government able to deal with passing crises, let alone address the much deeper and ultimately more demanding long-term challenges Japan faces …
>
> Japan deeply fears that, as China grows stronger, it will squeeze Japan economically, politically and strategically, reducing Japan to a kind of Chinese dependency …
>
> … Japan has the basic resources needed to be a great power in Asia for many decades. But Japan will need not just a new government but a new kind of government. A young Japanese friend said to me recently that the only way for Japan to avoid decline was by replacing the whole political system. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, who resigned five years ago, was as good a leader as the present political system could deliver, and he was not good enough to halt Japan's slide. What is needed, my friend told me, is a revolution — an end to money politics, careerist politicians and the rule of party bosses. A new politics formed by competing views of Japan's future, rather than by competing factions and interest groups.

This might be interpreted as a call for a People's Forum, as this design is intended to produce a 'new politics formed by competing views of … [the] future'.

For another perspective on whether the Forum might improve democratic government, Ralf Dahrendorf's (2000) assessment of the task appears useful. Drawing on his experience as a social scientist, a founder of the European Community and a member of the UK House of Lords, Dahrendorf identified five major problems for contemporary democracies. The first is that democracy works best when the people are strongly involved, which is usually when democracy is being fought for. Once it is well-established and citizens' rights are generalized, conflicts become less urgent, more diffuse and the people tend to disengage. The People's Forum may be able to counter this diffusion with its careful identification of issues, its formulation of crucial questions and its persistence with these for an extended time, so that citizens are encouraged to maintain their focus and thereby develop well-considered judgments and insist on their implementation.

Dahrendorf's second democratic problem is that political democracy is linked to nation-states and, as their significance is eroded by globalization, government seems less relevant. As the Forum should be able to work across international domains it may be able to counter this decline, partly by developing an international form of democratic governance (via questions on supranational issues), but also by helping to clarify the responsibilities of each democracy with questions on national issues.

His third concern is a slide towards authoritarianism as national governments try to bypass parliaments by consolidating the power of executive systems, which in the US is led by the growing power of the presidency. Dahrendorf (2000, 312) describes this as

> a curious development that has to do with the complexities of government, the need for expertise, and the as yet undefined role of the media … these trends need to be deplored or reversed, but no new mechanisms have been found to control ostensibly independent

> bodies, rein in quangos, and channel vague expressions of public opinion.

The People's Forum design may provide such a mechanism, as it should redefine the role of congresses and parliaments by having them more explicitly and more wisely directed by the people. This should clarify 'vague expressions of public opinion' and reverse any authoritarian trend.

Dahrendorf's (2000, 313) fourth democratic problem is the flip side of the slide towards authoritarianism: the apathy of many citizens who are 'tired of what they regard as the democratic game'. Such disengagement at the bottom strengthens authority at the top, but it should be countered by the People's Forum offering citizens easy but meaningful ways to participate, such as voting once a year on strategic issues and, as they choose, engaging in sustained public discourse on the specific questions that the Forum poses on these.

Dahrendorf's final democratic difficulty is that civil society has become less cohesive in ways that erode the social base of government. This is partly due to democracy overcoming class-based party struggles to produce generalized citizenship rights. As these are individual rights they tend to atomize collective identity, and this challenges us to ensure that tomorrow's society will have the cohesion to function. Here again, the People's Forum appears to offer an answer. It would provide an arena in which citizens come together and communicate systematically by selecting their agenda and steadily working through it.

The inquiry by Robert Putnam (1993), Robert Leonardi and Raffaella Y. Nanetti into the effects of institutional change in Italy provides another perspective on the prospects for the People's Forum. In 1970, the Italian government created identical new regional governments, from the south with its narrow family-based morality to the north with its more inclusive outlook. Putnam and his colleagues assessed the effects of this institutional change that was applied uniformly across the country and came up with three broad lessons. The first was that 'Social context and history profoundly condition the effectiveness of

institutions' (1993, 182); the second was that 'changing formal institutions can change political practice' (1993, 184); and the third was that 'most institutional history moves slowly' (1993, 184). The first lesson indicates that the People's Forum should be more effective and least likely to provoke violent conflict in open, inclusive societies that are accustomed to managing difference, while the second means that it may help closed and authoritarian societies to become more open and liberal. The third lesson may apply more effectively to new institutions that are not personally experienced by citizens than to those that all citizens can actively participate in. With the latter class, into which the People's Forum falls, citizens will 'learn by doing' and therefore 'institutional history' may move quickly.

The somewhat controversial 'selectorate theory' developed by Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and his colleagues provides a useful perspective on triple dysfunction theory and thereby also on the potential of the People's Forum. Selectorate theory is a rational choice view of how organisations such as dictatorships, democratic governments and corporations work. It underlies the game theoretic modelling that Bueno de Mesquita and others very successfully use to predict the outcome of 'strategic situations', as noted above in §9.3.1. In prefacing an introduction to their theory, Bueno de Mesquita and Smith (2012, 264) observe: 'For the citizens of democracies, life is good. But good does not preclude better.' They note that 'better' is an optimal provision of public goods, which according to selectorate theory is achieved by maximizing the size of the group that keeps the leader in power. The most essential such group is the 'winning coalition', those 'people whose support is essential if a leader is to survive in office' (2012, 5). Less essential, but influential, is the group that effectively selects the leader, which is called the 'real selectorate', or the 'influentials'. The largest relevant group is the 'nominal selectorate', which comprises all those (the 'interchangeables') who have at least some legal say in selecting their leader, such as citizens who are eligible to vote. From the perspective of selectorate theory it would seem that, if the People's Forum receives the public support necessary for it to func-

tion, then it should improve the democratic provision of public goods because it would tend to enlarge both the real selectorate (the influentials) and the winning coalition (the essentials). A People's Forum should expand the influentials by encouraging more of the interchangeables to join them by voting in its polls and by contributing to the development of public opinion on its questions via engagement in public discourse on these. Such activity should transform these participants in the Forum from interchangeables to influentials by giving them more influence over who leads their democratic government — because he or she will tend to be selected according to their conformity to the policy recommendations that Forum participants develop via their contributions to Forum polling trends. If the Forum becomes very influential, then its voters and those who campaign successfully on questions presented on the Forum's ballot would virtually become part of the winning coalition, because they are then essential to the political survival of leaders in the sense that these voters and activists help to form the public opinion on policy that both selects and supports (via elections) only those leaders who will execute it. Thus, as the People's Forum has the potential to increase the size of winning coalitions in democratic governments, selectorate theory indicates that (if it works) it would improve the quality of government.

Triple dysfunction theory and selectorate theory thus appear to complement each other. While selectorate theory has the wide scope of describing how democracies, autocracies and corporations are managed, triple dysfunction is restricted to democracies, how their structure tends to fail and thus how it might be improved. Triple dysfunction might therefore be considered to fit within selectorate theory and, from that perspective, the nominal selectorate might be regarded in triple dysfunction theory as the 'nominal directorate', because all those who have some legal say in selecting their leader (in selectorate theory) also have some possibility of influencing or directing government policy (in triple dysfunction theory). Likewise, in democracies the real selectorate (or influentials) can be considered to also be a 'real directorate'. For example, in a democracy that suc-

ceeds in countering triple dysfunction with an institution like the People's Forum, the real directorate (influentials) includes citizens who participate in that institution by voting in its polls, and/or by arguing and campaigning on the questions it runs, and/or by offering advice to PF managers on the composition of their ballot paper. The real directorate or influentials might even be considered to include those who distinguish themselves from the nominal directorate by utilizing the Forums' polling trends as heuristics when they vote for parties and political candidates.

Considerable potential for the People's Forum to help develop global governance may be inferred from remarks made by Pascal Lamy, director-general of the World Trade Organisation, as he observed that current institutions of that scope

> only have 'secondary legitimacy' as 'assemblies of nation-states'. What they need to be effective is 'primary legitimacy.' That can only come by building up the 'community of interests' [to quote Zheng Bijian, former vice-chair of the Chinese Central Party School] by bringing global governance 'closer to citizens,' particularly by employing social networking technology so that 'citizens are inhabited by a sense of togetherness' …
>
> The great challenge, therefore, is how to move toward 'a convergence of interests' when the executive committee of global governance — the G20 — is beset by centrifugal tendencies instead of drawn toward unity. (Berggruen and Gardels 2013, 156)

The People's Forum may be essential for governance at this scale (as well as at the national scale) because it focuses on building the 'primary legitimacy' that comes from helping citizens to develop and implement their ideas on policy. It should therefore foster the requisite 'sense of togetherness' and 'convergence of interests'.

Philanthropist George Soros, who has financed the development of democracy in several countries via his Open Society Foundation, identifies three priorities for political improvement in the US.

> What can we do to preserve and reinvigorate open society in America? First, I should like to see efforts to help the public develop an immunity to Newspeak [George Orwell's *1984* term for deceptive official jargon]. Those who have been exposed to it from Nazi or Communist times have an allergic reaction to it; but the broad public is highly susceptible.
>
> Second, I should like to convince the American public of the merits of facing harsh reality …
>
> But improving the quality of political discourse is not enough. We must also find the right policies to deal with the very real problems confronting the country. (Soros 2011, 16)

These three priorities are close to those of the People's Forum: To raise the level of public discourse on public affairs and then shape public policy with the resultant enlightened views.

On the urgency of improving democratic governance, Gus Speth provides an environmental perspective. He observes that

> we're trying to do environmental policy and activism within a system that is simply too powerful. It's today's capitalism, with its overwhelming commitment to growth at all costs, its devolution of tremendous power into the corporate sector, and its blind faith in a market riddled with externalities … The only solution is to … figure out what needs to be done to change today's capitalism … We need a new political movement in the US to drive this … The economy we have now is an inherently rapacious and ruthless system. It is up to citizens to inject values that reflect human aspirations rather than just making money … But groups, whether they're concerned about social issues, social justice, the environment, or effective politics, are failing because they're not working together. (cited in Else 2008, 48)

In Chapter 5, the analysis of the 'scarcity multiplier' demonstrates what is needed 'to change today's capitalism'. Part 1 initiated that analysis with its diagnosis of 'triple dysfunction' and Part 2 followed it up by prescribing the People's Forum as a remedy. This institution could be the crucial tool for Speth's 'new

political movement … to inject values that reflect human aspirations'.

It is even possible that the Forum may find an important heuristic role in some non-democratic regimes. As China scholar David Lampton (2014) observes, that country is changing and now 'almost all Chinese leaders openly speak about the importance of public opinion … China has built a large apparatus aimed at measuring people's views … [and] has even begun using survey data to help assess whether CCP officials deserve promotion.' This trend demonstrates the widespread need for public opinion to be well developed in both autocratic and liberal democratic systems. People's Forums should facilitate such development, not only directly, but also indirectly by strongly implying that free media are crucial in helping public opinion to become more sophisticated.

