THE FUTURE OF CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY:

THE NORTH AMERICAN MODEL 2030 A.D.



Democratization sometimes seems inextricably embedded in globalization, one of the tsunamis of change. Diverging from that perspective is John Poast's vision of the future under a modified constitutional monarchy. Explicating that vision is a scenario sketching a pathway to a nonhereditary, meritocratic monarchy that would require documented competence of all persons entering governmental service. John Poast, the author, teaches political science at Hawaii Pacific University--v.k.p.

"The monarchy will insure that social peace and stability are maintained under the principles of democracy, and the orderly access to power of the distinct alternatives of government will be according to the will of the people" (King Juan Carlos I).

by John Poast

We refer to the era of the Kennedy presidency as Camelot, a mythical reference to the romance and fairy tale quality often given to kings, princes and knights of the realm. There is still a fascination with kings, royalty, and certainly handsome princes (no doubt just waiting to make some beautiful maiden their bride as Grace Kelly showed the world in the 1950s). We read daily of the personal lives of Princess Di and Prince Charles. We can't seem to get enough of their albeit trashy stories, and they are nearly as popular in the United States as they are in England, despite a revolution to throw off the tyranny of the English king back in 1776. Our vocabulary is still filled with drug czars, kingpins, and movie queens while we drive regals, royales and imperials. Monarchy, having been a principal form of government for at least ten thousand years, is still practiced in many parts of the world in both its constitutional and absolute forms.

In the United States, we decided not to have a king although, even after our revolutionary war, George Washington was said to have been offered a crown. But did that mean that monarchy was dead as a system of democratic government? Far from it, as such countries as Spain, Thailand and Tonga continue to prove.

When monarchy was rejected, the world turned to the republic as a somehow purer form of government, often simply by the fact of not having a king. But what if we bring the pendulum back toward the center and improve the monarchical system within a democratic and constitutional framework - not as a mere figurehead, but with some real powers in a national leadership role? This is what is proposed in the 2030 Model of Constitutional Monarchy. This paper will explore a possible future in which a strong monarchy is embraced once again as a viable form of government. A refined form of monarchy to be sure; hopefully, with the flaws removed and the strength and leadership values intact.

BACKGROUND

In 1993, Brazil conducted a national plebiscite to determine if they should remain a republic or become a kingdom once again. After years of corruption and a longing for tradition and dignity, as well as a "royal solution" to the fear of succession by Brazil's southern states, Brazilians were offered the chance to vote for a king (Brooke, pp. 1,6). Brazil had been governed by an emperor until 1889 when Pedro II was overthrown. Many felt that a return to monarchy would be better than the corruption the country had suffered under republican presidents (Kamm, p. 7).

After the liberation of the Eastern European nations from communism in 1989, several countries seriously

considered a return to monarchy including Rumania where former King Michael had two very warm and receptive visits from the people - not the authorities (Perez-Pena, p. B-4). Perhaps the most remarkable prediction of a return to monarchy comes from Russia's Vladimir Kvint in his 1994 article in Forbes magazine where he stated, "I predict a return to monarchy. It will prove to be the only way Yeltsin can hang on to power." (Kvint, p. 145). He felt there was nostalgia for a strong leader since Russia had always had a strong figure in power. Basing his prediction on the most famous Russian regent in history, Boris Godunov, Yeltsin could put then-thirteen-year-old Georgiy, son of Great Princess Maria, on the throne with himself as regent for life. This would eliminate the need for elections and the threat of the dreaded Zhirinovsky coming to power. Would the West support an undemocratic restored monarchy with a market economy? Vladimir Kvint is certain of it (Ibid., p. 150-152).

These examples represent restorations of monarchy and do not include the numerous nations which still operate successfully with kings, queens, and emirs as the head of state. Among these are some of our strongest capitalist democracies including Great Britain, Japan, Sweden, Holland and Spain. This is the world of 1997 and forms part of the basis for the changes which could occur during the twenty-first century.

SCENARIO

After years of effort the European Community finally became a reality both economically and politically in 2005. It was a huge success and began to dominate world markets in a way that made the Americans and the Japanese struggle to compete. It had been the dream of Caesar, Charlemagne, Napoleon and Hitler to unite Europe in this way, but this time it had been accomplished peacefully.