This book observes that political science indicates five of the most influential behaviours in democratic politics are: (1) electors and their representatives tend to be confused about whether the latter are trustees or delegates (see the concluding part of §2.2); (2) a very large majority of citizens is politically disengaged and ignorant of public affairs and policy (§2.2.3, §2.2.4); (3) many citizens rely on heuristics to guide their vote (§2.2.3) and some of this reliance is expressed by them being quite happy to leave the work of becoming knowledgeable on public policy and trying to influence government to others, such as politicians and NGOs, *provided* that they can have a say when they want to (§7.2.3); (4) citizens are increasingly disillusioned with traditional electoral, party-based politics and are engaging more through issues, as noted in Chapter 1 (see its references to Andersen and Hoff, Kevill, Brett and the rise of NGOs campaigning on issues); (5) small numbers of citizens with intense common interests find it much easier to organize politically than large numbers of citizens with less direct common interests, which often corrupts public policy because the intense interests of small influential groups are usually focused on narrow concerns, such as their private goods (see Olson's Law, §2.3.2).

The People's Forum's poll addresses each of these behaviours. As triple dysfunction theory sees the confusion of responsibilities noted in (1) above as caused by an organizational flaw, the People's Forum would ameliorate it by reducing the area of responsibility that elections attempt to delegate from citizens and by clarifying the responsibilities that then remain with citizens (i.e. strategic policy) and their representatives (tactical and operational policy). The Forum would minimize the damage to governance from citizens' disengagement and ignorance (2 above) by assisting them to delegate responsibility to those among them who do engage (3 above). It would facilitate more engagement by citizens with issues (4 above), and in doing so provide constructive heuristics for voters (3 above). That combination should tend to replace the dubious heuristics currently provided by political candidates and parties (e.g. see §7.2.6), which tend to be more about personalities and dramas of political power than about issues and policies. The People's Forum should minimize the operation of Olson's Law (5 above) by assisting *all* citizens to organize politically — by helping them, first, to develop their opinions on public affairs and then to collectively pressure their political agents to implement those developed opinions.

In doing these things, the People's Forum would be taking advantage of what has been argued in this book to be the main democratic problem. This is the ambiguous delegation (1 above) that seems to make it acceptable for citizens to remain ignorant on important issues while trying to compensate by using heuristics as they vote in elections, public opinion polls and referendums. The Forum's voluntary, self-selective, repetitive voting would actually use this widespread democratic disengagement to produce sophisticated results — because those who are disengaged will exclude themselves from Forum polls, while those who do engage should become progressively better informed on public policy via that engagement. As it produces this sophistication, the Forum would be assisted to inject it into government policy and legislation by the reliance of the disengaged mass public on heuristics. This may be achieved by the Forum regu-

larly publicizing both its results and their deliberated quality in order to encourage citizens to use them as guides for their vote.

The comparison given in §6.5.2 of several proposed new forms of democratic government, together with the assessment in §9.3 of the necessary conditions for experimental tests of the People's Forum, indicates that this institutional design warrants a trial. To do this it should be run for at least three years across either an entire province or nation, which might be sufficient exposure for many citizens to start to understand it and to use it. The result of the trial may be made more conclusive by concurrently running one or more intensive deliberation forums to try to produce mutually supportive interactions, as discussed in §9.1. To consider which forums to run in this context, they might be separated into two classes: open (self-selected participation) intensive forums such as National Issues Forums, Study Circles, America*Speaks* and Minnesota E-Democracy; and restricted (such as random selection participation) intensive forums like deliberative opinion polls, online deliberative polling, consensus conferences, planning cells and citizens' assemblies. Open intensive forums might make some contribution by assisting in very limited ways to develop mass public opinion on the questions posed by the People's Forum's ballot paper. Restricted (randomly selected participation) intensive forums might contribute by helping to develop political influence for Forum polls. They may do this by providing the mass public with heuristics for voting in elections, in public opinion polls and in referendums. These heuristics would be the findings of those strongly representative intensive forums on Forum questions, as they would show (by random sample) how the mass public would respond to those questions if it carefully deliberated them. Restricted participation intensive forums are therefore likely, not only to largely agree with People's Forum trends, but also to be understood to some extent by citizens as saying what the mass public would, if everyone had the resources, time and incentive to carefully consider those questions. Publicity for the findings of restricted participation intensive forums may therefore en-

courage citizens at large to support politicians and candidates who promise to implement the Forum's trends.

Although the People's Forum is recommended here as the most feasible and effective way to start to improve democratic government, its effects may be slow to develop. Its focus on long-running issues should help citizens gradually build pressure on their representatives to improve strategic policies, laws and basic structures of governance, such as constitutions, unwritten conventions and other institutions. A few examples of such structural reforms are: restricting the types and thus the number of public servants who are appointed by popular election; eliminating gerrymanders by having district boundaries redrawn by impartial commissions; and eventually, perhaps, appointing legislators by sortition instead of by election.

As proposed in the opening Synopsis, the People's Forum might become a new branch of democratic government, and if it did, it should fill a yawning gap in their structures. This is that the public opinion on which they run is 'woefully uninformed' (see the first paragraph of §2.2.3). The Forum should ameliorate this fundamental fault by helping citizens develop their knowledge and opinions on public affairs and by providing constructive heuristics for those who don't. Not until this is done will democratic governments have good foundations for their executive, legislative, judicial and administrative branches. The new branch might be dubbed the 'opinion development branch' or the 'public deliberation branch'.

To conclude, we might note that the design of the Forum conforms to Marsh's (2000, 200) judgment that, in Australia at least, it is crucial to create a 'political capacity to seed opinion formation and to help mobilize consent'. This includes capacities 'to engage interest groups and issue movements in a forum that can challenge the executive' and 'attract media attention'. The People's Forum should be able to do those things. Its design appreciates that any citizen may have the interests, knowledge, sensitivities and sense of civic responsibility that can help. This open, accessible and careful approach may help us work together towards a safer and more fulfilling future.

Afterword
A METHOD FOR DESIGNING POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

This afterword offers a theory of institutional design. As such, it may help those who want to devise a political institution themselves; perhaps one that holds more definite promise than the People's Forum and other designs such as those described in Chapter 6.

As Rothstein (2011, 216) points out, institutions may be formal, such as legal and administrative structures, or they may be informal, such as generalized trust and other elements of social capital. It is the formal type that we focus on here, and it is suggested that these may be most effectively designed by the method that was used to invent the People's Forum. Acceptance of this suggestion may of course be influenced by whether the Forum is shown to work in the real world of democratic politics. If it cannot be established, or if it is and fails to be effective, then more attempts are needed to design an institution of similar purpose, and the method set out here may help. In that situation, however, experience will have indicated that the method is deficient, so it will need improving or replacing. Nevertheless, it does at least provide a starting point. And if the People's Forum is successful, then the method may be seen as beginning to prove itself and might therefore be used to try to devise other formal institutions.

In contemplating the Forum's design and the following description of how it was produced, one might be prompted to

ask: 'Why wasn't that particular design suggested long ago?' This question becomes obvious when it is recognized that the diagnosis guiding that prescription is basically well-known. Its first part, ambiguous delegation, is merely a reinterpretation of the old dilemma of whether political agents are delegates or trustees. The second part, excessive political competition, is widely recognized, but tends to be seen as necessary for the energy, transparency and accountability that it generates. And the third dysfunction, excessive compromise, has worried democrats at least since Plato emphasized in *The Republic* that democracy could never uphold the kind of knowledge that was needed to cure the world's evils (Shapiro 2012, 193–94). So the diagnosis has been broadly apparent for a long time and the prescription might therefore be expected to have been concocted decades ago. It did not have to await the arrival of technology, such as television, the internet and the smart phone, as the People's Forum could conceivably work across large jurisdictions with technology no more advanced than print media, radio and snail mail post.

The very small number of national-scale innovations described in §6.5.2 may provoke a similar question: 'Why has political science come up with so few practical designs for improving democratic function across provinces and nations?' Part of the answer may be that as government failure has always been experienced by most people it is seen as normal, rather than as a problem that urgently needs solving. Moreover, a particular policy or action that is seen by some citizens as government failure might be seen by others as good government, so what's the problem? And if there is a problem, then it appears to have already been tackled, for many attempts have been made to design better democratic government, as shown by the great variety of these around the world (e.g. Lijphart 2012). However, these different forms may instead be considered fundamentally alike, which is the approach tried in this book. Further reason for the rarity of fundamental reform in democratic government is that it seems impossible to implement because most incumbent politicians support the current system, as this is where they have

been successful. And finally, the crafting of such reform seems too difficult as there is no recognized method for designing political institutions (see Goodin 1996, 31 — and quoted below). It is this deficiency that I now attempt to remove, by describing the process used to devise the People's Forum.

This method was only recognized in hindsight, after the design was produced. But it may derive merit in being deduced from the actual experience of devising an institution. The deduction began by recognizing that several distinct strategies had been used. These are quite unremarkable as they are widely and routinely used in everyday life and research, so their specification in a method may seem unnecessary. However, it is largely the manner in which these strategies were applied that produces the method. As this method is, in effect, a theory of how to design institutions, it may fill the gap described by political theorist Robert Goodin (1996, 31) as a 'paucity of literature specifically on design issues', with 'little analysis as to what it means for institutions (or anything else, for that matter) to be designed and still less analysis of what principles might properly guide such design attempts'. That gap was clearly demonstrated by the book — *The Theory of Institutional Design* — in which Goodin made those comments, as none of its ten articles provided a theory of how to design an institution, despite the apparent promise of its title. Instead, those articles discussed functions that institutions should perform and what might be expected from institutions in practice, including what might happen to them. That book was an early contribution to the series 'Theories of Institutional Design', published by Cambridge University Press. Many years and volumes later, this series has yet to publish a basic 'theory of institutional design', in other words, a theory of how to design an institution.

Such a theory is now offered by proposing that five strategies are useful and perhaps both necessary and sufficient for designing an institution, provided that they are applied in a particular sequence.

The five strategies of the method

The first strategy: Utilize existing information

In looking for greater progress in his discipline, political scientist Jon Bond (2007, 904–5) offered the following advice.

> The kind of revolution necessary to propel political science to the next level of development is a revolution in theory. Sir Isaac Newton's contribution to the science of physics was not the basic research he did, but rather it was his recognition of how to put what physicists already knew together into a new overarching theory. I believe it is possible that political science has accumulated enough information about how and why politics work as they do to support such a synthesis.

The first strategy follows this suggestion. Only preexisting information was used to identify the problem and to try to solve it. I did no systematic empirical research and relied largely on the interpretations of experts in whatever research appeared relevant. The project was therefore multidisciplinary, ranging across history, biology, ethology, political science, public choice, ecological and neoclassical economics and evolutionary, social and cognitive branches of psychology. These sources have been augmented by nonacademic sources of information and my own political and psychological experience, where these appeared reliable and relevant.