One of the final and most difficult sticking points had been the selection of a leader. A head of state for all the former states. No one could agree and the diatribe between the French, Germans and British seemed at times to threaten the entire effort. Finally, the delegate from Norway offered a solution: why not a monarch? In selecting someone of royal lineage there was one great advantage as a monarch could legitimately claim kinship to nearly all the participating European countries. The Austrian Prince Karl Leopold was related by extraordinarily blue bloodlines to the former monarchs of England, France, Spain, Holland, Russia and of course the old Hapsburg Empire. He was a forty-one-year-old former Olympic silver medalist in the epee, a graduate of the Sorbonne and Oxford in history and economics, and a self made millionaire. He was, in the final analysis, a perfect choice. On May 15, 2005, he was crowned Emperor Karl I, grand leader of the European Empire. The title was not hyperbole because the new union was indeed an economic empire with investments throughout the world.

The United States, meeting with its partners in NAFTA, had come to the conclusion that same year that something needed to be done to compete more successfully with the Europeans. In 2010, they announced the creation of a political union between the countries of North America. South America had also been invited, but elected to remain in the greater NAFTA economic union but forego political participation until the issue could be studied further. That was a wise decision because the new union proved to be full of contentious issues. By 2015, after the San Antonio riots and the disastrous guerrilla war in Quebec, it was decided that a different structure was needed to make the political union work. Old issues of sovereignty, states' rights, and border jurisdictions proved too difficult to overcome and were threatening the North American Union. Finally, the leaders of Mexico, Canada and the United States proposed a constitutional convention to draw up an entirely new government acceptable to all countries. It would be bold, and called for the dissolution of each nation, a new nation state to be called the Commonwealth of North America, and above all a new governmental structure.

The Constitutional Convention was convened in Toronto on February 1, 2016. It was expected to last for two years. Instead, it lasted four. Drafting a constitution which would include the challenges and solutions to the world's problems was a herculean task. A final compromise was developed by delegate Roger McMurdy of Nova Scotia and Dr. Eduardo Canestro of Mexico. The centerpiece of the new constitution called for a non-hereditary monarch (to avoid the less than talented son or daughter being forced on the people) to be a powerful executive leader of the newly created nation. Successive leaders would be selected by merit through

a twenty-year development process and all key government positions would also be merit based. Elections would be decided by lot. It was radical and revolutionary. It was the product of history, experience, and the demands of high technology in an age of complete information overload.

The delegates had opened up all possibilities and had borrowed from ancient Rome, Greece, Napoleonic France, as well as the writings of Jefferson and Powell. Powell, the tough independent President of the United States from 2005-2009 had been the last decisive leader in U.S. history. Both Gore before him and Reynolds, Workman and Carol Miller afterward, had all been ineffective one-term presidents elected more on popularity and television appearance than leadership skills. The delegates were determined to prevent incompetents from gaining power in the future. The world was too complicated and too demanding. It needed nothing short of brilliant leaders to cope with the demands of the nation and the competition from abroad. The authors looked to such pioneers in leadership as Warren Bennis who had long ago said: "1) staying with the status quo is unacceptable; it won't work; 2) the key to competitive advantage will be the capacity of leadership to create the social architecture capable of generating intellectual capital (ideas, know-how); 3) most important, leaders must provide direction, trust, and hope. Too many leaders have a combination of competence and ambition but lack integrity" (Future Survey, December 1994, p. 13). Creating leaders was what the new constitution was all about -- leaders who could measure up to the task of serving as ministers or proconsul of the Commonwealth of North America.

Vincent Ballinger, the distinguished elder statesman, former governor of Maryland, Secretary of State and President of the Constitutional Assembly was named as the President of the Council of Regents and the Proconsul pro tem. He went on to name fifteen other Regents to serve as implementors of the new government and make selections for heads of ministries and regional governors. Their next task was to begin the selection process for the National Assembly. It took ten years to bring the government in alignment with the constitution as written and approved by the three former nations and their respective states and provinces. Among the major efforts was the relocation of the North American Capital to Colorado Springs, the division of the three nations into six regional governments, and the establishment of the National University of North America. The latter would be the vehicle for making sure the future would have leaders up to the task of governing a twenty-first century continent.