There is one exception to this approach, and this is part of the fourth strategy, in which potential solutions are tested to provide new information that show whether the design process needs to be continued and, if so, to guide it. One of the ways in which this may be done is by the second strategy of design: defining or redefining the problem

The second strategy: Define the problem

The second strategy is that the problem to be solved must be carefully defined. With political problems this may produce a definition that implies not only whether the solution requires

a new institution, but also the function of this institution and therefore possible outlines of its design. Definition may thereby indicate the solution. Perhaps the first people to state this strategy in the field of governance were two experts in design and city planning, Horst Rittel and Melvin Webber. They had recognized a widespread confusion about goals in public policy and suggested that it was happening because citizens in democracies had started 'asking for a clarification of purposes' (Rittel and Webber 1973, 157). As public infrastructure planners they recognized that

> goal-finding is one of the central functions of planning … Goal-finding is turning out to be an extraordinarily obstinate task … Planning problems are inherently wicked … The *information* needed to understand the problem depends on one's idea for *solving* it … To find the problem is thus the same thing as finding the solution. (Rittel and Webber 1973, 160–61, emphasis in original)

Political scientist Michael Harmon and public administration expert Richard Mayer (1986, 9) subsequently endorsed this view of 'wicked' problems: 'the choice of a definition of such a problem, in fact, typically determines its 'solution". Others have expressed a similar assessment of how to tackle any problem, whether it could be classed as 'wicked' or not. For example, Albert Einstein observed that the

> mere formulation of a problem is far more essential than its solution, which may be merely a matter of mathematical or experimental skills. To raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old problems from a new angle requires creative imagination and marks real advances in science. (QuoteWorld 2008)

Political scientist Ian Shapiro (cited in Topper 2007, 574) has noted that surprisingly little attention is given to problem specification in the study of politics. Therefore, 'one central task for political theorists should be to identify, criticize, and suggest plausible alternatives to … the specifications of problems … and

to do it in ways that can spark novel and promising problem-driven research agendas' (Shapiro 2005, 180).

Part 1 of this book is devoted to defining the problem, first by working from evidence to observe its existence and describe its essence, then by using more evidence to check the accuracy of that definition.

The third strategy: Utilize only necessary and sufficient information

My third strategy was to try to identify and use only the information that is necessary and sufficient for the task at hand. This is important because the task — to devise a better form of government — is to solve a very broad problem. If the problem was narrowly specialized, this strategy may need little emphasis, for solutions of narrow problems are likely to present fewer opportunities for fruitless digression. Researchers of narrow problems usually need to look for details within a specialized field, whereas those who tackle broad problems may need to look for large-scale patterns or general effects across several fields. Specialization might be expected to cultivate not only skills in focusing on detail, but also a preoccupation with this, so that the capacity to take an interest in large problems and to regularly back off from the details to assess their relevance to a big picture may be neither valued nor developed. This may explain the observation of political theorist David Held (1991, 4) that, while

> specialization need not always lead to the fragmentation of knowledge, this seems to have happened in the case of politics and related disciplines … we seem to know more about the parts and less about the whole; and we risk knowing very little even about the parts because their context and conditions of existence in the whole are eclipsed from view.

Fung (2007, 443) subsequently emphasized this problem, observing that specialization 'has become a segregation of thought that now poses a fundamental obstacle to progress in democrat-

ic theory'. Specialization has produced many theoretical models of democracy, but as Graham Smith (2009, 10) observes:

> No practical design [for a democratic institution] can realistically hope to meet all the rigorous demands of any particular theoretical model … While theoretical work often proceeds as if it were an exhaustive account of democratic politics, theories offer only a partial analysis of our democratic condition … we tend not to develop fully-fledged theories of democracy (whatever they would look like) …

An article on page C1 of *The New York Times* on October 20, 2009 reported several leading political scientists as recognizing that their discipline was finding it increasingly difficult to appear relevant to broader social and political discourse. One of these scholars was Joseph Nye, University Distinguished Service Professor at Harvard, who warned that the motivation to be precise had overtaken the impulse to be relevant: 'the danger is that political science is moving in the direction of saying more and more about less and less' (quoted in Holmberg and Rothstein 2012, 1). In 2010, this problem was addressed by panels in the annual meetings of both the British and American political science associations. Doubt about the relevance of much political theory parallels Goodin's concern at the absence of a fundamental theory of institutional design — that is, the lack of specification of a method of design. The irrelevance of much political theory provoked Mark Warren (2002b, 683) to comment that, near the turn of the century, innovations in democratic participation were demonstrating 'that reality is, once again, ahead of democratic theory'.

In executing the third strategy of only using information that is necessary and sufficient, the second strategy of carefully defining the problem was used to indicate which information is necessary and sufficient. In combining the first strategy of using existing information with the third strategy, the presentation of details in data from experiment and observation was minimized so that patterns are not missed because of a narrow focus. Pattern recognition, in the form of generalizations and conclusions

by experts who know the technical details, was used as much as possible.

The fourth strategy: Pushing and pulling

Two scholars of public management and policy, Erik-Hans Klijn and Joop Koppenjan (2006, 158) have observed that institutions for public administration must be designed by careful experimentation.

> Institutional design is not a simple activity. The nature of institutional design, its process and its impact are not very well understood. Institutional design is a process of pushing and pulling with uncertain results … research into institutional design is still in its infancy.

Klijn and Koppenjan (2006, 155–56) explain that 'pushing and pulling' is partly needed to accommodate the power relations between the parties affected by the institution, and this is because how the 'formal decisions in institutional arenas aimed at changing network rules will work out in the games played within networks is highly uncertain.' This means that institutional 'designs are by definition imperfect and should be seen rather as the start of a trajectory of institutional change than as a definitive design' (Klijn and Koppenjan 2006, 156). 'Pushing' is taken here to be the design phase and 'pulling' to be the testing of a design, so that design-and-test must be followed by more design-and-test until a design is produced that performs well. The repetition of this design-and-test cycle is minimized by making the attempts at design as effective as possible. To this end, the second strategy is crucial — the problem must be carefully defined.

The fifth strategy: Thought experiment

Nobel laureate in economics Paul Krugman (1998, 19) has declared that you

> can't do serious economics unless you are willing to be playful. Economics … is a menagerie of thought experiments — parables, if you like — that are intended to capture the logic of economic processes in a simplified way. In the end, of course, ideas must be tested against the facts. But even to know what facts are relevant, you must play with those ideas in hypothetical settings.

My fifth strategy was to follow such advice and use thought experiments. This 'play' may be described as applied imagination or attempts to mentally simulate reality, and it may not only save much time and expense, but encourage endeavours that otherwise would never be undertaken. Some of its use in this study was for the 'pulling' or testing required by the fourth strategy, because testing by experimental trials in the real world of politics is not possible at this early stage of the design process. As discussed in §6.4 and §7.2.12, such operational trials require considerable political commitment and/or funding. Part 1 mainly defines the problem that is being tackled as ambiguous delegation, which leaves public opinion largely in control of public policy but too disengaged to do a good job with its tactical and strategic components. That description of government failure shapes both the mission of the design and the two strategies it employs to accomplish its mission, which thereby implies a broad outline for the design. In §9.3 it is indicated that this design cannot execute its strategies for a small group, because it uses motivations to execute those strategies that can only arise in very large groups. However, the analysis and synthesis of Parts 1 and 2 are the first steps towards a large-scale trial, because they describe why an institution is needed and the type that appears to have the best chance of being able to perform the required functions. Thought experiment or imagination is crucial for getting to this stage, because if it can, to some extent, simulate the ability of a design to solve a problem, or identify weaknesses in a design that point to a 'better' one, then it should expedite the negotiation of Klijn's and Koppenjan's 'trajectory of institutional change'. This is because much of the 'pushing and pulling' is done conceptually before it is necessary to do any of

the expensive, time-consuming and risky, real-world 'pulling'. It should be emphasized here that a 'better' design is one that is not only likely to work better than others, but is also more feasible to implement.

'Pushing and pulling' as science

The push (design) and pull (test) of designing institutions is essentially theorizing to try to explain data followed by more data collection to test the theory, then re-theorizing and re-testing, and so on. The cycle begins when existing data indicates a problem that is serious enough to try to solve. To start doing that, the problem is defined. As this is a type of explanation and theories are explanations, the definition of a problem may be virtually a theory of its cause. If the definition, together with the theory it implies, indicates a design solution that is judged impossible to implement, this judgment constitutes additional data that instructs us to try to redefine / re-theorize the problem in a more helpful way. Redefinition may require more data to be gathered. If the new definition / theory implies a design solution that could possibly be implemented, then testing it becomes the next step, which is another act of data collection. Such a test might be any or all of three types: first, a thought experiment, which may be inconclusive as it has limited capacity to produce new data that are reliable; second, an inspection of the performance and operating environment of existing institutions that resemble this solution and its anticipated environment; and third, establishing the institution that appears to be the solution in the environment it is designed for and running it to see if it works. Such tests may indicate that the design is flawed and, if so, that data may be used to guide another redefinition of the problem.

Klijn and Koppenjan's 'pushing and pulling' may thus be seen as a cycle of gathering data (pulling), then defining / theorizing / solution design (pushing), then gathering more data by testing the design (pulling) and then re-defining / re-theorizing / re-designing (pushing) and so on until a design is found that works well enough. This observing–theorizing–observ-

ing–theorizing iteration is, of course, the scientific method, the process of 'scientific inquiry' (Pigliucci 2010, 303–4). According to theoretical physicist Lee Smolin (2006), neglect of this method over the last thirty years is causing particle physics to stagnate. He suggests that the neglect arises because most physicists are preoccupied with string theory, which minimizes the formulation of different theories and thus the competition between them. This blocks the observation–theorizing–observation–theorizing iteration in two ways. One is that the paucity of competition between theories limits the variety of observational tests that might provide information leading to better theories (2006, 304–5). The other way is that string theory itself is not a real theory as it is not falsifiable — and also is not 'confirmable' (it is not possible to confirm a prediction that only that theory makes) (Smolin 2006, xiii–xv). String 'theory' is therefore disparaged by some of its sceptics as 'not even wrong' — it does not make predictions that could falsify it.

The need for *both* pushing and pulling was stressed by the eminent astrophysicist of the early twentieth century Sir Arthur Eddington (n.d.) when he pointed out that observation is not enough for effective science: 'It is also a good rule not to put overmuch confidence in the observational results put forward until they are confirmed by theory.' So pushing and pulling is the scientific method, in which the meaning of observation is formulated with theory (pushing) and this is then tested with more observation (pulling). As such, it was the basis of my method of designing an institution. Pushing and pulling organized the implementation of the other four strategies. However, as this is being written the pulling (testing by observation) remains to be completed with the third mode noted above, that of operational scale trials in the real world of politics.

The very real difficulty of pulling or testing theories/designs in political science means that ever finer details are often investigated instead, producing theory without it being tested in the real world to see not only whether it works, but whether it does so for problems that are serious enough to warrant explanation and solution. This appears to be the unproductive specialization

that raises a 'fundamental obstacle to progress in democratic theory' (Fung 2007, 443), as discussed above in the description of my third strategy of institutional design. To some degree, Bond (2007, 905) has also noticed this: 'it is possible that political science has accumulated enough information about how and why politics work as they do'. Particle physics appears to have run into the same problem: theory has specialized to the stage where its experimental testing tends to be impossible or extremely expensive, for example, the 2010 budget for the Large Hadron Collider was US$9 billion. Lack of testing may obscure the insignificance of a theory by allowing it to be developed in order to employ a problem-solving method favoured by the theorist. If that theory is tested, it may show that the favoured method of theorizing is inadequate, forcing a search for other methods that are more suited to the task. Political scientists Donald Green and Ian Shapiro (1994; Shapiro 2005) contend that rational choice theorists have made this mistake. Strong preferences for particular methods, such as mathematical analysis or the use of assumptions from neoclassical economics, may draw the scholar's attention to problems that appear amenable to these methods. However, this may mean that problems are studied that are of little significance, or that alternative explanations of significant problems are ignored. Such bias may be revealed by testing a proposed solution, for if the test shows it to be either a failure or an inconsequential success, then the problem may be re-evaluated, so that it is more constructively defined or replaced with a problem that is more significant. Green and Shapiro's stipulation that research must be problem-driven and Shapiro's subsequent stipulation that it should also be 'theory-driven' (Shapiro 2005; Topper 2007, 574) is followed by my second strategy of carefully defining the problem. The fourth strategy of 'pushing and pulling' assists that strategy by checking and rechecking that the problem is well-defined. In turn, the second strategy assists the third strategy because constructive definition of the problem points to the information that is necessary and sufficient to solve it.

The completion of pushing and pulling

To make the 'pushing' or designing phase as effective as possible, it might seem that collective action theory would be crucial, as it should help define the problem and thereby indicate the type of institutional design that would solve it. However, as Nobel Laureate in economics Elinor Ostrom (2007, 203) has pointed out, experimentation is necessary because collective action theory is in need of considerable further development.

> [A] key lesson of research on collective action theory is recognizing the complex linkages among variables at multiple levels that together affect individual reputations, trust, and reciprocity as these, in turn, affect levels of cooperation and joint benefits. Conducting empirical research is thus extremely challenging … The reason that experimental research has become such an important method for testing theory is that it is a method for controlling the setting of many variables while changing only one or two variables at a time … Instead of looking at all of the potential variables, one needs to focus in on a well-defined but narrow chain of relationships … One can then conduct analysis of a limited set of variables that are posited to have a strong causal relationship … the theory of collective action is not only one of the most important subjects for political scientists, it is also one of the most challenging.

Ostrom's view emphasizes the need for the fourth strategy: we must experiment, designing and testing (pushing and pulling) until we get it right. But as discussed in §9.3, careful definition of the problem in Part 1 of this book has produced a design for reforming democratic government that is unlikely to work with politically uninfluential experimental groups such as random samples or small communities. So until the resources can be mustered to test it on whole polities, this must be attempted by thought experiment (or possibly by computer simulation). At the stage of the project achieved here, purely conceptual pushing and pulling that relied on thought experiment has yielded a design that appears promising enough to warrant the cost of a trial (or 'pull') in the real world, at the scale of a province or a

nation. Such an experiment offers the possibility of completing the application of the fourth strategy of pushing and pulling, but in order to do this the necessary financial resources must be raised.

Applying the five strategies

I applied the five strategies by commencing with the first. Existing information suggested that democratic government tends to malfunction. In the late 1980s this seemed personally apparent to me from involvement in two types of work. One was my occupation as a public servant. For twenty-five years I was a government forester engaged in planning and managing commercial and non-commercial uses of natural resources. My other area of work was a private pursuit of environmental concerns, which included helping NGOs with conservation campaigns. As serious democratic dysfunction became more obvious from these two perspectives, I used the second strategy of defining and redefining the problem. In doing this I applied the first strategy of using existing information that might further illuminate the problem, together with the third strategy of trying to make sure that the information I looked for was necessary and sufficient for this purpose. This took many years as a part-time pursuit and in retrospect I expect that I would also have started to employ my fourth strategy, by testing (pulling) the definition and the type of solution that it implied (the push) with the fifth strategy of thought experiment. That is, I would have tried to imagine whether my current idea of the solution appeared both feasible to implement and likely to work. It was in this mode that Bob Brown and I (as noted in Acknowledgments) discussed the need for something like Citizen Initiated Referendums. If mental simulation had indicated that my current idea of a solution was either extremely difficult to implement or unlikely to work, then I would have made another attempt (following the fourth strategy of repeated design-and-test) at a definition (the second strategy) that would imply a more effective design. The evidence hinting that I had worked in this way was that I simul-

taneously produced a definition of the problem and a design for the solution. But this was not apparent for many years, for it was only the design that seemed to have been devised. This was written down (now elaborated as Part 2) about fifteen years before the problem was fully defined on paper (see Part 1). However, as that definition was written out, the ease of doing it showed that, whether it was right or wrong, it was well-formed in my mind. Thus the fourth strategy of repetitive 'pushing and pulling' had coordinated the use of the other four strategies to produce both a definition of the problem and a design for its solution. The definition included a classification of those characteristics of policy issues that appeared to be part of the problem, as set out in §4.1. As it is merely thought experiment that indicates this design may be effective, the next step must be a real-world experiment. As indicated in §9.3, this 'pulling' requires the design to be operated in a polity such as a province or a nation for the period that it was expected to need in order to begin producing results.

My explanation that I had used these five strategies is, of course, not thoroughly supported by evidence, and it assumes that unconscious thinking played a large part — for example, in defining and redefining the problem; in inferring a particular design from a particular definition; and in judging what information is necessary and sufficient for 'pushing and pulling'. However, the idea that unconscious thought is efficacious when driven by strong desires to solve problems is well established. A century ago, the French polymath Henri Poincaré included it as a part of his four-stage description of how he solved tough problems. Those stages are: conscious thought, unconscious thought (incubation), illumination and then verification. Historian of science Arthur Miller (2010) considers that this model of creativity is the best we have. He notes that psychologist Edouard Toulouse, who was an expert on creativity, was satisfied with that view after personally psychoanalysing Poincaré. Other scientists such as Einstein, Helmholtz and Heisenberg have described their problem-solving in the same way. Einstein emphasized the importance of both creative imagination and relentless persistence, and this has been endorsed by Howard Eves, an

eminent historian of mathematics, who observed that an 'expert problem solver must be endowed with two incompatible qualities — a restless imagination and a patient pertinacity' (quoted in Singh 1997, 225).

The method as a theory of institutional design

We have seen that 'research into institutional design is still in its infancy' (Klijn and Koppenjan 2006, 158); that there is a 'paucity of literature specifically on design issues'(Goodin 1996, 31); and that the theory of collective action, which should guide the design of political institutions, 'is not only one of the most important subjects for political scientists, it is also one of the most challenging' (Ostrom 2007, 203). Graham Smith's (2009) *Democratic Innovations* is a recent contribution to the Cambridge University Press series 'Theories of Institutional Design,' and although it does not produce a theory of how to design political institutions, it moves a little in this direction by offering a framework for assessing their capabilities. Such a framework is useful, perhaps essential, for the testing (pulling) phase of the cycle of define / theorize / design — test, re-define / re-theorize / re-design — retest, and so on. This may be so whether the testing is a real-world trial of an institution or just the thought experiment of subjectively assessing the capabilities of a design, as is done here for four designs in Chapter 6 with a framework adapted from Graham Smith's.

One of several desirable capabilities of institutional designs that are recommended by Goodin (1996, 40) is that we should 'design our institutions in such a way as to be flexible … to admit of 'learning by doing' and to evolve over time. Thus, we might say revisability is one important principle of institutional design'. This may be a very useful criterion for preferring one design over another, but my fourth strategy of defining / theorizing / designing, then testing followed by re-defining and so on may be seen as more fundamental because it could point towards several designs that may then be ranked for suitability according to attributes such as their revisability. Another way of

understanding the fundamental nature of the fourth strategy is that it invites the replacement of a design that performs poorly with another that is produced by redefining the problem it is intended to correct. This may mean that the new design is so different that it could not have been produced by revising the design it replaces. Goodin's 'revisability' conflates the desired *capability* of designs with the *method* of producing them whereas my fourth strategy (along with the other four) focuses only on method.

My method for designing institutions may also help solve the problem observed by David Held, Archon Fung, Graham Smith and others, that specialization may obstruct theoretical progress in some social sciences. The iterative process of the method may solve it by each cycle checking the usefulness of narrow focus. This is likely because the method is to produce a definition / theory / solution that is then tested in some sense so that deficiencies may be discovered, which may then elicit a new definition / theory / solution that is also tested and so on until sufficient progress is achieved. Theorizing is thus continually checked for significance, relevance and effectiveness. The cycle starts with the recognition of a problem (indicated by existing information, which is my first strategy) and proceeds to a careful definition of the problem (my second strategy), which should clarify whether the problem is significant and also indicate a theory of cause that may point to a solution — in other words, a theory that appears relevant and effective. Definition also helps to show what information is necessary and sufficient to solve the problem (so definition assists the implementation of my third strategy). This phase of defining / theorizing / solution design is followed with a testing phase that will initially be restricted to thought experiment (my fifth strategy). The two phases are repeated (which is my fourth strategy) until testing indicates that an adequate solution has been devised. Each repetition should improve the relevance and effectiveness of the definition of the problem, the theory of its cause, the design of the solution and the information gathered to help produce these improvements.

Thought experiment may seem to be too subject to the imaginative idiosyncrasies of the researcher to be useful in this procedure, but it should provoke her to look outside her specialization to see whether her definition, theory, design-solution and information gathering appears relevant and effective in the 'context and conditions of existence in the whole' (Held 1991, 4). And, of course, thought experiment may be made more reliable by comparing the thoughts of several people who are well-informed on the problem. This may apply more knowledge and subject different idiosyncrasies to critical review. However, as emphasized in the previous section, this method, or theory of institutional design, finally requires the design to be tested by operating it in the environment in which it was intended to function.

Appendix
POPULATION GROWTH AND THE SCARCITY MULTIPLIER IN TASMANIA

The description of the scarcity multiplier in Chapter 5 argues that — without other influences — an abundance (per capita) of useful natural capital in a region makes its population grow more rapidly than populations of other regions that are less well endowed, which then accelerates the decline of that abundance in that region. It was further suggested that in modern economies, the influence of natural capital on the growth of the population operates largely by affecting migration. This migration response is illustrated below with the history of the growth of the Tasmanian population since colonial times. The reaction of the state's democratic government to that growth has been, and continues to be, strongly influenced by a private goods bias. The result is a persistent scarcity multiplier. If this is to be halted, then Tasmania's political system must be altered to give it the capacity to recognize and eliminate its private goods bias.

The British started to colonize Tasmania in 1803 and, as we shall see, within a few decades the limitations of its stocks of natural capital started to restrict the speed at which the 'More development' of Figure 5.1 (in §5.3.1) could proceed. The operation of the scarcity multiplier in Tasmania has therefore been somewhat restricted for most of its two centuries of industrial development. One limitation of Tasmania's natural capital that causes this restriction is that, compared with the nearby Australian mainland, Tasmania has a small area of land and therefore

relatively limited prospects for agriculture, mining, forestry and the other industries that depend on that area. This limitation is exacerbated by another natural feature that is not a 'stock' in the conventional sense and therefore perhaps not strictly 'natural capital' (as defined in §2.2.3.2, *Distraction by advertising*). This natural feature is Tasmania's geographic inaccessibility. More than two hundred kilometres of sea (Bass Strait) separate the main Tasmanian island from the rest of Australia, which means that it cannot have land-based road and rail connections that would help the main Australian market trade with Tasmania and also to trade with foreign countries via Tasmanian ports. As the Australian economy developed, this lack of geographic accessibility became an overarching limitation that further restricted the economic value of Tasmania's relatively limited natural capital. These two types of limits to natural capital have resulted in Tasmania's population growing to less than a tenth, the size of that of neighbouring Victoria, which by mid-2010 had more than 5.5 million residents, whereas Tasmania had only half a million. This difference is not due to earlier colonization in Victoria, as both states had their first European settlement at the same time, in 1803. However, in the early 1850s a very large difference was created by the Victorian gold rush, which brought hundreds of thousands of people to that state. As this is written, the evidence that Tasmania's geographic isolation continues to be an economic penalty is that although Victoria has 3.3 times Tasmania's land area, its rate of growth in population is presently about 30 times that of Tasmania. Expressing this disparity in terms of percentage rates for the year ended 30/9/2011, Tasmania's population grew by 0.5%, Victoria's by 1.5% and Australia's by 1.4%.