In 2030, out of a pool of talented leaders who displayed the characteristics that would be required by future graduates of the National University, came the first Proconsul. His name was Eduardo Domingo Canestro, Ph.D. Harvard, class of 2006, the former Mexican Foreign Minister, delegate to the Constitutional Assembly and Governor of the Southwest Region. He was crowned Proconsul Edward I, and the official plan of succession was implemented.

THE TRAINING AND SELECTION OF LEADERS

"Leaders of the nation shall be graduates of the National University of North America." That statement was one of the most profound to come out of the new constitution. It set in motion a series of guidelines which later produced some of the finest leaders the world had ever seen. Two hundred candidates were to be selected each year with a small number of alternates as required. To enter the university the following prerequisites had to be met:

- a. A natural-born citizen of the Commonwealth whose parents were also natural born citizens. (This provision is designed to recruit those with a lifelong commitment to North America).
- b. Minimum age of thirty years, maximum of thirty-five at the time of admission.
- c. Service of at least five years as an officer in the National Defense Forces of the Commonwealth. (As a potential Commander-in-Chief of the nation's armed forces during war or peacetime, this was considered mandatory).
- d. An earned Masters Degree from an accredited university of higher learning in any discipline. (This

provision is designed to insure a foundation of scholarship).

- e. A minimum score of 1800 on the Leadership Aptitude Examination Battery. This examination may be taken no more than three times with a one-year interval between attempts. (The exam is a three-day effort requiring a passing score in social sciences, arts and humanities, business, physical and biological sciences, law, mastery of a foreign language, physical and sports skills, medical and psychological exams, and character and integrity).
- f. At least five letters of recommendation from distinguished scholars, business and government leaders or other persons of stature in the nation.

Upon entry in the University, which is located at the old Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, the first five years are spent in studies and research culminating in an earned Doctorate in Letters. During that period, the finest scholars, leaders and academicians in the nation serve as faculty (many retired leaders and previous graduates would be a part of this pool and it would be considered one of the highest national honors to be asked to lecture there). Students would be paid a reasonable salary and provided with housing for their families while enrolled at the university.

Upon graduation, continuous on the job training would occur for the following fifteen years. This training would be in industry, local, regional or national government, or in nongovernmental organizations. The students would earn normal salaries as they became managers, administrators and leaders. One would have to serve in all three types of organizations to insure a well rounded experience. Every six months, for a three-week period, there would be seminars held at Carlisle to reflect on the great issues of the day. The link with the university is a lifelong process. At age forty-five, some would run for regional governor (the minimum age). At age fifty, the window would open for selection to a ministerial or vice ministerial position in regional or national government or possible selection as the proconsul. The age of fifty was chosen because it represents an age at which one would have had an opportunity to make a reputation yet still be young enough to display the vigor necessary to take on a major challenge (Hayek, p. 113). The proconsul serves until age seventy, as do the ministers. Regents and members of the supreme court serve to age seventy-five. A retiring proconsul is automatically offered a seat on the Council of Regents. Because the goal is for a proconsul to have the time necessary to design, implement and evaluate programs, the reign is at least fifteen and as much as twenty years depending on when they were selected. Formal training ends upon selection to a key position or at age fifty-five. Seminars continue for as long as one can attend but are voluntary after selection to the top ranks of government (often top leaders return as speakers at the seminars). A student does not have to serve in government and may opt for private industry, but the society at large praises those who serve and it is among the highest honors the nation can bestow.

THE STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT

The proconsul is the Head of State, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, and the Chief of the Executive Branch of government. He can name ministers and vice ministers with a majority approval of the Council of Regents. He can remove ministers for cause. He can also name members to the Supreme Court who serve until age seventy-five. They can only be removed by an impeachment vote of the National Assembly (on a three-fourths vote for high crimes or misdemeanors). He can introduce legislation in the assembly. He can veto any proposed legislation, but the veto can be overridden by a two-thirds vote in the assembly. His veto or signature can be overridden by the Council of Regents by a three-fourths vote. The Proconsul can be removed by a combined vote of both the Supreme Court and the Council of Regents (a three-fourths vote in each body). He can also be removed through the national recall procedure. In a national emergency (requires a unanimous vote of the Regents) he can rule by decree. No decree may change the structure of the constitution.