Tasmania's lack of geographic accessibility thus appears to have been a major driving force of its historical trend in migration, in which migration out of the state tends to exceed migration into it. Because of this, Tasmania's population has basically grown only through its natural increase (the ratio of births to deaths), whereas Australia as a whole has had strong net immigration in addition to natural increase. Figure A1 shows these

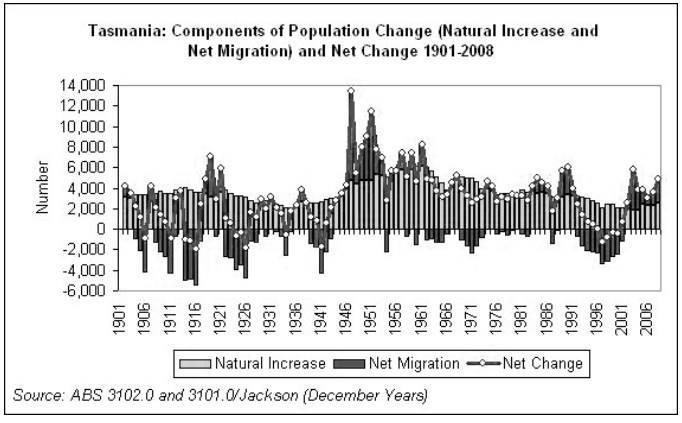

Fig. A1. An historical overview of Tasmania's natural increase and net migration (http://www.taspop.tasbis.com/webapps/i/588/1396/195797).

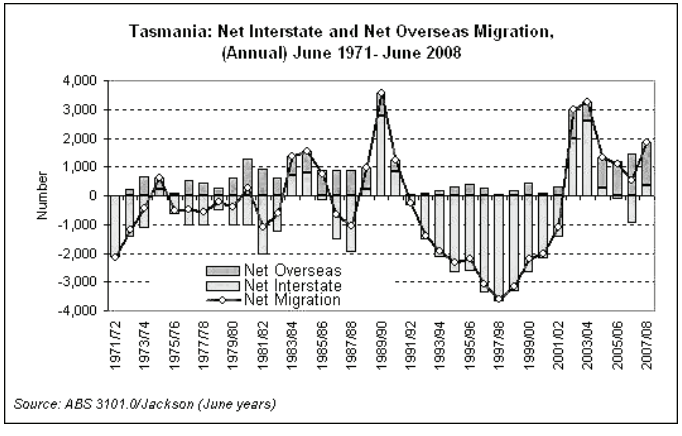

Fig. A2. Components of Tasmanian migration for the past 40 years (http://www.taspop.tasbis.com/webapps/i/588/1396/195820).

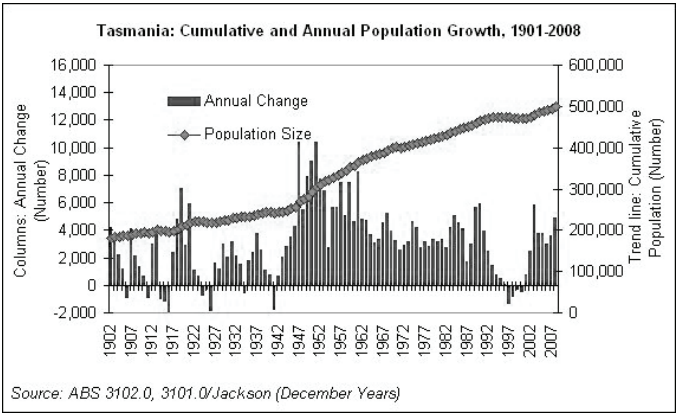

Fig. A3. Tasmania's journey to 500,000 (http://www.taspop.tasbis.com/webapps/i/588/1396/195796)

components in Tasmania's population change since 1901 with out-migration (below the horizontal line) generally exceeding immigration (above that line). Other data for Tasmania from the same source extends from 1901 back to 1860, showing a similar preponderance of out-migration over immigration for that period. Figure A2 shows that, at least since 1971, Tasmania's out-migration has been to the mainland states, with no net out-migration to foreign countries. Figure A3 shows the result: a slow increase in the state's population.

Two centuries of this modest growth means that Tasmanians now retain more natural capital per person than they would have if their population had grown more quickly. This is because a larger population would have two major effects: It would divide the total quantity of natural capital into a lower per capita quantity; and it would consume and destroy more natural capital, thereby diminishing its total quantity, leaving even less per capita. In addition to Tasmania's slow growth of population resulting in a per capita abundance of natural capital in the state that is higher than it would have been with faster growth of population, its slow growth may also mean that Tasmania's per capita abundance of natural capital is now greater in some im-

portant respects than that of mainland Australia. Although the land area of the mainland is 112 times that of Tasmania, most of it is inhospitably dry or hot, or both, so its much higher rate of growth of population may have, over more than two centuries, now reduced its per capita abundance of much of the natural capital that is useful to people to levels below those that remain in Tasmania. An obvious exception is the geological natural capital of the mainland that recently produced a mining boom in iron ore and natural gas in Western Australia, in uranium, copper and gold in South Australia and coal and coal seam gas in Queensland. This natural capital is, of course, nonrenewable, and the boom now appears to be producing a bust before it is exhausted due to market contraction in China (Cleary 2011). Arguably, that boom has produced a nation-wide scarcity multiplier that will exacerbate the bust by boosting the numbers of Australians that the country must support after this part of its natural capital is exhausted. A further cost of this boom is the large contribution to global warming by the fossil fuels it produces.

Research is needed to see whether Tasmania really does have a higher per capita abundance of useful natural capital than mainland Australia and, if this is so, to get a good understanding of specifically what it is that is more abundant on a per capita basis. Such investigation would compare mainland and Tasmanian availabilities or prices of land, flows of fresh water, natural recreational assets and other sustainable inputs from natural capital to quality of life. Preliminary research into the per capita availability of natural capital for Australia as a whole has been done by economist Doug Cocks (1996, 90–103). A few others, such as economist Hans-Jürgen Engelbrecht (2009), have investigated the effect on subjective well-being of the per capita abundance of natural capital in a number of developed and developing countries.

Even without the knowledge that such research might produce, it seems obvious to many Tasmanians and visitors to the state that it does have a per capita abundance of some useful types of natural capital that is greater than in the rest of the na-

tion. Tasmania's geographic inaccessibility has developed this favourable situation by helping to keep its per capita income lower and rate of unemployment higher than in the rest of the nation. Those conditions make Tasmania's population grow much more slowly than that of the mainland and therefore its per capita abundance of natural capital diminishes more slowly. Rates of unemployment for Australia and Tasmania are shown in Figure A4 from late 1978 to late 2008. At the end of this period national unemployment is shown here as starting to exceed that of Tasmania, but later data show that, true to form, this reversal only lasted for eighteen months, and by late 2012 Australia's rate of unemployment was around 5% while Tasmania's was over 7%. This indicates that residing in Tasmania is often a lifestyle choice, one that is made to enjoy an abundance of natural capital, rather than the industrial, medical and cultural advantages afforded by high concentrations of population. Tasmanians may continue to enjoy that abundance only as long as their numbers do not grow significantly. That would erode the abundance by physically destroying more natural capital to produce more income to support the larger population and by intensifying crowding effects in the use of the natural capital that remains.

This picture of residency in Tasmania, as a lifestyle choice and/or a lack of ability to relocate interstate, appears to be sup-

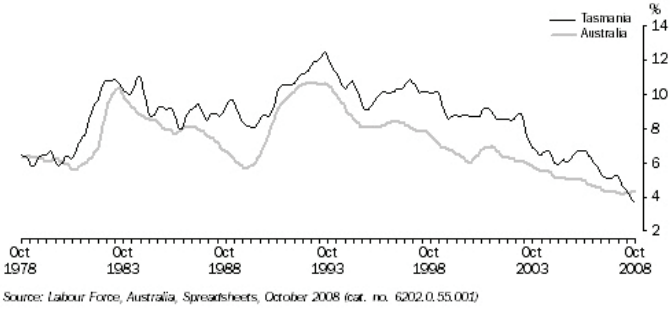

Fig. A4. Unemployment rates in Tasmania and Australia. Source: Labour Force, Australia, Spreadsheets, October 2008 (Cat. No. 6202.0.55.001), cited in ABS 1307.6 — Tasmanian State and Regional Indicators, Dec 2008.

ported by economist Saul Eslake (2012, 15–16) as he observes that

> in the 2010–11 financial year, Tasmania's per capita gross state income was more than 23% below the mainland average — the widest margin in the 20 years for which figures are available. In 2006–07 (the year before the [global] financial crisis began) the gap was 'only' 17.5%, having narrowed by more than 3.5 percentage points since the beginning of the decade …

Tasmanian households are to a significant extent shielded from the consequence of the state's poor economic performance by the operation of the national fiscal system. They pay 21% less per head in income tax to the national government than mainland Australia. And they receive 27% more per head by way of social security benefits than those living on the other side of Bass Strait. As a result, Tasmanian household disposable income is less than 7% below the corresponding figure for mainland Australia — less than one-third of the difference in per capita gross state income between Tasmania and the rest of Australia.

But this 7% difference in per capita income is significant, and it adds to the incentive for emigration from Tasmania that is produced by its usual relative scarcity of employment opportunities. So we can conclude that if the national government did not compensate Tasmanians for their economic handicaps, the incentive for emigration would be much larger and this would slow the state's scarcity multiplier. With its fiscal assistance, the federal government is boosting this multiplier.

The population feedback of the multiplier analysis of Figure 5.1 (§5.3.1) indicates that further increases in per capita income might be achieved in Tasmania while minimizing erosion of the availability of natural capital if economic development is coupled with measures that prevent it from encouraging the population to grow, such as restrictions on migration into Tasmania. This is not permitted by the Australian Constitution, but, as we have seen, such restriction has been partially effected during

Tasmania's two centuries of development by its relatively inaccessible location making it less affluent than the rest of Australia.

Apparently most (perhaps all) Tasmanians do not recognize that restriction of their economic growth has preserved relatively high per capita availabilities of natural capital, for they generally do not see their state's lack of accessibility as a benefit. Instead, they focus on their isolation as limiting their incomes and their opportunities for employment, and strongly support any measure that would make Tasmania more accessible. Three that have been implemented are the Tasmanian Freight Equalization Scheme, the Bass Strait Passenger Vehicle Equalization Scheme and Basslink. The first two of these subsidize transport costs to and from Tasmania (at the expense of mainland Australians) to make them more comparable to transport costs between the mainland states. In 2014 these subsidies were worth approximately $95 million and $38 million respectively to Tasmania (Clark 2014). Basslink is a high-voltage direct current cable across Bass Strait that shunts extra peak load capacity to the mainland from the flexible supply of Tasmania's hydro-electric system and takes — into Tasmania — some of the excess base load capacity of mainland coal-fired generators. This creates economic savings and arguably reduces pollution, as it lessens Tasmania's need to invest in base load generation, supplies Tasmania with power in times of drought and enables it to sell peak load power that makes mainland coal-fired power generation more efficient. Another measure that might be implemented to increase Tasmania's accessibility is a faster, larger and cheaper vehicular ferry system for Bass Strait. A cross-Strait highway of bridges, tunnels and links via several Bass Strait islands is the ultimate dream of this type, but would be quite uneconomic with current technology and the limited market. For comparison, the 50 kilometre English Channel tunnel is half the length of any Bass Strait tunnel system and serves a far larger market.

As the scarcity multiplier indicates, economic assistance such as increasing Tasmania's accessibility and payoffs from the national fiscal system encourage its population to grow, thereby reducing its per capita abundance of natural capital while fuel-

ling its desire for yet more development, which then leads to further reduction of that abundance and repetition of the process. Such erosion of abundance does not arouse concern in most politicians and the business lobby. They do not want to recognize it because it argues against the lobby's mission of increasing their profits by expanding the supply of labour and enlarging the domestic market, both of which depend on expanding the population. Moreover, business people are in nirvana when the population is enlarged because that helps the scarcity multiplier to drive more development, which then drives more of it. Citizens are unconcerned by the resultant multiplication of scarcity as their thinking is usually too short-term to see it. Most of this multiplication is further off in the future than the direct effects of currently proposed developments, which are usually more employment, more income and the immediate environmental impacts. While such 'stage one' thinking (as discussed in §5.4) gives many citizens some awareness of the initial benefits and costs of currently proposed developments, their usual failure to think 'beyond stage one' prevents them from seeing the consequences of those initial benefits, of which a major one is the exacerbation of their own wants as described by the population and affluenza feedbacks of the scarcity multiplier. This consequence tends to be too far off in the future to be of personal concern and to exercise one's social conscience.

Although the scarcity multiplier limps along in Tasmania, hobbled by geographic isolation, it still depletes natural capital to an extent that alarms many residents and others who know the state. So Tasmanian society has been racked by fierce environmental disputes for half a century, and these continue to erupt. But the relatively slow progression of the multiplier means that the state still retains much of its natural capital in a relatively intact condition. One facet of this is that 45% of Tasmania has its natural condition protected to some degree — from nominally highly protected World Heritage Area and National Parks to less well-protected reserves on both public and private land. The qualifier of 'nominally' is used here because the scarcity multiplier is actually chewing away at these

'protected' areas in the guise of tourism developments that damage the wild character (the combination of naturalness and remoteness) that these reserves were intended to protect, at least in the minds of those who campaigned for their protection (see for example, www.keepthecapeswild.org.au). Another manifestation of the per capita abundance of natural capital in Tasmania is its very strong 'shack culture' (Newton 2003; Vowles 2012), in which — until a few decades ago — many Tasmanians built shacks on public land by beaches, lakes, rivers and mountains with no formal permission from (or payment to) government. These buildings were often constructed by amateurs to rough standards with second-hand materials. Their freedom to do that has now been curbed by laws requiring that all shack owners and prospective shack builders must obtain government permission to use public land and pay for lease or freehold and for any associated services such as roads and waste disposal. This recent transition largely reflects a rising scarcity of land and other types of natural capital, brought on by growth in both the size of the population and the spending power of each person.

Tasmania's ratio of natural capital to population appears high by comparison with most other advanced economies, and this seems to make any further reduction of the ratio acutely distressing to many who are familiar with it. Tasmanians still have much to lose, so environmental protests are frequent. However, despite a widespread appreciation of this potential for loss, most residents and their political representatives (left-wing, right-wing and green) regard Tasmania as retarded unless it can be freed from impediments to economic growth, such as its relative inaccessibility. But, as we have seen, any boost to its economy energizes its scarcity multiplier, escalating both the wants of Tasmanians and the depletion of their natural capital. Obviously, that combination is a vicious one, but Tasmanians do not appear to see it. Either one or both parts are invisible to them. As noted in the scarcity multiplier analysis, this is because their short-sighted focus on immediate results prevents them from seeing the effects of those results, which are a little further off into the future. No doubt there are a few Tasmanians far-sighted

enough to see and be worried by these long-term implications, but they are thoroughly outnumbered and feel vulnerable to political ridicule. Unless Tasmanians can reform their political system with institutional changes that improve their collective capacity to look ahead, the scarcity multiplier will increasingly impoverish them, from one generation to the next.

For those Tasmanians who are concerned about the decline of their ratio of natural capital to population, a rough rule of thumb for assessing the activity of the scarcity multiplier is to look at the rate at which their population is growing. If this is trending positive (say decade by decade), then the scarcity multiplier is likely to be working and degrading their quality of life. This would suggest to concerned Tasmanians that their government should halt the multiplier, which could be done in one or more of several ways, as implied above in this Appendix and discussed in §5.3.4, the end of §5.3.5 and early in §5.4. Four of these ways may be the major options. The first is that the Tasmanian government restores the state's economic isolation by closing freight equalization schemes and Basslink. The second is that it prohibits new development projects — especially large ones — even if they appear to be environmentally benign in their immediate impacts. The third option is for the Tasmanian government to ask the federal government to adopt a policy of zero population growth for the nation and to implement this primarily by restricting migration into Australia. The fourth option may be a last resort for Tasmania: To secede from the Commonwealth, so that the state acquires a direct power to control its intake of migrants.

However, if Tasmanians are to engage effectively enough with public policy to be able to recognize the operation of a scarcity multiplier and then deliberate their collective response to it, they must have more assistance than that afforded by their current institutions, such as the mass media, social media, elections and parliament. The People's Forum is designed to fill this gap, but only operational-scale trials will show whether it can.

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INDEX

A

Abramoff, Jack 116
Abramowitz, Alan 152
Abse, Wilfred 123
Ackerman, Bruce 406
adversarialism
  fake 109, 110, 114, 130–31
affluenza 187, 215, 216–17, 219, 220–23, 229–30, 236, 465
agency
  problem 128–29
Akerlof, George 69
Alford, John 129, 296, 382, 481
Althaus, Scott 87
America*Speaks* 46, 403, 407–8, 437
Andersen, Jørgen Goul 40, 142, 144–45
Annan, Kofi 104, 110
Arrow, Kenneth 64
Asimov, Isaac 176
authoritarianism 44, 395, 398, 429, 430
Avaaz 46, 323

B

Bacevich, Andrew 179–80, 199
balance
  social 93, 94
ballot paper 24–28, 31, 253, 255, 257–60, 275, 277, 282, 290–91, 294–96, 327, 329–32, 335, 337–39, 341–43, 348, 359, 364–70, 372–74, 381, 405, 410, 413, 421–22, 433, 437
Bartels, Larry 86
Becker, Ted 409
Beetham, David 56, 264
Beinart, Peter 154
Bennett, Stephen 84, 368
Berggruen, Nicolas 73, 309, 314–17
bias
  anti-market 204–5
  liberal 382, 394
  private goods 198, 204, 205–6, 209–10, 212–14, 216, 218–19, 221–23, 225, 227–29, 240–41, 457

supply 205
Bimber, Bruce 344
biodiversity 56, 94, 228
Blankart, Charles 45
Blumler, Jay 120, 409, 411
Bohman, James 250
Bok, Derek 38, 83
Bond, Jon 442
Borlaug, Norman 202
Borlaug postulate. *See* Khazzoom, Daniel, Khazzoom-Brookes postulate
Bosch, Gerhard 189–90
Bows, Alice 40
Bradley, Bill 38
Breslau, Karen 183
Brett, Judith 41, 130
Brewer, Mark D. 82
Brezovsek, Marjan 79
Brookes, Leonard 202. *See also* Khazzoom, Daniel, Khazzoon-Brookes postulate
Brown, Bob 173, 237, 452
Buchanan, James 44
Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce 84, 149, 426, 431
Burke, Edmund 74
Burstein, Paul 82
Burton, Bob 121
Bush, George H.W. 178
Bush, George W. 103, 112, 178, 180–82, 205

C

Campbell, Vincent 409
capital
natural 21, 94, 96, 124, 140, 168, 174, 191–95, 198, 206–9, 212, 214–222, 224, 226–29, 232, 234–35, 237–38, 240–41, 384, 457–58, 460–67
private 212, 216, 218–19, 221–24, 226–28
public 209–10, 212–16, 218–24, 227–29, 240
Caplan, Bryan 44, 77, 79, 121, 281
Carnaghan, Ellen 101
Carson, Lyn 37
Carter, April 37
Carter, Jimmy 91, 146, 179, 180–81
Carvalho, Luis 49
Chambers, Simone 252, 332, 341, 365
Chandler, Mark 182
Change.org 46, 323
choice
individual 61, 62, 64, 88–89, 139, 343
public 19, 44, 45, 57, 63, 77, 117–19, 194, 264, 373, 442
rational 44, 119, 431, 450
social 61–62, 64–68, 75, 76, 80, 89, 95, 139, 141, 161, 201, 255, 323, 338, 399
Chua, Amy 111

Cincinnati system 313, 320
Citizens' Assemblies 272, 411
Civic Commons in Cyberspace 409–13
civil disobedience 103, 161, 194–95
Clarke, Richard 103–4
Cleary, Paul 241
climate change 35–36
Clinton, Bill 91, 103, 154, 178
Cocks, Doug 172–73, 461
Cohen, Barry 39
Coleman, Stephen 120, 409, 411
colonization 214, 458
competition 20, 22, 30, 49, 60, 68, 92, 93, 95, 109–11, 114, 115, 118–23, 126–28, 131–34, 136, 146, 149–50, 155, 164–65, 168, 171–72, 178, 181, 183–84, 186–88, 192, 208, 215–16, 221, 223, 226–27, 230, 234, 236, 239, 242, 248–49, 251, 258, 332, 360, 395, 399, 440, 449
  commercial 120–21
  competitive struggles 122, 427
  excessive. *See* dysfunction, triple dysfunction theory, excessive competition
compromise 20, 22, 26, 29, 44, 69, 123, 125, 127–29, 131–34, 146, 149, 151, 157, 168, 171, 181, 185, 186–87, 192, 218, 239, 269, 318, 356, 399, 440
  excessive. *See* dysfunction, triple dysfunction theory, excessive compromise
consensus 46, 67, 146, 190, 233, 293, 295, 318, 349, 366, 403, 408, 413, 427, 437
conservatism 153, 382, 383, 395
control
  popular 56–57, 79, 252, 263, 267–68, 274, 298, 300, 310
Converse, Philip E. 85
corporation 61, 182
corruption 43, 67, 101, 103, 110, 111, 114, 116–18, 139, 194, 225, 270, 310, 364, 369, 425
Council of Citizens 313, 319
Crozier, Michel 427–28

D

Dahl, Robert 57, 262–67, 280
Dahrendorf, Ralf 429–30
Dalton, Russell 48, 330
Daly, Herman 188, 189, 207, 223
Dawkins, Richard 149, 241
DeLay, Tom 116, 155
delegation
  ambiguous. *See* dysfunction, triple dysfunction theory, ambiguous delegation
deliberation
  public 46, 48, 59, 97, 105, 154, 235–36, 249–50,