The Council of Regents is composed of twenty-one of the senior elders of the nation. Most will have served in

high office in industry, government service, the military, universities, or at top positions in regional government. It is mandatory that no more than three members can be from the same career track, i.e., no more than three industrialists or three former generals. At some point in the future nearly all will be graduates of the National University. The minimum age to serve on the Council is age fifty. The maximum age is seventy-five. Selection to the Council is made by the Council. One can only be removed from the Council for cause by the National Assembly in an impeachment proceeding with a three-fourths vote. The Council of Regents may declare the beginning of an emergency with a unanimous vote. They may end an emergency with a three-fourths vote.

Located in the Council of Regents, the Office of Future Planning analyzes every act or piece of legislation for its future impact on the nation. Their recommendations are sent to the Council of Regents and must be voted on. They can also amend legislation and send it back to the Assembly (a powerful tool).

The Supreme Court, the highest judicial court in the land, is composed of fifteen members. They have the power to determine the constitutionality of legislation. They also can hold impeachment procedures against the Proconsul in conjunction with the Council of Regents.

The National Assembly is composed of one thousand members from each of the six regions of the nation. Delegates are selected by lot after being nominated by guilds in each region of the nation. The guilds insure that representatives come from a broad range of society. Guilds represent the following areas: business; education; craftsmen; law; health care; human services; engineers/scientists; labor.

If one wants to serve one must be a guild member and, in turn, meet their requirements. The National Assembly represents North Americans from all walks of life, and one's guild must nominate one within one's region. One must have been a resident of one's region for the previous five years, be at least thirty-five years old, and serve for a single term of ten years and may not be re-selected. Each year, one tenth of the assembly is selected. Election is by lot, and party affiliations are unnecessary. Thanks to the single-term limit, re-selection is not an issue, thus permitting a delegate to devote her efforts toward the legislative agenda. One member of the assembly is elected for a maximum four-year term to serve as the Speaker of the Assembly. The speaker is also a member of the Council of Regents during his term and may be the only member younger than fifty years old.

Ministers and vice ministers are appointed by the proconsul. There are six ministries at the national level designed to provide those government services most appropriately provided at that level. Ministers and vice ministers are chosen from a pool of graduates of the National University. The ministers meet on a regular basis as representatives to the Council of Ministries where mutual concerns can be discussed and resolved.

A Ministry of Defense is headed by the Minister of Defense who oversees the single service national defense forces. A civilian official, he works closely with the Commanding General of the National Defense Forces, a five-star general who is normally offered a position on the Council of Regents upon retirement. A strong defense was deemed crucial to the government especially after the Mideast nuclear war of 2009 when fourteen million were killed. Fortunately, no missiles pierced our Space Defense Command shield and entered North American Airspace. Defense is composed of five services: Aerospace Forces, Naval Forces, Ground Forces, National Rescue Forces, and the aforementioned Space Defense Command.

The Ministry of Human Services includes medical care, welfare, veterans affairs, safety, and civil service inter alia.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs combined the old offices of State, Trade, CIA, and parts of Commerce. Still the most powerful ministry among equals.

The Ministry of Science and Technology coordinated all national research and development as the speed of scientific and technological breakthroughs continued. This ministry combined the offices of the former NASA, NOAA, DARPA, and portions of Energy, among others.

The Ministry of Economy was formed from Treasury, Commerce and Labor as well as the Fed. It is

responsible for examining all aspects of the national and international economy. The taxing structure is also in this ministry but the 25% flat tax system inaugurated in 2020 greatly reduced the size of this agency.

The Ministry of Natural Resources included parts of Energy and Interior, as well as the EPA. Also included was an office of tourism. The biggest mandate concerns the area of ecology and the most prudent use and renewal of resources. Each of the Ministries has a representative in the Office of Future Planning.

REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

In some ways, the Regional Governments are a mirror image of the National Government. The regions were originally divided based upon similarity of geography, industry and climate. The six regions are: The Northeast Region, The Southern Region (very close to the old Confederacy), the Midwestern Region, the Pacific northwest, the Central Region, and the Southwestern Region.