256, 260, 275–76, 278–79, 281–82, 289, 291, 292, 299–300, 314, 320, 326, 342, 373, 383, 394, 396, 438
Deliberative Poll 401
Delli Carpini, Michael X. 249
democracy
capitalist 62
deliberative 20, 45, 250, 271, 291–93, 299, 333, 360
direct 48, 105, 247
hyper~ 151
liberal 19, 37, 38, 39, 40, 43, 47–50, 55–58, 61, 68–69, 75, 81, 102, 109, 116, 123, 126, 130, 140, 160, 165, 167, 176, 186, 195, 207, 218, 242–43, 247, 262, 264, 274, 282, 285, 288–89, 299, 304, 309, 311, 313, 322, 346, 372, 401, 435
pyramidal 305–9, 311–14, 316, 321–322, 414
ParPolity 307
representative 47, 105, 108
retreat of 43
DemocracyOS 320
Deng Xiaoping 175
Denniss, Richard 215, 223
Diamond, Jared 164
Diamond, Larry 42
directorship 29, 30, 41, 61, 79, 80–81, 83–84, 95–98, 101–3, 108, 121–22, 126–28, 134, 136–38, 141, 145–46, 165, 178, 180–81, 198, 205, 234, 248, 251, 254, 296, 344–45, 393, 396, 398
Downs, Anthony 89
Druckman, James 81
Dryzek, John 283, 330, 337, 372
dysfunction 59
democratic 19, 23, 44, 48, 55–57, 107, 126, 129, 172, 176, 180, 194, 197, 198, 254, 406, 427, 452
triple dysfunction theory 20–23, 26, 29–31, 36, 45, 49, 51, 55–56, 58, 109, 126, 128–29, 134, 136–37, 140–42, 144–46, 149, 151, 155, 157, 159–60, 165, 167–72, 175, 178, 182–86, 190–96, 203–4, 218, 225, 227, 234, 239, 240–43, 247–49, 251, 262, 269, 296, 431–34, 436, 440, 447
ambiguous delegation 20, 23, 29, 68, 69, 74, 75–78, 80–81, 83, 90, 92–93, 104–8, 121, 122, 125, 131–34, 136, 149–51, 153, 165, 168, 171, 175–81, 184–87, 192, 198, 239, 251, 344, 398, 436, 440, 447
excessive competition 20, 22, 30, 127, 132–34, 136, 150, 155,

164, 168, 172, 178, 181, 183–84, 186–88, 192, 249, 251, 399
excessive compromise 20, 22, 26, 29, 125, 128, 129, 132, 134, 149, 151, 168, 171, 185–86, 192, 218, 239, 269, 399, 440

E

economics 62–64, 69, 77, 148, 169, 201, 216, 231, 240, 340, 442, 446–47, 450–51
economy
economic growth 21, 40, 95, 172, 186, 191–98, 202, 206, 209, 214, 225, 236, 237, 239, 241–42, 383, 464, 466
market 49, 57, 60, 61–63, 89, 90, 111, 139, 145, 152, 164–65, 175, 183, 188, 203–7, 224–28, 231–32, 240, 257, 289, 323, 343, 434, 458, 461, 464–65
E-Democracy 409, 412, 437
efficiency 190, 201, 203, 263, 270, 274, 276, 279, 284–85, 288, 298, 300, 302, 308
Ehrlich, Paul 235
elections 20, 22–23, 26, 29, 40–42, 68–72, 75–76, 78, 84, 95, 96, 97, 102, 106, 108, 109, 111, 115, 126, 131, 133, 137, 142, 149, 151, 155, 331, 352, 354, 360, 406, 426, 432, 436–37, 468
electoral competition 110
electoral cycle 69, 169
electoral structure 68, 106, 133
electoral systems 22, 106, 123, 247
Elmore, Richard 129
Empowered Participatory Governance 292–93
Engelbrecht, Hans-Jürgen 461
Engleman, Robert 170
environment
of evolutionary adaptation 100, 162
equality
political 56, 57, 105, 124, 154, 263–69, 272–275, 277–80, 284, 285, 288, 313, 325, 333, 415, 417
Eslake, Saul 463
Eves, Howard 453
externalizability 160, 164–65, 167, 197, 340
externalization 164–67, 186, 187, 197, 227

F

Farrar, Cynthia 298, 478
Fisher, Linda 182, 185
Fishkin, James 298, 406
Flanagin, Andrew 344
Flannery, Tim 184, 320
focus groups 294
freedom
of association 56

of expression 56
of movement 56
Frey, Bruno 231
Friedman, Jeffrey 85
Fukuyama, Francis 47, 84
Fung, Archon 292–94, 444, 455
Funk, Caroline 382

G

Galbraith, John Kenneth 93–95, 216
Gardels, Nathan 73, 314–16
Garnaut, Ross 40
Gastil, John 79, 272, 293–94
George, David 188
Gerring, John 58–59
Getup! 46, 323
Giddens, Anthony 37
Gilens, Martin 333
Giles, Jim 381
Gillard, Julia 39, 104, 205
Gingrich, Newt 155
global warming 21, 36, 39–40, 62–63, 73, 87, 104, 130, 161–63, 166, 168–69, 173, 176–78, 181–83, 185, 198, 205, 229, 242, 336, 344, 384, 408, 461
Goodin, Robert 249, 441
goods
democratic 262–65, 267–68, 271, 274
governmental 263–70, 272–75, 277–80, 284–86, 288, 300, 302, 304–5, 310, 313, 325, 415–16
enlightened understanding 265–70, 273–74, 277–79, 284, 286, 288, 297, 300, 304–5, 310, 313, 416–17
political prevalence of enlightened understanding 266, 269–70, 273–74, 277–78, 280, 285, 288, 300, 305, 311, 417
institutional 263–64, 266, 270, 272–74, 276, 278–79, 284–86, 288, 298, 302, 308, 311
efficiency of institution 263, 270, 274, 276, 279, 284–85, 287–88, 298, 300, 302, 308, 312, 416
transferability of institution 263–64, 270–72, 274, 276–79, 285, 288, 297, 299, 300, 303–4, 308–9, 311, 372
applicability to political system 274, 277–78, 285, 288, 304, 309, 311–12, 454
applicability to polities of large scale 142, 274, 277, 279,

288, 291, 297, 300, 304, 309, 312, 362, 416, 420
applicability to strategic issues 24, 31, 32, 168, 242, 251–52, 260, 269, 273, 274, 277, 279, 288, 299–300, 303, 309, 311–12, 315, 318–20, 335, 342, 373, 396, 416, 418, 422, 424, 430
feasibility of introduction 271–72, 285, 286, 288, 303, 308, 311, 313, 317, 320, 416
transparency 263, 264–65, 270, 273–74, 277–79, 287, 288, 299, 302, 308, 309, 312, 318, 356, 364, 416, 440
political equality 263–69, 273–74, 279, 284–85, 288, 300, 304, 309, 415, 417
agenda control 56–57, 79, 252, 263, 266–69, 273–74, 278–79, 284–85, 288, 298, 300, 304, 310, 416
communication 74–75, 266, 268–69, 273, 277, 279, 284–85, 288, 300, 304, 309, 416
full inclusion 44, 263, 266–69, 273–74, 284, 286, 288, 300, 304, 310, 404, 416
voting 266, 268–69, 273, 284–85, 288, 300, 304, 310, 416
private 19, 22, 47, 48, 49, 56, 58–64, 66, 81, 88–90, 92–95, 103, 106, 117, 124, 133, 139, 151, 159, 184, 192, 197–98, 203–6, 208–10, 212–16, 218–29, 234, 236, 238, 240–41, 343, 360, 393, 435, 457
public 19, 20–22, 40, 47–49, 57–64, 66–69, 71–73, 75, 77, 79, 81, 88–90, 92–96, 98, 102–3, 106–7, 114, 122, 124, 126, 128, 133, 138, 141, 149, 151–54, 157, 159, 160–61, 164, 167, 168, 171, 185–88, 192, 194–95, 197–98, 201–10, 212, 214, 216, 218–25, 228, 234, 239, 240–41, 243, 264–65, 266–69, 281, 283, 296, 299, 330–31, 343–45, 349, 359, 360, 393, 399, 431, 432
Goodstein, Eban 92
Gorbachev, Mikhail 112
Gore, Al 38, 115, 181
Graber, Doris 87
Green, Donald 450
Greene, Joshua 340
Greenspan, Alan 91

Grubb, Michael 36
Gundersen, Adolf 407

H

Hacker, Jacob S. 106
Haidt, Jonathan 387, 389–91, 393
Hamilton, Clive 104, 215, 223
Hansen, James 36, 181
Hardin, Garrett 170, 205
Harmon, Michael 443
Hartley, Jean 322
Hartz-Karp, Janette 37
Haslam, Alexander 75
Head, Brian 129, 296
Heifetz, Ronald 296
Held, David 444, 455
Hendriks, Carolyn 292
Henry, Nicola 41
Herring, Horace 202
Hetherington, Marc 122, 394–96
heuristics 86–87, 191, 252, 341, 352–53, 433, 435–38
Hibbing, John 151, 294, 342, 363–64, 382
Hirsch, Fred 49, 215, 230
Hoff, Jens 40, 145
Hogan, Robert 99
Holmberg, Sören 59
Howard, John 130
Howard, Philip K. 319
Hu Angang 175
Hueston, Gerry 184
human rights 113, 124
Huntington, Samuel P. 427–28
Hyman, Herbert 338

I

identity
  social 70
immigration 171–72, 206, 208–9, 215, 220, 222–23, 234, 236, 336, 458, 460
incentive 25, 68, 75, 79, 95, 119, 128, 133, 165, 231, 234, 272–73, 277, 284, 303, 331, 333, 347, 368, 402, 414, 422, 437, 463
incentive compatible device 295–96
income
  natural 94
individualism 120, 232, 279
inequality 40, 147, 189, 192, 228–30, 242, 383, 398
inflation
  of consumption by supply 201
  of want by supply 198, 199, 200–3, 206, 215–17, 223, 229, 234, 236–39, 241
information
  access to 59
  availability of 130, 132
Intelligent Governance 73, 313, 314, 317, 318

J

Jackson, Tim 40, 189, 279, 387

Jeffres, Leo 261
Jegen, Reto 231
Jessner, Lucie 123
Jevons, William Stanley 201
  ~s paradox 202
Johnson, Boris 39
Johnson, Chalmers 117
Joseph, Craig 387
Jost, John 383–84, 388–89

K

Kahan, Dan 341
Kahneman, Daniel 340–41
Kaiser, Robert B. 99
Kane, John 80
Kevill, Sian 41
Keynes, John Maynard 203
Khazzoom, Daniel 202
  Khazzoom-Brookes postulate 202
King, Anthony 149–53, 157–58, 232
Klijn, Erik-Hans 446–48
Koester, Gerrit 45
Kohlberg, Lawrence 392
Kolbert, Elizabeth 181
Koppenjan, Joop 446–48
Kristjánsson, Svanur 144
Krugman, Paul 156, 446
Kuttner, Robert 91, 117, 152

L

Lampton, David 435
Latham, Mark 39
Layard, Richard 92, 93, 220
leadership 30, 50, 69–71, 75, 77–80, 84, 92, 98–101, 104, 108, 116, 121, 127–28, 130–34, 157, 176, 261, 294, 296, 300, 353, 393
  qualities 108, 132
Leeson, Peter 119
Leib, Ethan 297, 298, 299
Leonardi, Robert 430
Levine, Peter 293–94
Lijphart, Arend 318
Lindvall, Johannes 143
Lines, William 171
Liquid Democracy 47
Lott, Trent 155
Lowndes, Vivien 405
Lucas, John 124
Lupia, Arthur 333, 356