- * The Regional Governors are selected by the Governor's Council to serve for five-year terms. They can be selected no more than twice. The minimum age to serve as governor is forty-five and the maximum age is seventy. The governor's powers are similar to the proconsul except that she is not in charge of defense forces.
- * The members of the Governor's Council are also senior residents of the region. Age requirements and specific duties are the same as those for the Regent's Council.
- * The Regional Office of Future Planning has the same functions as its counterpart on the national level but with emphasis on regional issues.
- * The Regional Court of Appeals handles Civil and Criminal appeals from local courts. Shares impeachment powers with the Governor's Council.
- * The Regional Assembly selection, requirements, terms, and tasks are similar to those for the national assembly, as is the role of the speaker.

Regional Departments

- * Although there is no national department of education, there are six regional Departments of Education. Requirements are designed to meet regional needs, i.e., more agricultural offerings in the Midwest, etc. Funds are distributed to the local governments based upon local needs and requirements.
- * Regional Departments of Human Services and Natural Resources provide similar, but not duplicative functions, in their respective areas, much the same as the national ministries.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government is designed to fit the needs of the communities it serves. There is as much citizen involvement as possible primarily through technology based town meetings. The most powerful political groups are the guilds which have members from the various career tracks of the citizenry. The local guilds select candidates for local government, regional assembly delegations and the national assembly. Once a slate of candidates is prepared and reviewed, the actual selection is done by lot which allows maximum representation and eschews reliance on the old political party concept (Dator, p. 9). By allowing the guilds a balanced representation at all levels, we avoided the overabundance of lawyers and obtained a nice cross section of experience from the community. One of the truly significant powers reserved for the citizenry, used extensively at the local level, is the referendum and the recall petition. This is the only voting issue where

citizens can directly affect the government -- up to and including the recall of the proconsul. After all, the proconsul is ultimately responsible to the people. The national recall and referendum procedure is difficult because of the required four-fifths vote, but getting sufficient signatures through the North American internet is technologically simple.

ANSWERING COMPLAINTS ABOUT GOVERNMENT

Concerns and complaints about democratic governments should be addressed in any new structure. Common complaints are that government is too repressive, bureaucratic, nationalistic, lacks future vision and is not sufficiently democratic.

The constitutional assembly spent hundreds of hours trying to resolve these issues, basing their decisions on an analysis of problems previously suffered in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico as well as in the early North American Union. The results of their efforts, as codified in the new constitution, reflect a successful attempt to reduce the complaints of government. For example, just as the Romans knew that "...unless public liberty is protected by intrepid and vigilant guardians, the authority of so formidable a magistrate [monarch] will soon degenerate into despotism" (Gibbon, p. 52), so the North American constitution clearly was concerned with the repressive nature of government and contains all of the guaranteed freedoms previously provided in the U.S. Constitution including the blessings of liberty (Tonn, p. 489).

The only significant change was a ban on slandering the office or the person of the proconsul. The reason for this was to promote a more positive view towards the office and the person as head of state by not allowing fallacious criticism. The writers of the constitution felt that serious wrongdoing would be handled by the impeachment process; and since integrity was such an integral part of the selection process, then perhaps corruption could be reduced on the front end. This worked well, and by 2035 most school children named Eduardo I among their heroes. The proconsul's office certainly has the opportunity for repression, but the sophisticated system of checks and balances should prevent that especially with the continuous role of the regents as overseers.

Perhaps the strongest criticism of this system of government comes from those who see less democracy in the system. There is a great deal of representative government. People do vote in the regional and national assemblies and the referendum and recall processes offer direct democracy at its purest. However, the authors felt that much time and money had been wasted under the old system on election campaigns. The U.S. alone had more elections than any other country in the world. Everything from dogcatcher to prosecutor was up for a vote! It also seemed that legislators and presidents spent more time running for office than serving in office — not to mention the influence of lobbyists which seemed only to promote corruption while giving lobbies much more electoral power than the average voter. The system, as designed, was still meant to be run by the people, with selection opportunities for anyone to reach the highest level of office including the rank of proconsul. The only real qualifications were based on talent, merit and a proven track record of success. The authors of the Constitution would argue that a representative system was left intact.