M

Mackay, Hugh 139
macro-allocation 207, 240
Madrick, Jeff 148
Mahbubani, Kishore 49, 175
Manabe, Syukuro 35
Mann, Thomas 156
mapping
  backward 56, 129, 134, 136–37, 243
  forward 56, 129, 131, 134, 136, 137
Marden, Peter 130
Marsh, Ian 109, 130–33, 136, 163, 322, 438
Matsusaka, John 333, 356
Mayer, Richard 443

McCartney, Paul 185
McGann, Anthony 65, 67, 105, 154
Mead, Margaret 316
Medvedev, Dmitry 49
Mendelsohn, Matthew 332
Mercer, David 130
meritocracy 175, 280, 281, 284–85, 311, 314, 318, 326, 355
micro-allocation 207
Miller, Arthur 453
Mill, John Stuart 390
Monbiot, George 185
Mooney, Chris 397
Moore, Mark 322
Morgenthau, Hans J. 45
Morris, Desmond 233
Mosley, Geoff 237
MoveOn 46, 323
Moyers, Bill 176
Mutz, Diana 138, 321, 337

N

Nanetti, Raffaella Y. 430
National Issues Forums 46, 329, 403, 408, 437
National Public Policy Conference 318–19
Nelson, Dana 96, 150, 157, 158
Ney, Bob 116
Nordhaus, William 62
Norquist, Grover 116

O

Obama, Barack 91, 97, 112, 152–53, 177, 178, 205
O'Connor, Mark 171
Offe, Claus 37, 107
O'Leary, Kevin 301–3
Olson, Mancur 57, 117
Olson's Law 118, 435–36
opinion
  public 28–29, 32, 47, 60, 66, 76, 82–83, 85, 87, 109–10, 114–15, 120, 123–24, 146, 157, 218, 239, 248, 251–52, 255–56, 260–61, 269, 276, 278–79, 281–82, 284–86, 291–92, 303, 304–5, 310, 321, 322, 326–29, 332, 334, 350, 354, 356–57, 359, 360, 401–4, 409, 413–14, 416, 418–20, 422, 424, 430, 432, 435–38, 447
Ornstein, Norman 156
Østerud, Øyvind 142
Ostrom, Elinor 451
overpopulation 88, 163, 164, 168, 170, 176, 235. *See also* population, size

P

Palme, Olof 142
paradigm change 73, 315
Paris Climate Summit 36
Parkin, Andrew 332
Parkinson, John 271, 299

ParPolity. *See* democracy, pyramidal
participation
deliberative 247, 306, 330
participatory budgeting 46, 305, 309–10, 318
Participedia 46
Patapan, Haig 80
Pearman, Graeme 184
Pearse, Guy 184
People's Forum
central tabulating facility 369, 370
design elements
accessibility 328, 334, 342, 362
advisory influence 328, 337, 354, 362, 372
agenda contributions from citizens 255, 327, 329, 364, 367
ballot paper 327, 329, 372
competition 328, 367
defence against manipulation 328, 359
executive review 328, 355
feedback 328, 334, 351
focus 328, 334, 342
funding 329, 362
incentives 329, 361, 367, 368
investigating interconnections 278, 328, 338, 341, 352, 365
long-running fundamental (strategic) issues 328, 334–35, 342–43
questions on attitude, mechanics, justification, implementation and willingness to pay 259, 278, 295, 328, 339, 341, 343, 351–52, 365, 373, 397
repetition 327, 332, 349–50, 356, 359, 361
report cards 328, 353
search for solutions 278, 328, 338, 341, 352, 365
solidarity exchange 259, 328, 339, 341, 343
trends 328, 350, 354
voluntary voting 255, 327, 329, 330–31, 350, 352–55, 362, 364, 367
voting security 257, 327, 329, 342, 362, 369
wide-ranging menu of issues 283, 285, 328, 331, 337, 365–68, 372
functions (5 major ones)
deliberating what is to be deliberated 279–80, 326–27
economizing citizen effort 285–86, 326–27
element of meritocracy 280–85, 326–27
examining basics 278–280, 326
public deliberation of

issues 275–77, 326–27
larger list of 12 functions 326–27
manager 254–55, 353, 433
performance indicators
based on democratic indices 417
based on expert opinion 418–19
based on Forum turnout 419
based on intensive deliberation forums 418
based on public opinion polls 418–19
personal identification number 369–71
strategy
for meritocracy 326–27, 425
People's House 301–5, 312–13, 321, 414–15
Pharr, Susan 153
Pickett, Kate 40, 229–30
Pierson, Paul 106, 480
Pivato, Marcus 305–7, 310
Plato 22, 123, 440
Platow, Michael 75
Podemos 320
Poincaré, Henri 453
polarization 38, 122, 295, 310, 340, 341, 395
policy
foreign 96, 112, 124, 125, 199
public 23, 28–30, 33, 55, 72, 77–78, 80, 83–84, 89, 93, 96, 97, 102, 105, 109, 119, 125, 127–29, 137, 143, 145–46, 158, 163, 179, 182, 184, 186, 191, 193, 196–98, 225, 234–36, 238–39, 248–51, 254, 265, 266, 270, 277, 279, 284–85, 297, 301, 303–4, 320, 336, 368, 372, 389, 394, 401–2, 414–20, 424, 434–36, 443, 447, 467
strategic 21, 23, 27, 29, 30, 32, 72, 73, 79, 84, 122, 129, 139, 167, 168, 169, 242, 248–49, 251, 254, 288, 309, 313, 317, 336, 362, 364, 414, 420, 424, 436
poll 24–29, 31, 41, 46–47, 82, 125, 149, 252–53, 255, 256–61, 275–77, 280, 281–85, 289–96, 298, 326–32, 334–35, 338–39, 342–43, 347–55, 357–59, 361–62, 364–67, 369–71, 397, 402–4, 406, 408, 410, 411, 415, 418–23, 432–33, 436, 437
Deliberative Poll 291, 298, 403, 406
odpoll (opinion development poll) 253
opinion development 29, 31, 253, 326, 438
self-selective opinion 24–27, 29–31, 280–82, 331, 352, 436
Popper, Karl 243

Popular Branch 297–300, 304–5, 313, 321
population
growth 39, 171, 173–76, 200–201, 209, 214–15, 217, 219, 220, 223, 228, 235, 238–39, 460–61, 467
size 73, 170, 173, 218, 224, 373–74
poverty 146–47, 216
power
executive 56
judiciary 56
legislative 56
separation of ~s 56
Power, Samantha 112–13, 124
Pratchett, Lawrence 405
preference ordering 64
Pusey, Michael 139
Putin, Vladimir 49, 101
Putnam, Robert 345, 430

R

Rapley, Chris 170
Reagan, Ronald 91, 112, 146
Reed, Ralph E., Jr. 116
referendum 24, 29, 66, 141, 154, 252, 272, 282, 298, 314, 323, 331–33, 351, 356, 365–66, 411–12, 436–37. *See also* electoral systems, poll
Reicher, Stephen 75
Reich, Robert 42, 48, 62, 139
report cards 26, 353–54
representative assembly 56
Richardson, Bill 183
Richardson, Graham 121
Rio+20 Earth Summit 35, 176, 229, 235
Rittel, Horst 443
Robbins, Lionel 63
Rodrigues, Joao 49
Rothstein, Bo 59, 143, 439
Rudd, Kevin 39, 205
Ruddock, Philip 173
Russell, Bertrand 390
Ryfe, David 294, 335

S

Sachs, Jeffrey 146, 152, 169
Samuelson, Paul 62
Sandel, Michael 139, 230
Saunders, Harry 202
Saward, Michael 250, 292
Say, Jean-Baptiste 203
Say's Law 203
Scanlon, Michael 116
scarcity multiplier 60, 88, 195, 196, 198–99, 206–7, 214–25, 227–28, 230, 234, 235–37, 239–41, 406, 434, 457, 461, 463–67
Schattschneider, Elmer 67
Schjoedt, Uffe 99
Schmitter, Philippe 407
Schneider, Michael 217
Schuck, Peter 38
Schwartz, Shalom 384–85, 387, 390
Schwarzenegger, Arnold 182, 183
Scoblic, Peter 112–13

selectorate theory 119, 149, 431–32
Seligsohn, Deborah 51
Selle, Per 142
Sen, Amartya 65, 91
Shalom, Stephen R. 305–7
Shapiro, Ian 114, 115, 443, 450
Sheatsley, Paul 338
Simms, Andrew 162
Skidelsky, Edward 188
Skidelsky, Robert 188
Slaton, Christa Daryl 409
slavery 66
Slovic, Paul 162–63, 166, 279, 340, 383
Smith, Adam 64, 199
Smith, Alastair 84, 149
Smith, Graham 45, 83, 262, 265, 267–68, 270–72, 274, 292, 356, 445, 454–55
Smith, Kevin 90, 344
Smolin, Lee 449
Snowdon, Christopher 230
social welfare function 64, 65, 67
solidarity exchange 328, 341, 343–49
  solidarity index 347–48
Somin, Ilya 83
Soros, George 90, 91, 433
Sorrell, Steve 202
sortition 23, 33, 313–14, 394, 438
Sowell, Thomas 238
special interests 38, 47, 101, 102, 103, 106, 107, 117–19, 131, 137, 150, 204, 257, 270, 300, 302, 310, 313, 328, 356, 414
Speth, Gus 146, 152, 434
Speth, James Gustave 73
Stenner, Karen 398
Stern, Nicholas 62
Stimson, James 82
Stohl, Cynthia 344
Stoker, Gerry 405
Stokes, Geoffrey 37
Summers, Larry 231
Sunstein, Cass 295
supercapitalism 48, 49
supermajoritarianism 68, 81, 105–6, 108, 154, 396. *See also* dysfunction, triple dysfunction theory, ambiguous delegation

T

Tanner, Lindsay 39
TasmaniaTogether 47
Taylor, Michael 57
Thacker, Strom 58–59
Theiss-Morse, Elizabeth 151, 294, 342, 363–64
theory
  selectorate 119, 431
  triple dysfunction. *See* dysfunction, triple dysfunction theory
thinking beyond stage one 87, 165, 238–39, 241
transferability 263–64, 270–72, 274, 277–79, 285, 288, 297, 299–300, 303–4,

308–9, 311, 372
Tullock, Gordon 117
Turiel, Elliot 392

U

unemployment 73, 87, 168, 169, 186–87, 190, 229, 373, 462
universal franchise 22, 68, 123, 126–27, 133

V

Van Vugt, Mark 99–101

W

De Waal, Frans 98–99, 220, 232–33
Warren, Mark 123, 445
Watanuki, Joji 427, 428
Watson, Bob 35
Weale, Albert 67
Webber, Melvin 443
Weber, Elke 161
Weiler, Jonathan 122, 394, 395, 396
Weir, Stuart 353
Wells, Robin 156
White, Hugh 428
Whiteley, Paul 78
Wikileaks 323
Wilkinson, Richard 40, 229, 230
willingness to pay 259, 328, 339, 343, 346–49, 373
Wright, Erik Olin 292

X

Xenos, Michael 81
Xi Jinping 177

Y

Yaffee, Steven 134, 136
Yankelovich, Daniel 278
Yencken, David 41, 109, 130–33, 136, 163
Young, Iris Marion 46, 74–75

Z

Zakaria, Fareed 50, 111, 118, 174
Zuma, Jacob 110