The bureaucracy has been streamlined in the new monarchical system. There are fewer ministries and they deal with issues which are appropriate for the level of government concerned. Local government handles local issues while national government takes care of the appropriate responsibilities of national defense and foreign affairs. It was felt that regions did not need to be sending their delegates off on overseas boondoggles for "trade" any more than the national government should dictate local education needs. Further, the system is based on merit. There is an exam which must be taken by everyone seeking entrance to work in the government. This does not mean a typing test like they had in 1990, but rather a comprehensive series of tests much like the requirements of the former Departments of State and Defense. The people desired in government are those of talent and commitment - not those who can't get a job elsewhere. They, like educators, are honored by society. Also, having placed people in the bureaucracy based on merit has eliminated some of the partisanship and politics from the organization. Add this to the elimination of political parties, and a bureaucracy emerges that is more efficient and less vulnerable to pressure from the assembly (Riggs, pp. 11-12).

The government realized what a lack of strategic planning had done to the former nation states. Always having to put out fires and pander to voters stood in the way of planning for the future. Using some of the guidelines given to them by the late and now much revered giants in the field of future studies like Toffler, Barber, Dator and Slaughter, the Office of Future Planning was created with the power and authority to influence the direction of government. Futurists have also taken their place among the elite of society and are the principal counselors to the policy makers. Every agency at each level of government has futurists on their staff.

It has taken a long time to even begin to erase the old idea of the smaller nation state. People still refer to themselves as Canadians from time to time. But the new generation, those born after 2020, are beginning to look upon themselves as North Americans and are proud of their country and happy with the leaders in their government. Prosperity is everywhere. Wise men in authority are concerned for the welfare of the people and their future. Local sovereignty issues are fading and everyone realizes that with the strength of the EC and the Japanese Trade Consortium, North America would be lost without the strength and power they gained by unifying. Those continents who broke up into small nations are no match for the major global players.

CONCLUSIONS

Why not monarchy? This was the question I asked myself when I began this research. People seem to like strong, powerful leaders and harbor an equally strong fascination for their wives and children. If a monarch can garner the respect and loyalty of his people, much as Juan Carlos of Spain did when he averted the coup attempt of 1977, then perhaps there is a place for a monarch. In Spain the monarchy stands as a symbol of the permanence and unity of the nation (Gunther, p. 110). But there are flaws in monarchy as well. Too much intermarriage, no doubt, exacerbated the problems of finding a competent ruler. Early monarchs were the toughest, the smartest, perhaps even the cruelest. But this did not guarantee that the son or daughter would also be clever. The ancient Romans used to adopt their successor and this, for a time at least during the Age of the Antonines, produced some measure of stability (Gibbon, pp. 52-73). This was one of the ideas that intrigued me.

The government that has taken shape in this paper is really of my own design. Thus, I have cited relatively few published works. Could a monarchy really work? I believe it could, although it would take a lot of effort to convince those who prefer a republic (perhaps not so much in Hawaii). Is it possible? If the question refers to a strong leader coming along in the twenty-first century and changing the direction of the U.S. government -- absolutely! Would he or she be a monarch? Perhaps.

I am strongly convinced that a new system of selecting leaders is necessary and I think mine is certainly worth further research. We often do a poor job of it and have paid the price on more than one occasion. U.S. history is fortunate (or lucky) that at least our leaders have risen to the occasion during our most serious crises. Robert McNamara, for example, was neither the best nor the brightest. He was someone who excelled in one area and then tried to apply those skills to many areas with disastrous results (even at Ford Motor Company he took the fabulous two-seater Thunderbird and made it a four-seater).

In contrast, my vision of the best and the brightest focuses on those who have proven themselves in a wide variety of roles and still come back to learn each year (seminar program) because the learning cannot stop. My system is, however, based on selecting good and honest people, which is the opposite of what James Madison felt about the inner nature of man once tempted with power. In deference to Mr. Madison, I have left enough checks and balances to make sure those who start off good continue to be. So, why not monarchy? Long live the King!

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Home | Back to Contents